



# **AN OVERVIEW OF THE GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME**

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# Presentation Outline

Introduction

Background of SF in Ghana

Overview of the GSFP

Complimentary SHN Programmes in Ghana

Literature on GSFP related to health and nutrition

Quick fix on areas that can be explored

Challenges

Conclusion & Way forward

# INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Good nutrition is necessary for physical growth, mental development and overall well being of children
- ❖ Though children know when they are hungry, they are not good judges of what the healthier options are in the environment
- ❖ Thus children depend on teachers, parents and caregivers for good nutrition.
- ❖ SFPs is one sure way governments promote optimal growth and development outside the home.

# SCHOOL FEEDING IN GHANA

- SF is an incentive for attracting parents to send their children to school.
- In Ghana it started quite some time back, mainly by international and religious organizations such as the WFP, CRS, WVI, ADRA, Plan Ghana etc. with targeted programs in selected parts of the country.
- Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP) built on these initiatives, emphasizing 3 dimensions in school feeding – agriculture, education and health /nutrition

# OVERVIEW OF GHANA SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME(GSFP)

GSFP is an initiative of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) Pillar 3 which seeks to enhance food security and reduce hunger in line with the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty, hunger, and primary education.

# ***GSFP Mission statement.***

The GSFP exist

- to provide one hot nutritionally adequate meal (school going) daily, cooked from locally produced foodstuffs to poor school children, in order to strengthen agricultural production in the poorest communities and enhance the capacity of the communities to improve their food security, health and nutrition status, and economic resources.

# OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTPUTS OF GSFP

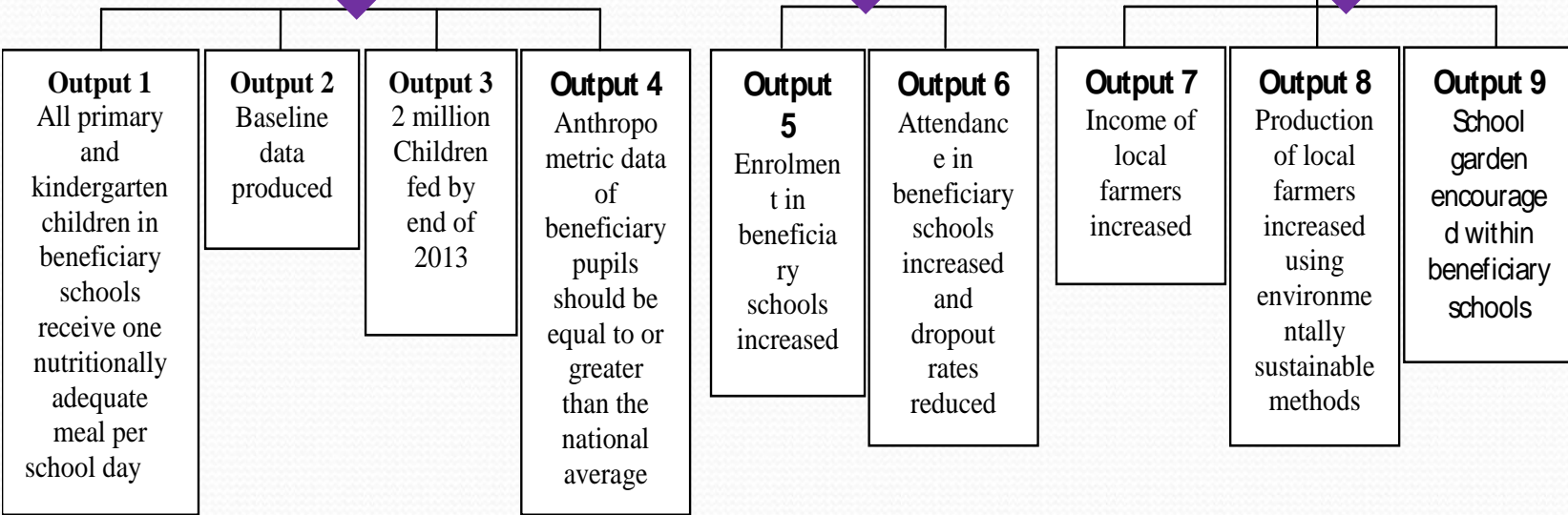
Long term objective

Contribution to poverty reduction and food security

Reduce hunger & malnutrition

Increase school enrolment attendance & retention

Boost domestic food production



Immediate objectives

# THE CONCEPT OF GSFP :



- The basic concept of the programme is to provide children in public primary schools and kindergartens with one hot nutritious meal, prepared from locally grown foodstuffs, on every school feeding day.





# ***GSFP – Strategic Principles***

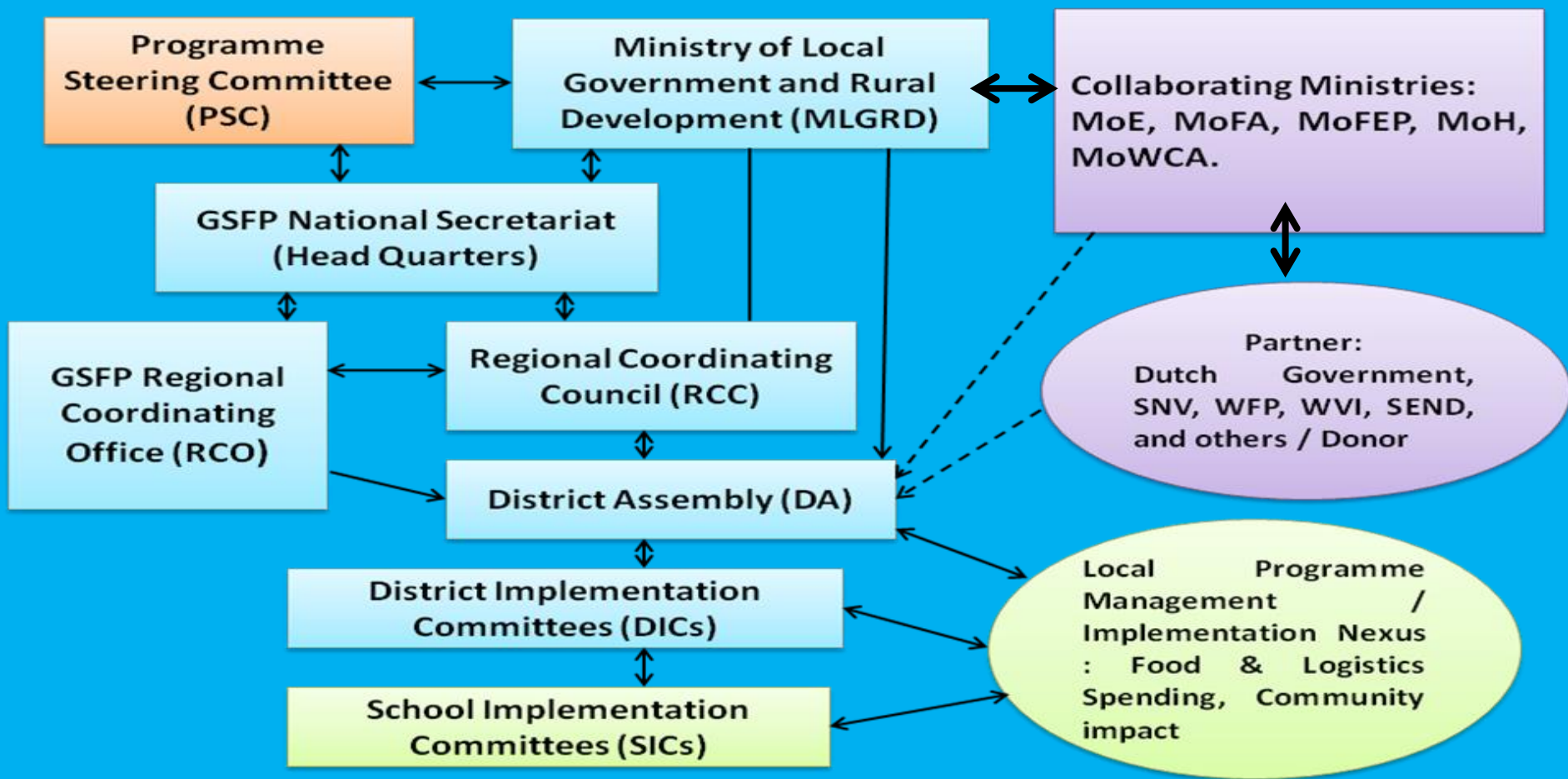
- Provide one hot balanced meal each school going day to school children.
- Menu based on locally produced foodstuffs.
- Target most deprived Districts and Communities.
- Decentralized implementation.
- Community participation.
- Collaboration with CSOs and the Private Sector.

# *Conceptual Framework*

- The strategy to feed school children with locally prepared food that is nutritionally adequate will focus spending on local foodstuffs thereby providing a ready market for local farm produce, leading to wealth creation for rural households.
- With the ready market and increased household incomes the rural community will generate wealth.
- With more incomes, they can afford the additional food intake and other items needed to improve their nutritional status to eliminate short term hunger and malnutrition.
- This will help break the cycle of rural household and community poverty



# Institutional Structure





**EFFORTS OF  
GSFP(&/STAKEHOLDERS)  
TARGETED AT IMPROVING  
POVERTY, AGRIC,  
EDUCATION, WATER AND  
SANITAION**

# ***POVERTY***

The symptoms of poverty.

- The lack of education and knowledge,
- The lack of good health and health facilities,
- Unemployment and under employment,
- Exclusion from decision-making.
- Exclusion from allocation of resources.
- Loss of dignity etc.

# Poverty Reduction

Poverty reduction is –

- Tackling any one of, or all of the symptoms of poverty is a step towards poverty reduction.

also

- Any policy, plan, program, project or activity that provides an opportunity to a person or community to satisfy their basic needs and more, and on a sustainable basis.

# ***Selection of Districts/Schools. (GSFP contribution to Poverty Reduction.)***

The criteria for selection of schools is linked to poverty.

- Deprived districts (according to the GPRS classification)
- Poorest and most food insecure districts
- Low school enrolment, attendance and retention esp. among girls.
- Low literacy levels.
- High hunger and vulnerability status.
- High communal spirit or community management capability
- High drop-out rate.
- Willingness of the community to put up basic infrastructure (e.g. Kitchen, storeroom, latrines) and to contribute in cash or kind.
- Poor access to potable water.
- Communities/schools not already covered by other feeding programmes.

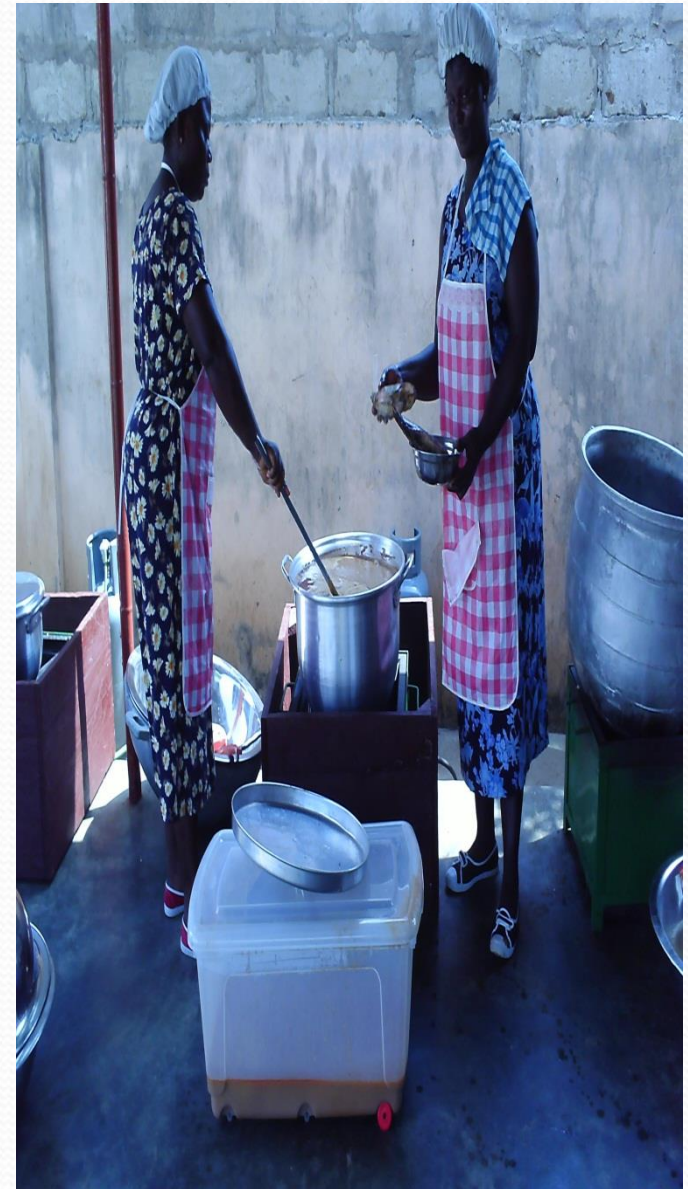
# **Poverty Reduction** *(contribution of the GSFP)*

- GSFP operations are decentralized using already existing District Assembly (local government) structures working with the communities in the actual implementation.
- The program therefore does not have staff at the district and community levels, existing district staff implement the GSFP on the ground.



# Poverty Reduction *(contribution of the GSFP)*

- The beneficiary districts /communities construct school kitchens. Foods are prepared on site and fed to the children.
- Caterers & cooks are employed from the local communities
- Menus are drawn up by the District Nutrition Officer and other reps on the basis of locally grown food stuffs. Thus the food stuffs are purchased from communities, districts, at and the at national levels as a last resort thus improving livelihood of farmer households
- Parents save monies which they would otherwise have spent on lunch for their children. (Cedis0.40\*195 school days p.a.)



# ***GSFP- the benefits to education.***

School enrollment, attendance and retention

The pilot phase of GSFP:

- Increased enrolment of beneficiary schools
- Improved attendance, retention and completion as compared with non-GSFP schools.

(Source: SNV field study- One meal, many benefits)

# DISTRIBUTION TREND (COVERAGE)

National	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	(%) of pupils	Total No. Public prim. pupils covered by GES	% of GES schools covered by GSFP
	No. of pupils	No. of pupils	No. of pupils	No. of pupils	No. of pupils	No. of pupils	No. of pupils			
<b>Ashanti</b>	8972	119360	120093	154598	186,132	181,474	310,347	19.49	727,659	42.60
<b>Brong Ahafo</b>	5701	61921	63375	87632	105,845	114,964	183,653	11.53	494,033	37.10
<b>Central</b>	7796	26705	33730	40198	42,409	44,248	89,047	5.60	424,657	20.90
<b>Eastern</b>	10161	35154	38991	47547	50,316	53,580	114,719	7.20	472,299	24.20
<b>Greater Accra</b>	14817	97407	103002	121301	140,501	130,714	189,144	11.88	316,726	59.70
<b>Northern</b>	3084	14588	16191	33699	41,065	50,597	179,642	11.28	578,106	31.00
<b>Upper West</b>	2457	5598	6281	11687	19,781	21,865	161,857	7.10	263,234	42.90
<b>Upper East</b>	3886	11366	12012	19428	32,301	34,082	113,125	7.28	406,637	28.50
<b>Volta</b>	4531	11769	14671	20483	29,213	29,685	115,977	10.16	183,141	88.30
<b>Western</b>	3370	29630	32843	43452	49,853	52,111	134,877	8.48	498,205	27.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>64,775</b>	<b>413,498</b>	<b>441,189</b>	<b>580,025</b>	<b>697,416</b>	<b>713,590</b>	<b>1,592,388</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,364,697</b>	<b>36.40</b>

# *Hunger and Malnutrition*

## **(benefits of the GSFP)**

### GSFP on hunger and malnutrition

- The provision of one hot nutritious meal a day will improve the nutritional status (essential nutrients e.g. Vitamin A, iron and iodine) among children.
- This will lead to a reduction in (child morbidity rate) malnutrition which is the cause of high vulnerability of children to disease and intellectual malfunction
- Beneficial multiplier effects thus knowledge/skills acquired through the nutrition/health education component by caterers and community women involved in the preparation of the school meals will extended k/s to their homes

# Agriculture (benefits of the GSFP)????????

- The GSFP emphasizes locally grown foodstuffs, with a target to procure at least 80% of the food from the locality.(Procurement governance )
- The ready market for local foods will encourage food crop farmers to produce more, reduce post harvest losses, to improve national food security. (LBCs /Buffer stock now introduced). Indeed it is targeted that 80% of the feeding cost for the program will go into the local economy.
- Though other interventions introduced by government such as block farms programme, subsidization of fertilizers and improved seeds, provision of tractors and other farm machinery at subsidized prices, and extension services particularly for the private sector for example has helped increase farm yield but linkage to GSFP is still weak

# ***Water and Sanitation***

## **(benefits of the GSFP)**

- The GSFP seeks to ensure that all participating schools are provided with potable water and sanitation facilities( provision of polytanks, CWS, education on health and sanitation by SHEP)
- This contributes to the availability of these services improving the health of the pupils and the community at large.

# COMPLEMENTARY SHN PROGRAMMES



- WASH programme by SHEP
- ALERT School by SHEP
- Deworming by NTD/SHEP/CRS/USAID/PCD etc
- NAFCO supplies of grade 'A' paddy parboiled rice naturally enriched with selenium, magnesium, B vitamins, folate, potassium, phosphorous, calcium and low in fat and starch.(Buffer Stock system).
- WFP provides a 2-3 day feeding arrangement, where food community for two days while GSFP assist in providing funds for the remaining three days in a week. Food is also fortified with MNPs
- Improving the nutritional status of school children by providing a third of their nutrient requirement through school feeding(Ration design tool) , and improving the nutritional knowledge and health behaviours of SF participating communities (BCC) by PCD/Dubai Cares
- Procurement governance(SNV)

# LITERATURE ON GSFP RELATED HEALTH AND NUTRITION IN GHANA

- A. **Lack of nutrition knowledge among care takers:** Following the assessment of the nutritional status of primary school children, identified the lack of knowledge among guardians and children themselves on how to better combine foods from the various food groups to achieve balanced diets and recommended that to ensure better nutrition more education must be carried out on care givers as well as the children. (Assessment of the nutritional status of primary school children (6-10 years) at Dzolo-Kpuita and surrounding towns in the Ho District: Hayford, 2005)
  
- B. **Poor Consumption of breakfast:** In a study on the Breakfast habits among Primary School Children in the Manya Krobo District in the Eastern region of Ghana, reported that 35% of children did not consume breakfast and the major reason for not taking breakfast was that there was “no food at home”. (Breakfast habits among Primary School Children in the Manya Krobo District in the Eastern region of Ghana: Hogrey, 2006)
  
- C. **Nutritional knowledge of the meal providers** in the Adenta municipality was average since 4 out of 7 of our respondents scored an average in the distribution. Secondly, the knowledge of food safety and hygiene practices of the meal providers was good since 30 out of the 36 respondents had a good score in the distribution. From the check list, all the meal providers (36) observed good and safe food handling practices. (Nutritional knowledge of meal providers under the GSFP in the Adentan municipality : Osabutey et al,2009)



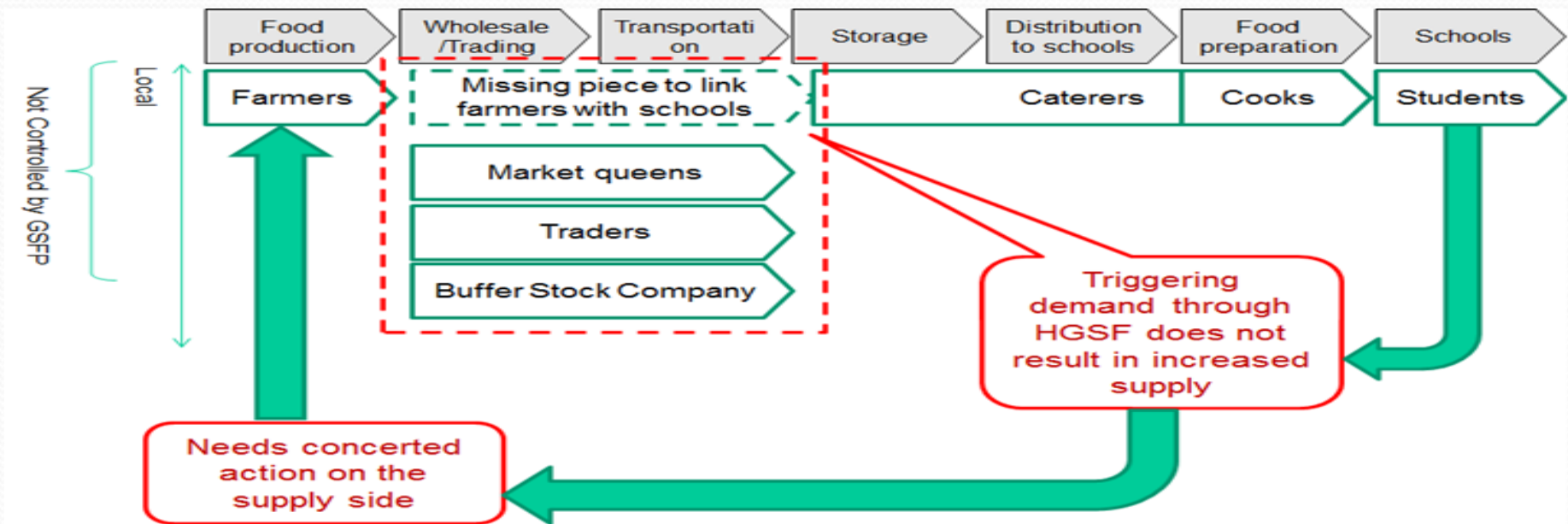
## **E. National School based Deworming Programme –Baseline Survey 2007, GHS (Draft)**

A draft report of a study undertaken by Ghana Health Service in 2007 showed that the overall prevalence of stunting among school age children was 17 percent, ranging from 13 percent in the Forest-Savanna Transitional Zone to 21 percent in the Northern Savanna. Trends for weight for age (underweight) were similar with a range of 7.0 % (Forest-Savanna Transitional zone) to 14 percent (Northern Savanna).

The same report estimated that the prevalence of anaemia among school aged children was 38.8 %. This however varied widely across ecological zones. Anaemia rates were highest in the Northern savanna(64.5%) and the Coastal savanna zones(58.6%) and least prevalent in the transitional zone(16.4%).

**F. 'Ghana School Feeding Programme: Re-tooling for a Sustainable Future'. Haas Business School. Univ. of California, Berkeley June 2011. The GSFP supply chain missing link with smallholder farmers.**

1. Mismatched of cash flow
2. Lack of trust between farmers-caterers (especially for future payments) Delays /bureaucracies in funds
3. Difficult for caterers to access farmers
4. No contact information, difficult to reach- spread out, a lot of interaction necessary
5. No structure to facilitate caterers and farmers negotiations
6. Standardizing the menus that are being used all over the country, and then analyze whether the nutritional targets set by the programme are being achieved.
7. Sensitization of the DICs and SICs on ownership of programme.
8. Staffing at a level that ensures effective implementation and sustainability.
9. Explore utilizing Ghana's buffer stock company as first point of purchase for the caterers.



## G. Ghana Mission Report: Aliyah, 2012

The aim of the mission was to examine the composition, quantity and quality of the food delivered by the GSFP programme to the school children: daily menu nutritional content in 5 schools, Ghana School Feeding Programme, 2012.

\* Source: adapted from WHO/FAO 2004, WFP 2007.

School name	Daily ration (g per child)	Energy (kcal)	Protein (g)	Fat (g)	Calcium (mg)	Iron (mg)	Iodine (µg)	Vit. A (µg) RE	Thiamine (mg)	Riboflavin (mg)	Niacin (mg) NE	Vit. C (mg)
Ayukuma Methodist Basic	120.78	425.00	6.00	16.10	12.00	1.20	63.00	211.00	0.16	0.08	4.10	4.00
Dome Anglican 2	85.25	289.25	11.96	8.91	63.72	1.88	90.02	196.71	0.12	0.08	3.90	2.72
Pagaaza Islamic Primary	95.69	382.41	12.85	12.41	71.05	4.11	95.98	194.83	0.29	0.11	4.77	2.33
Zangbalunbihi DA Primary	58.17	217.21	10.25	5.66	64.75	3.57	0.65	68.65	0.22	0.09	3.18	1.98
Gbawe Methodist 1	200.55	755.98	22.06	25.83	123.98	7.06	51.13	1060.71	0.47	0.22	8.43	6.39
<i>Mean</i>	112.09	413.97	12.62	13.78	67.10	3.56	60.16	346.38	0.25	0.12	4.87	3.49
<i>Minimum</i>	58.17	217.21	6.00	5.66	12.00	1.20	0.65	68.65	0.12	0.08	3.18	1.98
<i>Maximum</i>	200.55	755.98	22.06	25.83	123.98	7.06	95.98	1060.71	0.47	0.22	8.43	6.39
Mean % RNI (for 6-12 years)*		22	27	39	10	20	50	69	28	13	41	9.96
<i>Micronutrient powder/child</i>	0.40					12.50		0.50			12.00	30.00
<i>Mean menu + MNP</i>	112.49	413.97	12.62	13.78	67.10	16.06	60.16	346.88	0.25	0.12	16.87	33.49
Mean % RNI (for 6-12 years)*		22	27	39	10	90	50	69	28	13	141	96

Nutrition content was calculated using the WFP/UNHCR NUTVAL (ICH, 2006) calculator, using recommended nutrient intakes for school-age children from (WHO/FAO, 2004).

- ≤30% of the daily RNI provided for most nutrients. However, it is inferred that the iodine content of the salt is lower than the original composite form of iodised salt because of poor storage. Large variations in the nutritional content of the menus across all nutrients were observed. WFP on the other hand, considerably increases the delivery of key micronutrients. Iron delivery, for example, increases to 90 percent of the daily RNI
- **Recommendation:** Though the GSFP assuredly delivers food every day to children when in school, there is the need to develop standards and menu planning support activities to improve the nutrition of daily meals so the quality and quantity is not compromised. Barriers to achieving the cited recommendation are delayed funds for food purchases, access and availability of food commodities, and price variations.

## H. End of Programme evaluation for the GSFP; Ernst and Young, 2012

### GSFP design and implementation

Even though GSFP has been assessed by a number of external and internal evaluations, the evidence based to date does not include any rigorously controlled impact evaluation. The most recent evaluation undertaken in 2012 by Ernst and Young was limited by having no baseline data for comparison. Report revealed:

- Need to enhance the structural linkage between local production and the GSFP eg buffer stock system. A key bottleneck has been the payment flow from government to caterers.
- Need to enhance the capacity of district actors in improving the coordination of the programme in line with the decentralisation programme.
- Improved food ration, nutrition education and behaviour change whiles linking to agriculture through a transparent, accountable, cost effective and sustainable design.
- Community participation and social accountability have been identified as important to school feeding implementation, providing standards for transparency and demand driven accountability. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development implemented a social accountability project setting up Zonal Urban Town and Areas (ZUTA) to support the monitoring of the GSFP. This serves as an opportunity to enhance transparency and community participation.
- Caterers not identified small holder producers to procure adequate quantities of food ingredients based on standard measures
- Children in treatment group performed better in their English, Maths and Science test scores
- The GSFP is still relatively new as the home-grown concept is still in a developmental stage. In spite of the several documentation of recommendations to improve the programme design and implementation, steps have not been taken to holistically pilot the recommendations. This pilot would serve as a unique opportunity to test the efficiency of an enhanced design, and provide grounds to measure the impact of school feeding in Ghana.

- **Child preferences and SHN policies that regulate healthy eating in the school food environment:** Food outlets, 64.0% were found on school compound and as close to pupils' as three seconds walk from a classroom seat, 24.4% within a 50 meter radius, 8.1% at the school entrance/exit and 3.5% beyond the 50 meter radius outside the school.
- Children spend an average GH¢ 2.05 ± daily on food at a unit cost of GH¢ 0.23 ± for portions per child. Pupils stated that advertisements in the media, costs, aesthetics, tastes, smell all influence their dietary buying preferences, especially for energy dense foods.
- While 45.6 % pupils' preferred purchasing lots of energy dense foods 46.4% preferred prepared meals. Fruits (9.3%) were least preferred though it was one of the cheapest food items at the schools. Policy on food vending was enforced (some parts) only in 4(50%) of the schools mainly public by the SHEP coordinators.
- It then behoves on the appropriate authorities to institute the restriction of students' exposure to food vendors and adverts by amending and reinforcing basic school health policies. Food environments in basic school in the Ga East Municipality. (Amfo – Ayeh, 2011)

## **The results of the 2011 NEA**

- The national education assessment (NEA) is a survey carried out every year to help the Ministry of Education assess the learning outcomes (quality of education) by looking at performance in numeracy (mathematics) and literacy (English). For each school sampled for the assessment pupils in Primary 3 (P3) and Primary 6 (P6) are made to take a standards test which is analyzed to determine the proportions of students meeting the minimum competency and proficiency.
- Findings: less than 1 out of every 5 students in P3 and P6 were proficient in mathematics, with the performance in English (24.2% for P3 and 35.2% P6) being slightly better.

## **Review of secondary data sources on school health and nutrition and mapping of existing programmes in Ghana: Agble, and Rahaman, 2012**

- Information on the nutritional status and practices among school age children is very scanty .
- Starchy roots (cassava, yams), and cereals (maize, rice) mainly constitute the Ghanaian diet , but often seasonally available
- Little published data on nationally established nutrition standards. It is worth mentioning, that the RDA standards available are used as guidelines for measuring individual- and population-level deficiencies.
- All the district GSFP menus reviewed by the team did not have quantities attached to them except one. Only 1/2 of the schools followed the menus on the average. Monitoring of programme still remains a challenge eg(menu auditing)
- Little or no information on quality and quantity of food served in the schools. No nationally established nutrition guidelines for standard measures for rations. The absence handy measurement for caterers, taking into account cost of feeding per child
- WFP supplements food provided to the school children selected schools in Northern Ghana. Thus the need to improve means of administration of MNPs
- While behaviour change communication materials on water, hygiene and sanitation are available in schools, those on nutrition are not available.



- 120 districts will be supported by the Catholic Relief Services with funding from the USAID for 2012 deworming of school children. There are however funding challenges to cover the remaining 50 districts. The unavailability of praziquantel on the international market has led to a postponement of the 2012 school based deworming from May/June to September/October, 2012
- Challenge of coordinating deworming activities of NGOs and other partners in the country
- Very limited collaboration between the GSFP and agencies of the sector ministries at regional and district levels (eg agric, health). This has resulted in the agencies of the sector ministries showing very little interest in the activities of the GSFP.
- There are no known interventions to improve the nutritional status of the school age children currently being implemented in the country

# ***Areas of GSFP that can be explored***

1. Strategies to reaching more hungry children in deprived communities.
2. Strategies for improving collaboration among GSFP partners /stakeholders
3. Research and implementation of interventions to improve nutrition of beneficiary pupils while still linking SF to agriculture eg. Fortifying food with other cereals enriched with naturally occurring vitamins & minerals (eg maize with soy bean), using natural preservation methods like solar drying of fruits.etc.
4. Strategies for enhancing ownership of the GSFP by its direct beneficiaries- districts and communities.
5. Synergy between related SHN interventions.
6. Improved school hygiene and sanitation.

# CHALLENGES

1. Political interference
2. Institutional Coordination and Sustainability
3. The Feeding Cost per pupil per day (GHC 0.40), woefully inadequate coupled with delays in funds transfer to caterers affects food quality and quantity
4. The determination of age specific food ration to suffice 1/3RDA
5. Resources for Effective Monitoring
6. Although school enrolment, attendance and retention has improved under GSFP, this has not been matched by the provision of additional education infrastructure.
7. Secured funds for sustainable funding of the programme in the long term.

# ***Way forward?***

- A policy on SF in Ghana
- A standard health and nutrition training manual
- Strengthening local level structures
- Intensify health and nutrition education of caterers, cooks, school teachers and children
- Effectively Link GSFP with Agriculture
- A baseline survey
- Effective monitoring and evolution

# THANK YOU

