



Policy Goals

Status

1. Policy Frameworks

School feeding is mentioned in many of Namibia's strategy documents and sectorial policies. A national school feeding policy in Namibia currently does not exist; however, there is a strong recognition for the need for such a policy.



2. Financial Capacity

The national education budget includes a budget line for the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP). The government contributes over 80 percent of the financial needs, while the remaining costs are covered by the community through cash and in-kind contributions. NSFP budget plans/lines are at the central level only, and there is a strong need to put mechanisms in place to ensure the timely disbursement of funds.



3. Institutional Capacity and Coordination

Currently, there is no steering committee in place to coordinate the implementation of NSFP in Namibia. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has the mandate of managing and implementing NSFP, and a specific unit within the MOE exists. There is insufficient staff to undertake the required functions for school feeding at both the national and regional levels.



4. Design and Implementation

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan and a web-based information system for NSFP were developed in collaboration with WFP in 2013. Beneficiary targeting criteria corresponds to the objectives of the program and the country's needs, and is reflected in the NSFP Reference Manual. There are national standards for food distribution and the food basket in place for all NSFP benefiting schools.



5. Community Roles-Reaching Beyond Schools

Each school has a functioning school board involving parents, teachers and community members. The expectations of communities and their respective roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in the NSFP Reference Manual. However, many communities feel the program relies too heavily on community contributions without proper incentives, which may contribute to a low level of participation.



Introduction

This report presents an assessment of school feeding policies and institutions that affect young children in Namibia. The analysis is based on a World Bank tool developed as part of the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative that aims to systematically evaluate education systems against evidence-based global standards and good practice to help countries reform their education systems to help ensure learning for all.

School feeding policies are a critical component of an effective education system, given that children's health and nutrition impacts their school attendance, ability to learn, and overall development. A school feeding program is a specific school-based health service, which can be part of a country's broader school health program, and often a large amount of resources are invested in a school feeding program. SABER-School Feeding collects, analyzes, and disseminates comprehensive information on school feeding policies around the world. The overall objective of the initiative is to help countries design effective policies to improve their education systems, facilitate comparative policy analysis, identify key areas to focus investment, and assist in disseminating good practice.

Namibia in Brief

Namibia is an arid southern African country with a population of 2.2 million people spread across 318,625 square miles.¹ It is classified as an upper-middle-income country; however, income inequality and structural poverty are still prevalent.²

The gross domestic product (GDP) of Namibia was \$13.1 million USD. The economy is dependent on its natural resources and is vulnerable to natural disasters. After experiencing negative economic growth in 2009, Namibia's economy experienced an average GDP growth rate of six percent between 2010 and 2013.³ GDP per capita increased from \$6,155 USD in 2000 to \$9,377 USD (constant 2011 international USD) in 2013.⁴ While poverty in Namibia is declining, almost a third of the population is still considered poor.⁵

Considering the economic condition of the country, chronic under nutrition is a prevailing issue; 24 percent of Namibian children are stunted and 8 percent are severely stunted.⁶ Several strategies such as food assistance, remittances, and social grants have been established by the Government of the Republic of Namibia to assist the 16 percent severely and 22 percent moderately food-insecure individuals and households in the country.⁷ These statistics indicate an important and continued need for food-based safety net programs, such as the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP).

Education and Health in Namibia

Education

Following the country's independence in 1990, the government placed a high priority on reducing inequalities by providing equal access to quality education for all children in Namibia. Article 20 of the *Namibian Constitution (1990)*⁸ declares that education is a basic universal right for all Namibians and made primary education free and compulsory for all children. The *Education for All: National Plan of Action (2002-2015)*⁹ further enshrines the government's commitment to achieving universal education by outlining a strategy to improving access, equity, and quality in education.

Formal education in Namibia is divided into four phases: Lower Primary (pre-primary to grade 4), Upper Primary (grades 5-7), Junior Secondary (grades 8-10) and Senior Secondary (grades 11-12). In addition to the formal education system, the government also established the Namibia College of Open Learning to provide educational opportunities for adults and out-of-school youth.¹⁰

Early childhood development centres are under the management of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, which targets children 5 years old and younger. The Ministry has the mandate to oversee the development of various aspects of early childhood

¹ Namibia Statistic Agency, 2013.

² Republic of Namibia, 2012a.

³ World Bank, 2014.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Namibia Statistic Agency, 2013.

⁶ Republic of Namibia, 2013a.

⁷ Republic of Namibia, 2013b.

⁸ Republic of Namibia, 1990.

⁹ Republic of Namibia, 2002.

¹⁰ Republic of Namibia, 2002.

development, care, and education as well as issues that affect orphans and other vulnerable children (OVCs).¹¹

Education in Namibia is a top priority and received 22.4 percent of the national annual budget in the 2012/13 fiscal year—the highest of any sector in Namibia.¹² Primary school net enrolment rate is at 99.8 percent, with gender parity at all grades.¹³ Literacy rates are high compared to regional standards: 95 percent for 15 to 24-year-olds and 88 percent for individuals 15 years old and older. However, the promotion rate for primary grades is 82 percent and 69 percent for secondary grades. A concern facing the education sector in Namibia is the high proportion of learners repeating grades—about 15 percent for primary and 22 percent for secondary learners.¹⁴ The secondary school completion rate (47 percent) is quite low compared to countries with similar economic conditions.

The government recognizes the importance of quality primary education on positively influencing the country's economic and health indicators. Several strategies are in place to strengthen the education sector in Namibia.

Health

Health is another top priority for the Government of Namibia. Although access to health care has improved, the health care system still faces several challenges. First, rural and urban residents have unequal access to infrastructure and services. In 2012, only 17 percent of the rural population had access to improved sanitation facilities compared to 56 percent of the urban population. The gap in access to an improved water source is smaller with 87 percent of the rural population having access to an improved water source in 2012 compared to 98 percent of the urban population.¹⁵ Access to clean water and sanitation facilities can improve health outcomes.

Other health challenges include the high burden of communicable diseases. In 2012, approximately 47 percent of deaths were caused by either communicable diseases or poor maternal, prenatal, and nutrition

conditions. Communicable diseases in Namibia include HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria. Namibia has one of the highest rates of HIV globally. The prevalence of HIV amongst individuals between the ages of 15-49 has gradually declined from 17 percent in 2003 to 14 percent in 2013.¹⁶ However, the reported number of tuberculosis cases has increased within the same time period. Non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes, are also becoming a problem. In 2012, approximately 43 percent of deaths were caused by non-communicable diseases.¹⁷

The maternal mortality ratio and infant mortality rate have not made significant improvements since 2000. The maternal mortality ratio increased from 225 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1992 to 449 deaths in 2007 mainly due to HIV/AIDS and the lack of access to emergency obstetric care services.¹⁸ Infant mortality rates have decreased slowly. In 2013, the infant mortality rate was 35.2 per 1,000 live births, which is a slight decrease from the previous year. The neonatal mortality rate remained steady at 21.8 deaths per 1,000 live births from 2012 to 2013. The under-5 mortality rate decreased very slowly between 2010 and 2013, with rates of 56 deaths and 50 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively.¹⁹

Nutrition is a priority and a multi-sectoral implementation strategy was developed in 2012 to address stunting in children under the age of five years old. Approximately 29 percent of children under five are stunted, which may make them more susceptible to disease and have a negative effect on cognitive development.²⁰ Micronutrient deficiency is also a problem with the highest rate of anemia amongst preschool-aged children and several regions with populations that are iodine deficient.²¹

The Case for School Feeding

School feeding programs, defined here as the provision of food to schoolchildren, can increase school enrollment²² and attendance—especially for girls.²³ When combined with quality education, school feeding

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² UNESCO, 2014.

¹³ Republic of Namibia, 2012b.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ World Bank, 2014.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ World Health Organization and Republic of Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services, 2010.

¹⁹ World Bank, 2014.

²⁰ Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition, 2013.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ahmed, 2004; Gelli, Meir, and Espejo, 2007.

²³ Jacoby, Cueto, and Pollitt, 1996; Powell et al., 1998; Kristjansson et al., 2007.

programs can increase cognition²⁴ and educational success.²⁵ With appropriately designed rations, school feeding programs can improve the nutrition status of preschool- and primary school-aged children by addressing micronutrient deficiencies. Combined with local agricultural production, these programs can also provide small-scale farmers with a stable market. School feeding programs can provide short-term benefits after crises, helping communities recover and build resilience, in addition to long-term benefits by developing human capital.²⁶ School feeding programs can be classified into two main groups: in-school feeding (when children are fed in school) and take-home rations (when families are given food if their children attend school regularly). A major advantage of school feeding programs is they offer the greatest benefit to the poorest children. Several studies²⁷ have indicated that missing breakfast impairs educational performance.

Present data suggests that almost every country is seeking to provide food to its schoolchildren. Therefore, especially for low-income countries where most food-insecure regions are concentrated, the key issue is not whether a country will implement school-feeding programs but rather how and with what objectives.

Social shocks of recent global crises led to an enhanced demand for school feeding programs in low-income countries as they can serve as a safety net for food-insecure households through an income transfer. In response to this amplified request, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Bank jointly undertook an analysis titled *Rethinking School Feeding*.²⁸ This initiative sought to better understand how to develop and implement effective school feeding programs as a productive safety net that is part of the response to the social shocks, as well as a fiscally sustainable investment in human capital. These efforts are part of a long-term global goal to achieve *Education For All* and provide social protection to the poor.

School Feeding Program in Namibia

The Government of Namibia took ownership of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in 1996;

the government has fully funded and managed the program since then.²⁹ NSFP has grown into an important strategy that the government utilizes to increase educational opportunities for vulnerable children; increase attendance, retention, and promotion rates; and to provide a safety net to food-insecure students.³⁰

NSFP provides a daily mid-morning meal of fortified maize meal to approximately 320,000 pre-primary and primary school children in vulnerable areas throughout all 14 regions in Namibia. The Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA), under the Ministry of Education, is the formal government body that coordinates, manages, and implements the school feeding program in Namibia. The NSFP unit's main functions include food procurement, monitoring implementation, and maintaining oversight and external control of the feeding program.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education (MOE) conducted an operational review on NSFP, with technical assistance from WFP. The resulting NSFP Case Study³¹ revealed significant gaps and challenges that threatened the quality of school feeding in Namibia. In an effort to improve the effectiveness of the program, the MOE established a strategic partnership with WFP to get technical support in four main areas: policy guidance, capacity building and program support, knowledge generation, and management and system strengthening.

Five Key Policy Goals to Promote School Feeding

There are five core policy goals that form the basis of an effective school feeding program. Figure 1 illustrates these policy goals and outlines respective policy levers and outcomes that fall under each goal.

The first goal is a national policy framework. A solid policy foundation strengthens a school feeding program's sustainability and quality of implementation. National planning for school feeding as part of the country's poverty reduction strategy (or other equivalent development strategies) conveys the importance the government places on school feeding as part of its development agenda. For most countries that are

²⁴ Whaley et al., 2003; Kristjansson et al., 2007; Jukes et al., 2008.

²⁵ Tan, Lane, and Lassibille, 1999; Ahmed, 2004; Adelman et al., 2008.

²⁶ WFP, 2013

²⁷ Simeon and Grantham-McGregor, 1989; Pollitt, Cueto, and Jacoby, 1998; Simeon, 1998.

²⁸ Bundy et al., 2009.

²⁹ Republic of Namibia, 2012a.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

implementing their own national programs, school feeding is included in national policy frameworks.³²

The second policy goal for school feeding is financial capacity. Stable funding is a prerequisite for sustainability. However, where need is greatest, programs tend to be the smallest and the most reliant on external support. Funding for these programs can come from a combination of sources, such as non-governmental organizations (i.e., WFP) and the government. When a program becomes nationalized, it needs a stable and independent funding source, either through government core resources or development funding. In the long term, a national budget line for school feeding is necessary for an effective and stable program.

The third policy goal is institutional capacity and coordination. School feeding programs are better executed when an institution is mandated and accountable for the implementation of such a program. Effective programs also include multi-sectoral involvement from sectors such as education, health, agriculture, and local government, as well as a comprehensive link between school feeding and other school health or social protection programs and established coordination mechanisms.

The fourth policy goal is sound design and implementation. In order to maximize effectiveness, school feeding programs should clearly identify country-specific problems, objectives, and expected outcomes. The country's context and needs should determine the program's beneficiaries, food basket (menus), food modalities and supply chain. Countries and partners should work towards creating a delicate balance among international, national, and local procurement of foods to support local economies without jeopardizing the quality and stability of the food supply.

The last policy goal is community roles-reaching beyond schools. School feeding programs that are locally owned, incorporate contributions from local communities, and respond to specific community needs are often the strongest. These programs are most likely to make a successful transition from donor assistance to national ownership. Community participation should be

considered at every stage, but without overburdening community members.

Use of Evidence-Based Tools

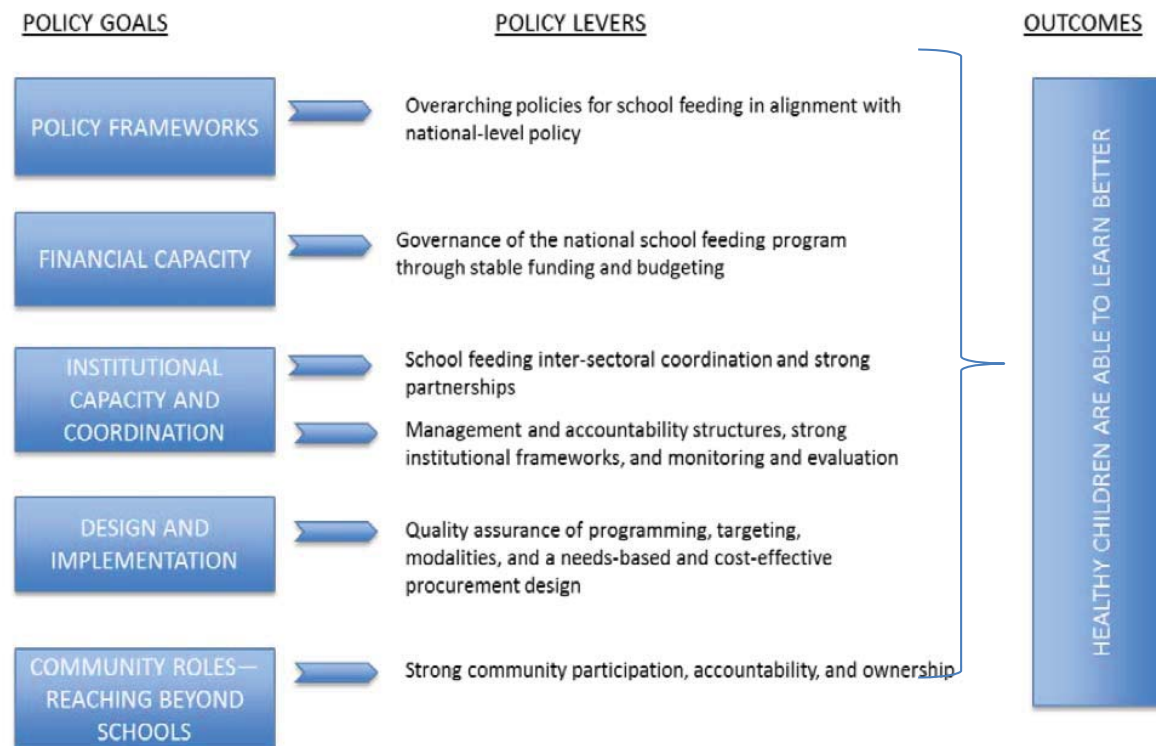
The primary focus of the SABER-School Feeding exercise is gathering systematic and verifiable information about the quality of a country's policies through a SABER-School Feeding Questionnaire. This data-collecting instrument helps to facilitate comparative policy analysis, identify key areas to focus investment, and disseminate good practice and knowledge sharing. This holistic and integrated assessment of how the overall policy in a country affects young children's development is categorized into one of the following stages, representing the varying levels of policy development that exist among different dimensions of school feeding:

1. **Latent:** No or very little policy development
2. **Emerging:** Initial/some initiatives towards policy development.
3. **Established:** Some policy development
4. **Advanced:** Development of a comprehensive policy framework

Each policy goal and lever of school feeding is methodically benchmarked through two SABER analysis tools. The first is a *scoring rubric* that quantifies the responses to selected questions from the SABER School Feeding questionnaire by assigning point values to the answers. The second tool is the *SABER School Feeding Framework rubric* that analyzes the responses, especially the written answers, based on the framework's five policy goals and levers. For more information, please visit the World Bank's website on SABER-School Health and School Feeding and click on the [“What Matters” Framework Paper](#) under Methodology.

³² Bundy et al., 2009; WFP, 2012.

Figure 1: Policy goals and policy levers for school feeding



Findings

Policy Goal 1: Policy Frameworks in Namibia



Policy Lever

- Overarching policies for school feeding in alignment with national-level policy

A policy foundation helps strengthen the sustainability and accountability of a school feeding program as well as the quality of its implementation. Nearly all countries with national ownership of programs have well-articulated national policies on the modalities and objectives of school feeding.³³

The recognition of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) as an important safety net is demonstrated by the inclusion of the program in seven national strategy documents and sectoral policies/plans, including Namibia's Fourth Development Plan (NDP4) for 2012/13-2016/17,³⁴ Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan (ETSIP) in 2005,³⁵ Education for All Policy (EFA) for 2002-2015,³⁶ National Plan of Action for OVCs in 2006,³⁷ National Policy for School Health in 2008,³⁸ National Drought Policy & Strategy in 1997,³⁹ and the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the Education Sector in 2003.⁴⁰ The National Strategic Plan for Nutrition also states that the Ministry of Education oversees the quality and safety of the food served for the school feeding programme.⁴¹ However, a separate national policy on school feeding in Namibia is not yet in place. The Ministry of Education is partnering with WFP to begin work on developing a NSFP policy.

1. Policy Frameworks is EMERGING		
Indicators	Score	Justification
1A. National-level poverty reduction strategy as well as education sectoral policies and strategies identify school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, with clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities	Established 	School feeding included in PRSP and Education Sector Plan; but without targets, strategies, defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities.
1B. An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, and funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively addresses all four other policy goals.	Latent 	A national policy on school feeding is not developed; however there is a strong recognition of its importance and it is listed in the NSFP 5-year Road Map (2012-2017) as a milestone and action item.

³³ WFP, 2012

³⁴ Republic of Namibia, 2012c.

³⁵ Republic of Namibia, 2005.

³⁶ Republic of Namibia, 2002. Pg. 38

³⁷ Republic of Namibia, 2006.

³⁸ Republic of Namibia, 2008. Pg. 6

³⁹ Republic of Namibia, 1997.

⁴⁰ Republic of Namibia, 2003. Pg. 5

⁴¹ Republic of Namibia, 2011. Pg. 46.

Policy Goal 2: Financial Capacity in Namibia



Policy Lever

- Governance of the national school feeding program through stable funding and budgeting

Stable funding is necessary for the long-term sustainability of a school feeding program, especially one that transitions from being donor-funded to government-funded. School feeding programs supported by external partners generally rely on food aid, government in-kind donations, and/or government cash contributions. In order for the program to be sustainable and nationally owned, the school feeding program should have a budget line and be part of the government's budgeting and planning process.

The budget for the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) is incorporated within the national education budget. It is listed under 'Other Services' (item 027),⁴² which also includes catering, workshops, training, publishing, etc. While NSFP technically has its own budget line, it is not listed under programs, which limits its sustainability and recognition as an integral intervention for quality learning. The Ministry of Education's goal is to list NSFP separately as a program line item under Primary Education and Secondary Education, as the beneficiary target group expands.

The current budget for NSFP mainly covers the purchase and distribution of food/maize blend (98 percent). The remaining 2 percent covers the cost of staff and the overall management of NSFP, which is considered very low in comparison with other countries. This leaves no funds available for non-food items or infrastructure needs (i.e., adequate storage places, kitchens, stoves, pots, and utensils).

The government contributes over 80 percent of the financial needs for the school feeding program, while the remaining costs are covered through community contributions, most of which are in-kind. As the budget priority is procuring food, the limited budget remains a constraint against diversifying the food basket,

expanding the staffing capacity, and incorporating additional monitoring activities.

From 2011-2014, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria financed the NSFP food needs (maize meal) for only two regions with a high population of the San people, specifically Kunene and Otjozondjupa.⁴³ They contributed approximately 123,810 USD, which was one percent of investment in school feeding. The provision of funds ended in 2013/2104.

Regions and schools do not have a dedicated budget line for NSFP, nor do they budget for NSFP activities. Some schools do make provision under the School Development Fund or Universal Primary Education Fund for NSFP expenses. A few regions have begun to incorporate NSFP activities within the regional education budget, although this is not standardized.

Previously, late release of funds to service providers has caused delayed delivery of food to schools, threatening the impact and the integrity of the program. There is a strong need to put mechanisms in place to ensure the disbursement of funds to school feeding implementers in a timely and effective manner.

2. Financial Capacity is EMERGING

Indicators	Score	Justification
2A. National budget line(s) and funding is allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner.	Emerging 	The Namibian School Feeding Programme is funded from a central government budget. Funds are not enough to cover all the needs. There is no budget line for school feeding in the regional and school levels. There is a need to put mechanisms in place to ensure the disbursement of funds for school feeding implementers in a timely and effective manner.

of poverty than any other ethnic/tribal group in Namibia, and several interventions and strategies are targeted to the San community, especially programmes around increasing educational outcomes for San learners.

⁴² Republic of Namibia, 2012a. pg. 57

⁴³ The 'San' people are group of former hunter-gatherer communities that are made up of different ethnic groups. The San population has the highest level

Policy Goal 3: Institutional Capacity and Coordination in Namibia



Policy Levers

- School feeding inter-sectoral coordination and strong partnerships
- Management and accountability structures, strong institutional frameworks, and monitoring and evaluation

Implementing a school feeding policy requires significant institutional capacity because the program is a complex school health intervention. The policy should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and actors at all levels. Methodically increasing government capacity to manage a school feeding program is important to the program's long-term sustainability. A national institution that is mandated and accountable for the implementation of the school feeding program is considered to be a best practice. This institution should have a specific unit that has adequate resources and knowledgeable staff to manage the school feeding program. Moreover, policies that detail accountability and management mechanisms can help ensure program quality and efficiency, especially if the school feeding program is decentralized.




Currently, Namibia does not have a steering committee in place that coordinates the implementation of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP). The Ministry of Education (MOE) has the mandate of implementing the school feeding program to preschools and primary schools in Namibia. Under the MOE, the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) is responsible for the oversight of NSFP; however, the main duties fall under the NSFP unit within the division of Management Planning Appraisal and Training (MPAT). The NSFP unit's responsibilities are heavily focused on commodity procurement, and little monitoring and strategic activities are performed. Monitoring and implementation activities are clearly highlighted in the NSFP Reference Manual (2013)⁴⁴ and integrated at all MOE levels (central, region, circuit and school). At both the national and regional levels, there are insufficient staff members to undertake the required functions for school feeding.

There are formal coordination mechanisms and structures in place among national, regional, circuit and school levels, although strong communication is lacking. At the school level, the school board is responsible for the management of school feeding with guidance from regional and circuit levels.

The 2013 Namibian School Feeding Programme Reference Manual details the guidelines, standards and procedures for effectively implementing the school feeding program. From 2013 to 2014, training was provided to all MOE staff involved in NSFP management and implementation at central, regional, circuit, and school levels. The trainings focused on the NSFP standards, procedures, processes, monitoring activities, and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to implement the school feeding program efficiently and effectively. In early 2014, service providers were also trained on their roles and responsibilities within NSFP.

There are three main national coordination platforms/bodies where school feeding issues are discussed. The first is the Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition, a multi-sector, multi-stakeholder platform that develops and coordinates the implementation of a multi-sectoral national nutrition strategy and manages national nutrition promotion activities. The second is the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), which is a strategy within MOE that is designed to accelerate the improvement of the education and training sector in Namibia. NSFP developments are discussed during ETSIP meetings. The third national coordination platform that incorporates NSFP issues is the Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NAMVAC). NAMVAC conducts vulnerability assessments, the findings of which contribute to decisions made regarding school feeding implementation and design.

⁴⁴ Republic of Namibia, 2013d.

3. Institutional Capacity and Coordination is ESTABLISHED		
Indicators	Score	Justification
3A. Multi-sectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	<p>Latent</p> 	A steering committee is not in place to coordinate the implementation of NSFP in Namibia. There are national coordination platforms/bodies where school feeding issues are discussed.
3B. National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school level structures.	<p>Established</p> 	An NSFP unit under MOE has the mandate of implementing and managing NSFP. Formal coordination mechanisms are in place and function properly in most instances.
3C. School level management and accountability structures are in place.	<p>Advanced</p> 	Mechanisms for managing school feeding at the school level are uniform through a national reference manual that has been revised in 2013 and is in place in most schools.

Policy Goal 4: Design and Implementation in Namibia



Policy Lever:

- Quality assurance of programming and targeting, modalities, and procurement design, ensuring design that is both needs-based and cost-effective

A well-designed school feeding policy that is based on evidence is critical to the implementation of a quality school feeding program. The policy can include details on targeting the correct beneficiaries, selecting the proper modalities of food delivery, and choosing a quality food basket. Over time, the school feeding policy may be redesigned or modified according to reassessments of the school feeding program.

The Ministry of Education (MOE), with technical support from the World Food Programme (WFP), has developed and initiated a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan⁴⁵ for the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) that includes data collection tools, data analysis, reporting, evaluations, budget planning, and a web-based system, known as the Namibian School Feeding Programme Information System (NaSIS). NaSIS is an online data-capturing system, where important NSFP information is captured and stored. NaSIS is accessible to all NSFP actors, including MOE staff and service providers. In addition to the monitoring information, the system also captures information on commodity management and tracking. Data collection takes place at the school level, verification occurs at the circuit level, data entry occurs at the regional level, and reporting takes place at both the regional and national levels. The M&E plan and system were recently operationalized in the second scholastic term of 2014; therefore, the data has not yet been used to refine and update the program.

Previously the NSFP targeted orphans and other vulnerable children (OVCs) and learners in vulnerable areas; however, the targeting criteria and methodology have since been adjusted. The beneficiaries of NSFP now include all pre-primary and primary students in food-insecure areas, particularly in rural areas. Targeting is

geographical, not at an individual level. Secondary learners are not eligible for school feeding.

There are national standards on food distribution and the food basket⁴⁶ that correspond to program objectives, nutritional content requirements, local habits and tastes and availability of local food. These standards are known and implemented at the school level in most instances. Food safety standards remain an issue since the process of storage and preparation of food at school levels are not monitored properly.

There are national standards on food management, procurement and logistics⁴⁷ that include procuring as locally as possible and taking into account the required factors of cost, capacity of implementing parties, and production capacity in the country. The procurement of the maize meal occurs at the central level, while tenders are awarded to three service providers for the following: i) procurement of sugar, salt, and soya protein blend, ii) procurement of maize meal, blending, packaging maize meal blend, and transportation to regional warehouses, and iii) transportation to schools from regional warehouses.

Approximately 75 percent of the total food used for school feeding is produced locally, while 100 percent is procured locally from Namibian businesses. The current service provision model of NSFP creates job and economic opportunities for Namibians and local businesses. There have been discussions on possible procurement modalities for school feeding that can be more locally appropriate, such as linking school feeding to local small-scale farmers. However, given the aridity of Namibia, it has been decided that this may not be the best option for commodity procurement for NSFP.

⁴⁵ Republic of Namibia, n.d.

⁴⁶ Republic of Namibia, 2013e.

⁴⁷ Republic of Namibia, 2013d.

4. Design and Implementation is ESTABLISHED		
Indicators	Score	Justification
4A. A functional monitoring and evaluation system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback	Established ●●●○	A web-based M&E system, supported by an M&E plan, is launched and starting to be functional. Training to inspectors has taken place.
4B. Program design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis	Established ●●●○	An operational review has been undertaken that assesses school feeding needs, which has fed the revision of targeting criteria and methodology.
4C. Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety, and nutrition content requirements	Established ●●●○	National standards for food modalities and the food basket are set and functional in most instances.
4D. Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	Established ●●●○	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements occur at the central level, and are established and functioning.

Policy Goal 5: Community Roles – Reaching Beyond Schools in Namibia



Policy Lever:

- Community participation and accountability

The role of the community should be clearly defined in a school feeding policy because community participation and ownership improves the school feeding program's chances of long-term sustainability. If the government places the responsibility of sustaining the school feeding program on the community, the school feeding policy should detail the guidelines, minimum standards, and support for the community to implement the program. The school feeding policy can also include mechanisms for the community to hold the government accountable.

At the school level, there may be a school management committee composed of parents, teachers, and students that acts as a liaison between the school and community and that manages the school feeding program. Care should be taken not to overburden the community, because in some cases the community may introduce fees to support the local school feeding program, which can negatively impact enrollment rates. Community-assisted school feeding programs are usually most successful in food-secure areas.

In Namibia, every school has a school board that includes parents, teachers, principals, and other community members. Within the school board, the school feeding sub-committee is directly responsible for coordinating the operations of the program on a daily basis. They are expected to solve implementation problems, fundraise, and mobilize the community to volunteer as cooks. The roles of the community, school board, and school feeding subcommittee are clearly outlined in the NSFP Reference Manual.⁴⁸

In practice, there is a low level of community participation throughout the country, mainly due to the communities' perception of high expectations for minimal incentives. One of the major challenges schools face is in mobilizing the community members/parents to

cook the daily meal. Community members often request cash payment rather than the in-kind incentives they receive in the form of food. Options for cash payment of cooks/volunteers should be considered, as it will increase community participation. Awareness of community participation and expectations should be raised.

Community members are encouraged to participate in the implementation of school feeding at their respective schools through the school board, the school feeding sub-committee, or volunteering for NSFP. Community members are able to hold the school feeding program accountable by either reporting issues (i.e., mismanagement or abuse) to the school board or school administration.

5. Community Roles-Reaching Beyond Schools is EMERGING		
Indicators	Score	Justification
5A. Community participates in school feeding program design, implementation, management and evaluation and contributes resources		There are school committees in place, and their roles are identified in the NSFP Reference Manual, 2013. In practice these roles are not fully utilized. Awareness of community participation is needed. Other than participation in the school board, there are no mechanisms for the community to hold the school feeding program accountable.

To view the scores for all indicators and policy goals in one table, please refer to Appendix 1.

⁴⁸ Republic of Namibia, 2013d. Pg. 17-21

Conclusion

Based on the above findings, there are areas that could be strengthened moving forward. The following policy options represent possible areas where school feeding could be strengthened in Namibia. The conclusions of this report and have been reflected in a revised road map of the Namibian NSFP.

Policy Options:

- Establish a National School Feeding Policy for Namibia.
- Budget should correspond with program expansion and include non-food based activities (i.e., M&E, non-food items, and capacity building of staff).
- Establish a separate budget line for NSFP, and regional education and school budgets should integrate NSFP-related activities.
- Establish a multi-sectoral NSFP Steering Committee to coordinate the implementation and improvement of NSFP.
- Mobilize resources from the government and other sources for the diversification of the school feeding food basket.
- Mobilize community participation by educating them about their roles and responsibilities and the importance of the NSFP.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Levels of Development of SABER School Health Indicators and Policy Goals in Namibia

Systems Approach for Better Education Results: School Feeding Policy Framework						
Policy Lever	Indicator	Stage				Overall Score per Domain
		Latent	Emerging	Established	Advanced	
Policy Goal 1: Policy frameworks						
Overarching policies for school feeding - sound alignment with the national policy	National-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy as well as sectoral policies and strategies (education sector plan, nutrition policy, social protection policy) identify school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, clearly defining objectives and sectoral responsibilities	There is recognition of school feeding as an education and/or social protection intervention, but school feeding is not yet included in the published national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies	School feeding discussed by members and partners during preparation of national-level poverty reduction strategy, equivalent national policy, or sectoral policies and strategies but not yet published	School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities	School feeding included in published national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national policy (including specifications as to where school feeding will be anchored and who will implement and accompanied by targets and/or milestones set by the government); published sectoral policies or strategies have clearly defined objectives and sectoral responsibilities, including what school feeding can and cannot achieve, and aligned with the national-level poverty reduction strategy or equivalent national strategy	EMERGING
	An evidence-based technical policy related to school feeding outlines the objectives, rationale, scope, design, and funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively addresses all four other policy goals (institutional capacity and coordination, financial capacity, design and implementation, and community participation)	There is recognition of the need for a technical policy related to school feeding, but one has not yet been developed or published	A technical policy and situation analysis under development by the relevant sectors that address school feeding	A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the program and covering some aspects of all four other policy goals, including links with agriculture development	A technical policy related to school feeding is published, outlining the objectives, rationale, scope, design, funding and sustainability of the program and comprehensively covering all four other policy goals with a strategy for local production and sourcing, including links with agriculture development and small holder farmers; policy is informed by a situation analysis of needs and aligned with national poverty reduction strategies and relevant sectoral policies and strategies	
Policy Goal 2: Financial Capacity						
Governance of the national school feeding program - stable funding and budgeting	National budget line(s) and funding are allocated to school feeding; funds are disbursed to the implementation levels (national, district and/or school) in a timely and effective manner	There is recognition of the need to include school feeding in the national planning process, but this has not yet happened; the government is fully reliant on external funds and does not have provision in the national budget to allocate resources to school feeding; there is recognition of the need for mechanisms for disbursing funds to the implementation levels, but these are not yet in place	School feeding is included in the national planning process and national funding is stable through a budget line but unable to cover all needs; there is no budget line at regional and school levels; existing school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels intermittently	School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line; all ministries involved in the program implementation have a budget line or funds allocated; budget lines also exist at regional and school levels; school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner	School feeding is included in the national planning process and is fully funded through a national budget line consistent with the school feeding policy and situation analysis including options for engaging with the private sector; budget lines and plans also exist at regional and school levels, sufficient to cover all the expenses of running the program; school feeding funds are disbursed to the implementation levels in a timely and effective manner and implementers have the capacity to plan and budget as well as request resources from the central level	EMERGING

Policy Goal 3: Institutional Capacity and Coordination						
School feeding coordination - strong partnerships and inter-sector coordination	Multisectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Any multisectoral steering committee coordination efforts are currently nonsystematic	Sectoral steering committee coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Multisectoral steering committee from at least two sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy	Multisectoral steering committee from at least three sectors (e.g. education, social protection, agriculture, health, local government, water) coordinates implementation of a national school feeding policy; this government-led committee provides comprehensive coordination (across international agencies, NGOs, the private sector and local business representatives as well) and is part of a wider committee on school health and nutrition	ESTABLISHED
Management and accountability structures, including staffing - strong institutional frameworks for implementation	National school feeding management unit and accountability structures are in place, coordinating with school level structures	A specific school feeding unit does not yet exist at the national level; coordination between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and schools is lacking	A school feeding unit exists at the national level, but it has limited resources and limited staff numbers and lacks a clear mandate; while coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place, they are not fully functioning	A fully staffed school feeding unit with a clear mandate exists at the national level, based on an assessment of staffing and resources needs; coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place and functioning in most instances	A fully staffed school feeding unit exists at the national level, based on an assessment of staffing and resources needs, with a clear mandate, and pre- and in-service training; coordination mechanisms between the national, regional/local (if applicable), and school level are in place and fully functioning	
	School level management and accountability structures are in place	Mechanisms for managing school feeding at the school level are non-uniform and national guidance on this is lacking	National guidance on required mechanisms for managing school feeding are available at the school level, but these are not yet implemented fully	Most schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance	All schools have a mechanism to manage school feeding, based on national guidance, with pre and in-service training for relevant staff	
Policy Goal 4: Design and Implementation						
Quality assurance of programming and targeting, modalities, and procurement design, ensuring design that is both needs-based and cost-effective	A functional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is in place as part of the structure of the lead institution and used for implementation and feedback	The importance of M&E is recognised, but government systems are not yet in place for M&E of school feeding implementation	A government M&E plan exists for school feeding with intermittent data collection and reporting occurring especially at the national level	The M&E plan for school feeding is integrated into national monitoring or information management systems and data collection and reporting occurs recurrently at national and regional levels	The M&E plan for school feeding is integrated into national monitoring or information management systems and data collection and reporting occurs recurrently at national, regional and school levels; analysed information is shared and used to refine and update programs; baseline is carried out and program evaluations occur periodically	ESTABLISHED
	Program design identifies appropriate target groups and targeting criteria corresponding to the national school feeding policy and the situation analysis	The need for targeting is recognised, but a situation analysis has not yet been undertaken that assesses school feeding needs and neither targeting criteria nor a targeting methodology has been established as yet	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology is being developed corresponding to the national school feeding policy; a situation analysis assessing needs is incomplete as yet	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and a situation analysis assessing needs	Targeting criteria and a targeting methodology exists and is implemented corresponding to the national school feeding policy and situation analysis (including costings for various targeting and designs); M&E information is used to refine and update targeting and coverage on a periodic basis	
	Food modalities and the food basket correspond to the objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	There is recognition of the need for national standards for food modalities and the food basket, but these do not exist yet	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to two or more of the following: objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements	National standards on food modalities and the food basket have been developed and correspond to objectives, local habits and tastes, availability of local food, food safety (according to WHO guidelines), and nutrition content requirements; M&E information is used to refine and update food modalities and food basket on a periodic basis	
	Procurement and logistics arrangements are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	There is recognition of the need for national standards for procurement and logistics arrangements, but these do not exist yet	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on three or more of the following: procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline	National standards on procurement and logistics arrangements have been developed and are based on procuring as locally as possible, taking into account the costs, the capacities of implementing parties, the production capacity in the country, the quality of the food, and the stability of the pipeline; M&E information is used to refine and update procurement and logistics arrangements	

Policy Goal 5: Community roles—reaching beyond schools						
Community participation and accountability - strong community participation and ownership (teachers, parents, children)	Community participates in school feeding program design, implementation, management and evaluation and contributes resources (in-kind, cash or as labor)	Systems and accountability mechanisms are not yet in place for consultation with parents and community members on the design, monitoring and feedback of the school feeding program	A school feeding management committee exists but parent and community member participation could be strengthened and awareness on the opportunity to monitor and feedback on the school feeding program is lacking	The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and communities have accountability mechanisms to hold school feeding programs accountable at the school level	The school feeding management committee comprises representatives of teachers, parents, and community members and has clearly defined responsibilities and periodic training. Accountability mechanisms are in place by which communities can hold school feeding programs accountable at the school, regional, and national levels	E M E R G I N G

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Acronyms

EFA	Education for All
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education

NAMVAC	Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NaSIS	Namibian School Feeding Programme Information System
NDP4	National Development Plan IV
NSFP	Namibian School Feeding Programme
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PQA	Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan
SHN	School Health and Nutrition
WFP	World Food Programme

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This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of **School Feeding**.

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