

Benin

Catholic Relief Services

Summary of Findings

The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) school feeding program in the Republic of Benin began in April 2002 with the selection of parent-teacher associations (PTA's) as the focal point of implementing the program for 10,000 school children. Actual feeding started in June 2002. Data on the performance of the program is not yet available, but reports from CRS-Benin's Global Food for Education (GFE) monitors indicate wide acceptance of the program by the selected PTA's. CRS-Benin successfully monetized the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities and plans to use the proceeds of approximately \$548,562 to fund critical intervention programs in support of the school feeding. In addition, CRS-Benin has also targeted 3,500 female students for take-home rations as an incentive to increase school attendance by girls. The program is scheduled to continue through the 2003 school year.

Country Overview

Benin is a small country on the west coast of Africa, with an estimated population of 6.5 million. Its annual growth rate of 3.0 percent is one of the highest rates of population growth in Africa.⁷⁰ Sustained economic policy reforms and political stability have enabled Benin to achieve an average annual economic growth rate of 4.9 percent in the period 1991 to 2001.⁷¹ Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth declined from 5.8 percent in 2000 to 5 percent in 2001 due to lower than expected agriculture output.⁷²

Despite a decade of positive per capita income growth, poverty has not been reduced significantly.⁷³ Gross national product per capita in 2001 was only \$380. Further progress requires comprehensive measures to slow population growth, accelerate economic growth, and assure the availability of health and education services.⁷⁴ This will require further economic liberalization, dramatic improvements in the effectiveness of public service delivery systems, decentralization, and reduced corruption.⁷⁵ One-third of Benin's population lives below the poverty threshold and suffers from chronic food insecurity. This country has an extremely low human development index (HDI). The United Nations Development Program 2001 HDI ranks Benin 147 out of 162 countries.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ World Development Indicators database, April 2002.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ World Food Program 2001-Benin Country brief.

Benin's economy is dominated by subsistence agriculture, which accounts for approximately 70 percent of employment.⁷⁷ Due to inadequate technology, traditional farming methods, and dependence on rain-fed agriculture, Benin's domestic food supply is not capable of meeting demand. Benin has an illiteracy rate of about 48 percent among adult males and 76 percent among female adults.⁷⁸ Overall, about 63 percent of the primary school students are boys and 37 percent are girls.⁷⁹

Enrollment figures for Atacora and the adjacent regions where CRS is implementing the GFE program are much lower.⁸⁰ Across this region, only about 30 percent of parents send all their children to school.⁸¹ Parents with only one child tend to keep that child out of school to assist with household and farm activities. Even in households with more than one child, parents will typically keep the first child out of school and send younger children instead. The level of school attendance by children is highly correlated with the education level of the parents.⁸²

The overall rate of student promotion is very low. On average, six out of 10 students are promoted to the next grade level (57 percent of girls compared to 64 percent of boys). The overall dropout rate for girls is 13 percent compared to 12 percent for boys.⁸³ The average attendance rate is about 80 percent for the region.⁸⁴

Families of the students primarily engage in farming and fishing, with an average yearly income of about \$175.⁸⁵ During the long dry season, the household food security situation throughout the region becomes very tight even by Benin standards.⁸⁶

Commodity Management

CRS-Benin requested and received 3,350 metric tons of commodities from USDA to support its GFE program, including 2,760 tons of soybeans for monetization; 500 tons of rice for direct distribution; and 90 tons of soybean oil for direct distribution.

CRS planned to distribute 270 tons of rice and 40 tons of soybean oil as take-home rations for 3,500 girls in 60 schools. The take-home ration would serve as a reward for good attendance to girls who achieve at least an 85-percent attendance rate during a given quarter.⁸⁷

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Government of Benin Statistics, 2001.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² CRS baseline Study of Benin's Education, 2001.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Government of Benin Statistical Report, 2000 and World Bank Country Report, 2000.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ CRS Report, June 2002.

The commodities arrived in Benin in two shipments in January and March of 2002. The soybeans were monetized in March 2002. CRS-Benin generated approximately \$548,561 from the monetization.

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: CRS defines food-assisted education as a set of interventions to support long-term educational objectives. The CRS-Benin program was designed to improve access to, quality of, and local participation in basic education for primary school-aged children. Specifically, the objectives are to:

- Increase enrollment and attendance rates of primary school-aged children.
- Improve the physical learning and sanitation environment for children in pre- and primary schools.
- Improve the quality of education provided to primary school-aged children.
- Increase active community involvement in the education of pre- and primary school aged children.

CRS-Benin is using commodities available under GFE in two ways. The direct distribution plan called for:

- Provision of a morning or mid-day meal to 10,000 children in pre- and primary schools over nine months.
- Take-home rations for 3,500 girls as a reward for high attendance rates. High attendance rate is defined as missing less than ten school days during a school term.
- Provision of training module materials to support the participation of teachers in training.
- Incentives to teachers and other school staff for attendance and for instituting teaching techniques in the classroom.
- Take-home rations to encourage enrollment and attendance by girls and other marginalized groups.
- Support for children's participation in summer school programs and/or short-term education programs for displaced or otherwise crisis-affected children.

In order to achieve the goal of community involvement in the education of primary school children, CRS designed a program that builds up the capacities of PTA's and other local community groups. Specific goals for the program are as follows:

- Providing initial intensive training as well as targeted follow-up training to PTA management committees established to implement the canteen distribution program.
- Promoting sustainable community involvement and commitment within the school environment by increasing PTA capacity. It is envisioned that when CRS phases out commodity distribution to the school canteens, the PTA's will take over management

and implementation of the program. As such, these objectives provide for intensive training, mentoring, and monitoring by CRS.

CRS monetized 2,760 tons of soybeans with the purpose of using the proceeds to fund a number of other critical interventions, including the following:

- Distribution of micronutrient supplements to improve student health.
- Provision of hygiene and nutrition education for parents and teachers.
- Improvements to school learning and sanitation infrastructure.
- Training of teachers and directors in improved teaching and school management techniques.
- Information and education campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of such issues as the importance of education for girls.
- Strengthening of PTA's to increase community involvement in education.

Implementation status: The focal point of the CRS program is the PTA. For this reason, CRS began implementation of the program in the Atacora region with the selection and training of 60 PTA's in April 2002. CRS selected the participating schools using a school selection and mapping tool developed by CRS-Benin. The following criteria were used in the school selection process:

- A rural location, where the school served students from villages located at least three kilometers from the school.
- A clean water source within the school surroundings and a willingness and ability to provide a cooking area and secure storeroom in the school.
- An absence of conflict between the PTA and the school director.
- A PTA that invests tangibly in the development of the school and community through cash and in-kind mobilization from the school and/or community.
- A PTA willing to make in-kind and nominal cash contributions to the canteens, and to sign a contract with CRS outlining the implementation plan.

CRS negotiated and signed contracts with each PTA. Each contract specifies the roles and responsibilities of the PTA's. The management committees within each PTA have full responsibility for operating and managing the school canteens, and for reporting on operations to CRS-Benin. The other PTA members and CRS-Benin monitor assist the canteen management committees on a regular basis.

Each PTA has a school canteen management committee, which is responsible for organizing the entire feeding program in their respective school. CRS began training the management committee members in May 2002. In addition to training the management committees, CRS also organized training for the directors of each school, which started in June 2002 in conjunction with the launch of the school feeding program in the schools. The total number of students enrolled in GFE-participating schools as of June 3, 2002, is 10,577, of which 3,098 or about 29 percent are girls.

Other donor support: CRS has established mechanisms at the country, regional, and headquarters levels to coordinate and collaborate with local and international organizations, host governments, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other donors in the implementation of GFE program. CRS' longstanding commitment to partnerships has played a key role in identifying potential partners for this initiative. CRS coordinates activities with World Education, International Foundation for Education and Self-Help, and Medical Care Development International in strengthening the education activities in Benin.

The collaboration is in the form of suggestions, such as the idea from the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help to extend equity actions beyond girls and boys to include ethnically marginal groups in the region. Other collaborative efforts include monthly meeting between CRS and other international organizations and donor communities to track funding educational programs. World Education provides CRS with a complementary PTA capacity building training program. Medical Care Development International provides health education training activities to PTA's as a complement to the CRS GFE program.⁸⁸

CRS also collaborates with Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) International. CARE is implementing a school promotion program for girls in Borgou region, adjacent to the region where CRS operates. CARE is in the process of developing International Education Center (IEC) material for this program, and CRS has indicated its willingness to incorporate the same material into the CRS GFE program.

Sustainability: CRS designed the GFE program in Benin to incorporate community involvement to help ensure sustainability and to work toward economically self-sufficient and stable communities. Through its many years of experience working with school communities, CRS has developed a sustainability strategy that is based on active local interest and participation in basic education. CRS experience has shown that education activities have the best chance of being successful and their impacts sustained if parents and other community members are actively involved through such mechanisms as PTA's and village education committees. CRS' strategy in its education activities, therefore, is to encourage formation of such organizations when they do not already exist and to strengthen them when they do.

CRS also works to facilitate linkages among the village education committees, local organizations, and regional government education offices so that eventually parent/community groups and federations can advocate successfully for the education needs of their communities. Such collaboration among private organizations and local officials in northern Benin bodes well for the sustainability of school lunch program in Benin.

Monitoring and evaluation: CRS-Benin has developed a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system to measure the impact of the GFE program in Benin. CRS has hired

⁸⁸ CRS Baseline study report, 2000. World Education (WE) and Medical Care Development International (MCIDI) activities funded by USAID.

four full-time GFE monitors based in Atacora region who will undertake regular monitoring and data collection. The monitoring and evaluation department assists in developing an effective reporting system for the canteen management committees, as well as for the CRS controllers. This information is entered into a management information system at CRS-Benin headquarters.

Because many impact indicators will be measured against the initial baseline study, it is feasible that some changes may be made after the start of the project to more appropriately reflect real needs and practicalities. The indicators are currently based on available statistics, staff observations, and lessons learned from other regions that have similar socio-economic indicators. The performance indicators are listed below:

- Tonnage of commodities distributed.
- Tonnage of commodities monetized.
- Number of meals (lunches) served per school.
- Number of take-home rations distributed.
- Number of teachers and administrators receiving teaching/management training.
- Number of parents groups formed and strengthened.
- Number of school improvements projects implemented.
- Percentage increase in enrollment over baseline, disaggregated by gender.
- Percentage increase in attendance rates over baseline, disaggregated by gender.

In 2002, USDA has also partnered with Allies in Health and Development (AIHD) to monitor the GFE program. Together, AIHD and USDA have developed factors from which a random sample of 20 schools has been selected to participate in the monitoring and evaluation program. The AIHD monitor will collect attendance data for the months June, July, and September 2002.

Project Impact

School feeding under the GFE program in Benin began on June 3, 2002, after the selection of PTA's and the training of school canteen management committees and school directors. Data on program impact is not yet available.

Enrollment: The targeted region's schools have an enrollment ratio of 67 percent boys and 33 percent girls in the primary schools. Actual enrollment data from the selected schools is not yet available, and data is being collected.

Special emphasis on girls: CRS plans to provide take-home rations to girls who attend school at least 85 percent of the days each month. CRS anticipates that about 3,500 girl students will receive monthly take-home rations beginning in September 2002.

Other project achievements: In its request for commodities, CRS chose commodities for monetization that would have an impact on the economy of Benin. Benin does not produce soybeans and the country has one oilseed processing plant, which processes

cottonseed. CRS convinced the processor, Fludor Oilseed, to process soybeans during the lull when cottonseed, the main raw material, is in short supply. As a result, the CRS GFE program saved the jobs of 150 people who would otherwise have been laid off temporarily from the plant for lack of raw materials.

Unanticipated Outcomes

CRS did not anticipate:

- A strike by teachers and school administrators for higher pay. Teachers and school directors engaged in a month-long work stoppage for higher pay. As a result, CRS had to postpone training of selected PTA's and school directors, thereby delaying the implementation of the GFE program for one month.
- The increase in first-grade enrollment. Because of this increase, some first-grade classes in some of the selected schools have more than 100 students per class, and more teachers are needed.

Lessons Learned

The following are lessons learned to date from GFE implementation in Benin:

- Daily attendance registers are not well kept in all the schools. The state of the registers now in use is not adequate to calculate attendance by gender.
- First-grade enrollment increases have resulted in larger class sizes and an even greater need for more teachers.
- About 65 percent of teachers lack basic teacher training.
- All the selected PTA's are interested in the program and enthusiastic about their selection.
- One of the strengths of the CRS program is the extensive training provided to PTA's before the program gets underway. As a result of this training, PTA members place a higher value on education for their children and are contributing to school improvements and payment of teachers' salaries. This is a welcome change in a part of the country where teachers' salaries are many months behind.
- Most schools participating in the GFE program lack such basic hygienic facilities as latrines and a water supply.
- Most schools lack enough teachers, resulting in cancelled classes that leave children at home. The region also suffers a shortage of female teachers who can serve as role models to the girls.
- Long absences from their posts are common for some schools directors.
- Each community member contributes complementary foods to the schools for the GFE program. Such contributions organized on a larger scale will lead to sustainability of the school lunch program in the region for the future.
- Pay strikes by school teachers and administrators during the academic year are more frequent than anticipated.

Best Practices

One of CRS' best practices is the use of the social marketing tool to sensitize parents in the education of their children. CRS achieved this through extensive training for members of the PTA, organizing parents' day at each school, providing training seminars for teachers and organizing distribution days for take-home rations. For example, on the distribution days for the dry rations each trimester, CRS uses visual skits to deliver educational messages and to heighten awareness of the importance of education for girls.

CRS' focus on parent-teacher activities also helps to sustain the program long after donor organizations leave the scene. As indicated earlier, Benin is one of the few developing countries to design and implement a school lunch program from its own meager budget. The Ministry of Education plans to implement the program in the entire country by 2010.

Next Steps

A sample of schools has been drawn up. The local monitor has been trained, and data collection has begun for the first 20 schools. A focus group questionnaire is to be developed, and the regional coordinator is expected to make a follow-up visit to schools.

CRS plans to extend the program for one additional month through the 2002 school year to make up for time lost due to the strike by teachers in early January. During this make-up month, CRS plans to continue the school feeding and the distribution of take-home rations. In addition, CRS plans to provide training for school directors and selected teachers, and to launch an awareness campaign for the PTA's during the summer months. The schools reopen in September 2002.

GFE in Action

Madame Kouton is about 45 years old (she does not know her actual age) and the parent of four girls and two boys. The oldest girl is 16 and already married, awaiting her first child. Madame Kouton is a member of the PTA in Pikire in the Kerou district in Atacora region. She joined the PTA after she was made aware of the CRS GFE program in the region. She enrolled her remaining kids in school because she wants them to have an education. She and her husband produce yams, cassava and other food staples. Although her family income is only about \$100 a year, she contributes food from her farm to the CRS GFE program, as required. She indicated that she has learned a lot from just being part of the PTA. She says she is willing to do more to guarantee an education for her children. She welcomes the help from the GFE program in feeding her two boys and two girls enrolled in school, and she believes her sacrifice for her children will pay off in the future when they are all "educated."

Cameroon

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

The World Food Program (WFP) assistance to Cameroon in the education sector began in 1992. The present expansion aims to increase school enrollment and attendance by girls and to re-target the project on the country's northern and eastern provinces. Schools where girls account for less than 40 percent of students and where at least 40 percent of students live more than 40 kilometers away are eligible for WFP assistance. Preference is given to areas where the overall enrollment rate is below 30 percent. The project's goal is to provide assistance to an estimated 49,000 pupils. Assistance includes a daily meal for all beneficiaries, both boys and girls, in the schools covered, and a quarterly dry ration to families who keep their daughters at school for the last two years of primary schooling (33 percent of beneficiaries). The effective targeting instituted in this program has led to an average 7-percent increase in the retention rate—the number of girls who stay in school.

Country Overview

Cameroon, a low-income, food deficit country, is in the grip of a serious economic recession characterized by a substantial drop in gross domestic product (GDP), a fall in household incomes and the introduction of draconian budget cuts in the framework of a structural adjustment program. Consequences of these macro-economic phenomena include an increase in poverty and food insecurity, especially in the country's northern and eastern regions. Basic social services, and education in particular, have been hard-hit by tight financial restrictions and are no longer able to respond to demand. As a result, an alarmingly large number of children, many of them girls, are no longer sent to school.

Over the country as a whole, demographic pressure (2.9-percent population growth per year), high population density, under-utilization of inputs, inadequate extension, disorganized markets and post-harvest losses have led to a fall in food crop production and the amount of food available per capita. For the 1982-96 period, daily caloric intake fell from 2,300 calories to 1,981.

Faced with the difficulties of making ends meet and the direct and indirect costs of their children's education, many families have chosen to withdraw their children from school. Parents cannot afford to pay school fees and the official and unofficial contributions required to keep the schools running. In addition, they often need the labor of their children, especially girls, to work in the fields or in the home. Without a meal or snack during the school day, children who attend school have little energy and are unable to concentrate on their lessons.

Parents have come to consider schooling as a burden rather than an opportunity and often decide not to provide their children with an education. As a general rule, girls are the first victims. Many children who enter school also end up dropping out.

Commodity Management

The selection of the food basket takes into account the beneficiaries' food preferences and includes cereals, vitamin A-enriched vegetable oil, leguminous vegetables, and iodized salt to remedy nutritional deficits common in the targeted regions.

The ration's nutritional value (714 kilocalories, 18 grams of protein, and 21 grams of fat) represents 30 to 35 percent of the energy intake recommended for school children (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization norms). The ration is completed by fresh condiments and vegetables (onions, vegetables, *niébé*, etc.) supplied by local communities through school management committees or parents' associations. The meal is served between 10 a.m. and noon.

Cameroon's Ministry of Education is responsible for project strategy and implementation. Its priority tasks are to set up the school canteens; train local communities, teachers, and canteen managers; and organize project monitoring and evaluation. It is the responsibility of the head teacher and the school management committee to take delivery of the commodities at the schools.

Deliveries of the dry rations intended for girls' families are made to the parents' committees. The committees re-distribute the food to the girls' mothers within a maximum of two weeks of receipt and keep an account of quantities received and distributed.

The 1,060 tons of U.S.-donated corn arrived in September 2001.

Project Overview

WFP assistance to Cameroon in the education sector began in 1992. The present expansion aims to increase enrollment and attendance in schools among girls and to re-target the project on the country's northern and eastern provinces. Eligible for WFP assistance are schools where girls account for less than 40 percent of students and where at least 40 percent of students live more than 40 kilometers away. Preference is given to areas where the overall enrollment rate is below 30 percent.

The immediate objectives of the project are as follows:

- Increase the number of children going to primary schools in poor areas afflicted by food insecurity.
- Augment pupils' capacity to learn by providing them with a nutritionally balanced meal.
- Raise enrollment and attendance rates among girls ages 6 to 14 in the targeted provinces.

The Government of Cameroon, WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and other organizations undertake awareness-raising campaigns regularly to promote schooling among girls and to ensure that local groups are committed to basic education and joint management of school activities. UNICEF has a complementary program to promote girls' education in poverty-afflicted northern provinces.

Project Impact

The project's expected outputs are to provide assistance to an average of 49,000 pupils, consisting of the following:

- A daily meal for all pupils, both boys and girls, in the schools covered (100 percent of beneficiaries).
- A quarterly dry ration to families keeping their daughters at school during the last two years of primary schooling (33 percent of beneficiaries).

The number of school girls receiving dry rations will increase from 15,000 in the project's first year to 16,000 in the second and 16,500 in the third and fourth years.

By targeting age groups between 6 and 14, WFP has focused on a population that traditionally stops attending school or drops out of school altogether. The girls targeted are remaining in school and thereby delaying marriage, pregnancy, and cyclical poverty.

Enrollment levels of girls targeted in the Cameroon school feeding program have increased over the last three years by 16 percent on average. Enrollment of girls increased nearly 50 percent in the beginning years of WFP school feeding. Since the school feeding program began, the Government of Cameroon has also started committing additional funds for education. Results so far include some signs of increases in the number of teachers and an improved curriculum.

Chad

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

In accordance with the Government of Chad's educational policy, this project aims to promote the regular attendance of school children—especially girls—and to increase their learning capacity in the short and medium terms. The World Food Program's (WFP) assistance is targeted exclusively to the rural and semi-rural public or community schools in five prefectures of the Sahelian zone. The number of beneficiary children averages about 66,000 a year in 500 schools. Of the beneficiary children, around 22,000 are girls. In order to make this program more successful, more parental participation is needed, along with collaboration for better school infrastructure.

Country Overview

Chad is a land-locked Sahelian country faced with periodic drought and classified as both a least-developed country and a low-income, food-deficit country. According to the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Human Development Report for 1999, Chad ranks 162 out of 174 countries, with a per capita gross national product (GNP) of \$230, an infant mortality rate of 194 per 1,000 (Demographic and Health Survey, 1996-97) and an aggregate household food security index of 64.5. Fifty-four percent of Chad's population lives below the poverty line.

Poverty and food insecurity limit access to education, and lack of education hinders development and contributed to malnutrition. Overall school enrollment in 1997/98 was estimated at 52 percent, with about 65 percent of boys enrolled and 39 percent of girls. Dropouts are common, and less than a third of children enrolled complete all of the primary educational cycle. Illiteracy among women exceeds 95 percent.

School enrollment in the Sahelian zone is less than 30 percent, much lower than the national average of 52 percent. Only 17 percent of girls are in school. The major obstacle to school attendance and learning in this region is chronic food insecurity. Even for children who attend school, hunger and malnutrition limit the capacity to learn. In addition, children are usually expected to contribute to agricultural production and household food and livestock production. The situation for girls is especially difficult because of the low social status of women, early marriage, and the heavy work burden of women, who are assisted by girls in all their household tasks. Moreover, school is not attractive because of the low quality of the educational system, overcrowded classrooms, and the long distances children must travel to reach school in this region of Chad.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Cornmeal	1,350	August 2001
	350	September 2001
Corn-soy blend	140	December 2001
	880	January 2002
Vegetable oil	150	January 2002

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: In accordance with the Government of Chad's educational policy, this project aims to promote the regular attendance of schoolchildren—especially girls—and to increase their learning capacity.

The activity pursues the following objectives:

- Promoting primary education and schooling for girls.
- Contributing to feeding children in food-insecure zones.
- Increasing the school enrollment of children in disadvantaged rural areas.
- Improving school attendance and reducing the rate of dropout, particularly for girls.
- Increasing the proportion of girls enrolled in the targeted region.

Implementation status: The preparation of fortified meals in the schools and the provision of a dry ration to the families of girls permits the children to attend school regularly and allows girls, in particular, to continue their education. This aid affords better access to food for children and populations suffering from food insecurity and represents an income transfer to parents who keep their girls in school.

This activity is under the technical authority of the Ministry of Basic Education through the National School Canteen Service (SNCS). A coordination unit composed of representatives of the above Ministry, the Ministry of Planning, and WFP is responsible for implementation and monitoring. The management committee of each school is in charge of receiving and supervising the use of commodities. The presence of women on these committees is favored. The dry rations for the families of girls are delivered by the management committee under the supervision of parents' associations.

WFP's assistance is targeted exclusively to the rural and semi-rural public or community schools in five prefectures of the Sahelian zone. The number of beneficiary children averages about 66,000 a year in 500 schools, including around 22,000 girls. These figures represent a continuous progression of the total enrollment in the schools and the proportion of girls in that total. WFP is providing hot lunches to 63,750 students in 500

primary schools. Increased U.S. donations have provided take-home rations for 61,250 students (35 percent girls) in 351 schools.

Other donor support: The Government of Chad, WFP, and other organizations, chiefly UNICEF, German Technical Assistance, and Catholic Aid and Development, conduct awareness-raising campaigns periodically to promote girls' education and to increase community involvement. Improvement in the educational structure is the main objective of a World Bank project. The European Union and France, along with WFP, are the principal donors of food aid.

Project Impact

A number of factors have limited the success of the Chad project. Only 14 percent of the schools have latrine facilities, grade enrollments have declined over the past few years, and, finally, parental participation, which is crucial to the success of the program, has been poor. The declines in school enrollments may have been even greater without the food assistance in the schools.

However, Chad is beginning to see additional contributors to the educational sector, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund. These organizations are targeting the educational infrastructure and parental participation. Additional reviews should be conducted in coming years to more adequately evaluate these impacts on the Chad school feeding program.

Congo (Brazzaville)

International Partnership for Human Development

Summary of Findings

School feeding for approximately 125,000 students began in February 2002. International Partnership for Human Development (IPHD) received 8,300 tons of commodities to support the Global Food for Education (GFE) program. About half of the commodities were successfully monetized and the proceeds of \$1.6 million were used to purchase local commodities and cooking utensils to supplement use of the donated commodities in feeding. Solid data on the performance of the program is not yet available, but IPHD's GFE monitors report a 125-percent increase in enrollment in the initial assessment of the first grade classes in the GFE program in the coastal region of the country. IPHD-Congo also plans to target 500 of the GFE schools for a malaria prevention program. The GFE project is scheduled to continue through the 2003 school year.

Country Overview

The Congo experienced political conflict and civil disturbances in the years preceding its independence from France in 1960. Likewise, Congo's history since independence has been violent, with three Presidential coups and one presidential assassination between 1958 and 1979.⁸⁹ After restoration of a fragile peace in October 1997, a new cycle of violence began in December 1998.⁹⁰ The transition to democracy and a market-based economic system has been undermined by frequent episodes of violence, insecurity, and sporadic fighting.

Congo's economy is based primarily on the petroleum sector, which is by far the country's major revenue earner, contributing 93 percent of the export earnings.⁹¹ Oil production is expected to continue to rise significantly in the next few years, considering the fields currently under development and recent discoveries.⁹² The country's abundant rain forests are another source of revenues. Forestry, which led Congolese exports before the discovery of oil, continues to generate 10 percent of export earnings.⁹³

Families have only just started to rebuild their lives following three years of civil conflict. Most schools reopened in 2001, although government funds are lacking to begin a school lunch program. Approximately 512,000 children annually attend primary schools in the Republic of Congo, and most dropouts occur after one or two years of schooling. The

⁸⁹ CIA Country Fact Book, 2002.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ State Department Country Background Notes, 2002.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that 34-40 percent of women are illiterate, compared to 17-18 percent of men.⁹⁴

Malnutrition is high among primary school children. Absenteeism due to malaria is also high.⁹⁵ Most primary school children have a glass of water and fruit before leaving for school. In the evening, they eat their only meal of the day.

Commodity Management

IPHD received 8,300 metric tons of commodities from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Approximately half of the commodities, 4,300 tons, were monetized, with the other 4,000 tons used for direct distribution. Proceeds realized through monetization totaled \$1.6 million. IPHD used some of the proceeds to purchase flour, yeast, salt, and sugar to supplement preparation of local foods and donated commodities at the schools.

Allocations of USDA-donated commodities included: 1,800 tons of soybean oil (1,300 tons for monetization, and 500 for direct distribution); 4,500 tons of rice (3000 for monetization, 1,500 for distribution); and 2,000 tons of corn-soy milk (all for distribution).

Project Overview

IPHD's GFE program began in February 2002 and has a 12-month time line. The 12 months include one month for project initiation, 10 months of school feeding, and one month to evaluate and close out the program. IPHD contracted with CARITAS/Brazzaville, a local non-governmental organization (NGO) to assist in program implementation. The overall goal of IPHD's GFE program is to increase enrollment, reduce the dropout rate, and increase attendance, especially for girls, while improving the health of students. The target feeding areas are the coastal region of Kouilou (Pointe Noire) and the provinces of Pool, Bouenza, Brazzaville, and Niari. The table on the next page presents the key criteria for measuring success of the program.

IPHD worked with the Ministry of Education to identify schools to participate in the GFE project. The school selection rationale is as follows:

- The coastal region (35,000 school children) has experienced little or no disruption from the civil conflict. Based on the logistics, these schools are more accessible than schools in many other areas of the country, and secure warehousing is available.

⁹⁴ UNESCO Country Data Indicators, 2002.

⁹⁵ World Health Organization data.

Criteria for Measuring Success	Comments
125,000 kindergarten and primary school children receive daily school lunches over a 10-month period.	Includes 600 primary schools and kindergartens in five regions: Pointe Noire, Brazzaville, Nairi, Pool, and Dolisie. Each student receives four kilograms of food monthly (21 school days) for a 10-month period. The program in Brazzaville started in mid-May, but the program in Nairi region is on hold pending a cessation of civil unrest in that part of the country.
Dropout rate decreased compared to non-GFE schools.	Data to be collected at the end of the school feeding year.
Enrollment increased.	Enrollment for both girls and boy will be analyzed.
Community involvement increased. IPHD's strategy is to encourage formation of parent-teacher organizations or strengthen those that already exist.	IPHD will assess level of parental/community involvement through volunteer labor participation, donated food stuffs, etc.
Government commitment to school feeding program increased.	
Local foods purchased to complement meals prepared at the school.	Monetization proceeds enable 50,000 beneficiaries to eat one to two kilograms of locally produced foods monthly.
30 schools to be repaired.	
80 schools to receive cooking and eating utensils.	Schools in Pool and Dolisie lack cooking and eating utensils or have insufficient utensils to prepare school lunches. IPHD monitors identified these schools during their visits.
72 schools to receive educational supplies.	Schools targeted are those in areas most affected by the civil war, which destroyed many of their books, blackboards, and similar items. Families are too poor to help the school since many have just returned to rebuild their homes.
40 school kitchens to be constructed or repaired.	With usable kitchens in schools, lunches can be prepared and served where previously they could not.
105,000 children involved in a malaria prevention program.	Primary school children suffer one or more bouts of malaria during the school year, which causes considerable absenteeism and malnutrition.

- Brazzaville, the capital, and the surrounding province of Pool have 40,000 school children. This area was chosen for its good logistics and lower program costs. In addition, this area gives the program its highest visibility, which could possibly help facilitate an assumption of responsibility for the school lunch program by the government.
- Niari and Dolisie Regions (50,000 school children) were targeted for primary schools. Most of Congo's civil war occurred in these regions, resulting in burnt out schools and a halt to all schooling activities during the war.

Malaria prevention program: The Ministry of Education also requested that IPHD target 500 of the GFE schools to participate in a malaria prevention program. IPHD developed informational and educational materials and provided technical assistance in communication design for the prevention program. IPHD selected 10,000 children in 50 of the 600 schools where the incidence of malaria is highest to receive vitamin A and zinc tablets daily for the school year. Dehydration salts and malaria tablets for severely ill children were also provided. IPHD monitors and local teachers will select 3,000 children in Kouilou and Pool Provinces to receive mosquito nets at cost.

Other donor support: IPHD's longstanding commitment to partnerships has played a key role in identifying potential partners for these initiatives. IPHD has established mechanisms to collaborate with the Congolese Government, local authorities, and international donor organizations in the implementation of GFE program. This partnership involves weekly meetings to compare best practices in identical donor programs.

Sustainability: Through its many years of experience working with school communities, IPHD has developed a strategy for sustainability that is based on active local interest and participation in basic education. IPHD's experience has shown that education activities have the most chance of being successful and their impacts sustained if parents and other community members are actively involved through such mechanism as parent-teacher associations (PTA's).

IPHD also works to facilitate linkages between PTA's, local NGO's, and regional government education offices so that eventually parent-community groups and federations can advocate successfully for the education needs of their communities. Such collaboration among the NGO's and local officials in Congo bodes well for sustainability should the economy of Congo improve to allow funding for a national school lunch program.

Monitoring and evaluation: Program monitoring and evaluation is the responsibility of both USDA and the implementing organization. USDA's local monitor will use methodology developed by USDA to collect data on the performance of the program in 20 sample schools. Data collection is in progress, hampered only by recent unrest in certain parts of the country.

IPHD hired 15 full-time monitors who visit each school twice a week to collect data. Data collection measures changes in attendance, enrollment, and the level of community participation. The monitors, who have received training in data collection, provide the program director with weekly and monthly reports that highlight successes, problem areas, and inventories. IPHD uses rental vehicles for their monitors, given the unreliability of local transportation in Congo.

Project Impact

The GFE program has been hampered by sporadic violence in three of the target feeding regions, hampering data collection.

Enrollment: Enrollment and attendance data are not yet available, but IPHD's monitors report a 125-percent enrollment increase in the initial assessment of first grade classes in the GFE program in Pointe Noire region.

Attendance: The school program began in mid-April 2002, so attendance data are not available for an assessment. However, IPHD monitors report a dramatic rise (133 percent for boys and 106 percent for girls) in attendance and enrollment at one school, Ecole 418, in Pointe Noire region.

Special emphasis on girls: IPHD designed their program to give incentives to schools with higher than normal enrollment figures for girls.

Unanticipated Outcomes

The IPHD bidding process includes private business and gave a boost to newly started private commercial enterprises. The bidding process introduced transparency and made it possible for these enterprises to ask for information on purchases of commodities under USDA's commercial marketing programs.

Lessons Learned

- Water and sanitation facilities either do not exist or do not work properly at most schools. This has a direct impact on the health of the students and teachers.
- It took longer than expected to serve meals, one classroom at a time, thereby increasing the likelihood that some classes would not be served food.
- Government officials want to be involved with program planning and management. A steep learning curve results in many meetings with government officials.
- Many teachers are not certified to teach, and schools lack teaching materials. This serious lack of educational resources could negatively impact GFE's overall success in the Congo.
- Girls make up a little over half of the student population, a good indicator that school feeding programs focusing on female attendance work.

Next Steps

IPHD plans to extend the program for one additional year to make up for time lost due to the recent civil unrest in parts of the implementing region.

GFE in Action

The GFE program provides a strong incentive for children to attend school. At one of the schools in Pointe Noire region, an 8-year-old girl was observed carrying a baby behind her back during the school lunch. Sensing that the girl might not belong to the school, the regional coordinator asked her if she were a student and whose baby she was carrying. She explained that her mother told her to watch her little sister, but she still wanted to attend school because she knew that the school lunch would be served. So she came to school with her baby sister so that she could eat.

Côte d'Ivoire

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

The World Food Program (WFP) has been providing hot lunches to more than 500,000 children in over 5,000 schools. The Côte d'Ivoire program now focuses on over 700 schools in the southern area through the creation of and partnerships with parent associations. WFP provides 45 percent of the food needs, requiring parents to build canteens and supply the additional food. Through WFP's empowerment strategy with parents, student enrollment levels have progressively increased by more than 23 percent.

Country Overview

Côte d'Ivoire is classified as a low-income, food-deficit country. Despite reforms resulting in some progress by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, the country's educational system is tilted in favor of towns in the south, and in favor of boys. The project's objective is to provide support to government efforts aimed at increasing school attendance, reducing regional disparities, and narrowing the gap between the numbers of boys and girls attending school.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Rice	700	June 2001

Project Overview

The project serves 531,000 pupils in 5,175 schools. The project focuses on schools in the north and on the progressive phasedown of WFP assistance to turn full responsibility over to community-based organizations.

Project Implementation

In order to make it easier for parents and village communities to take over responsibility for school feeding, the project features the following innovations:

- Creation in individual schools of management committees made up of parents, teachers, and local authorities.

- The food basket supplied by WFP including 45 percent local commodities to encourage local production and facilitate provisioning of canteens by parents.
- Reinforcement of the monitoring and evaluation system through the recruitment of United Nations Volunteers (UNV's) who will participate in mobilizing communities and in forming management committees, and be responsible for project monitoring.
- Two-year extension of WFP assistance in 715 southern schools in order to ensure a smooth transition towards the complete takeover of school feeding by local communities.

Sustainability

In Côte d'Ivoire, school canteens receiving WFP food aid operate largely on support from parent-teacher associations (PTA's). For a school to qualify for WFP support, parents must organize an association and then build a kitchen and storeroom. The PTA then hires cooks and manages the canteen's food stocks. Moreover, all but the poorest families pay a daily contribution that covers part of the cost of the canteen's operation.

Project Impact

Enrollment has increased by 23 percent on average over the last three years. High levels of community involvement and strong emphasis by the government have contributed significantly to the positive impact of the WFP Côte d'Ivoire school feeding program. Although more teachers are needed to keep up with the pace of higher student enrollment, the number of certified teachers has risen in the last two years. WFP is now working to enable community associations to take full implementation responsibility for school feeding programs. WFP's creative methods of program implementation have led to strong parental involvement and greater buy-in to the importance of education for their children.

GFE in Action

WFP has hired Odette Loan as a director of school canteens. Her own past helps her relate to the children and their parents within the schools. When she was a young student, she recalls walking six kilometers to school with only a ball of rice for lunch. Once she and her siblings transferred to a boarding school, food was no longer available. Her siblings dropped out of school because they had no food. Odette Loan didn't quit, managing to find others who would help her find food to survive. She knows the struggle involved in not having anything to eat in school, and this knowledge ties her to these children and reinforces her commitment to the WFP school feeding program.

Eritrea

Mercy Corps

Summary of Findings

The school feeding component of the program started in March 2002 for about 35,000 students in 150 schools. Mercy Corps (MC) now projects that the project will reach up to 65,000 students in as many as 180 schools nationwide. This change in number of beneficiaries is due to conservative original projections. Reports from USDA and MC monitors indicate that student attendance, enrollment, and performance have increased since the biscuits were introduced. A total of 9,330 metric tons of soft white wheat and 8,100 tons of vegetable oil were monetized. Additionally, MC is providing small grants for parent-teacher associations (PTA's) and has placed a special emphasis on girls. MC is now preparing training materials for the girls' education component of the Global Food for Education (GFE) program. The MC GFE project in Eritrea is scheduled to continue through March 2003.

Country Overview

Eritrea is undergoing a critical transition. After a 30-year struggle to gain independence from Ethiopia, Eritrea was on its way toward development as a strong and independent nation. However, over the past few years, Eritrea has experienced a series of economic and political setbacks as a result of severe drought and renewed fighting with Ethiopia. The multi-year drought that affected the entire Horn of Africa affected over 400,000 Eritreans, more than 10 percent of the population.⁹⁶ During this time, a border war erupted between Ethiopia and Eritrea, causing widespread infrastructure and property damage in southern Eritrea. At its height, between one-third and one-half of the civilian population was displaced in Eritrea.⁹⁷ With assistance from the United Nations, the two countries are implementing a peace agreement signed in December 2000.

Eritrea consistently ranks 148 out of 162 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index in terms of quality of life issues such as access to health care, education, and economic opportunity. A significant number of students in rural areas attend school under a tree, without access to a classroom. The illiteracy rate is 32.7 percent for adult males and 55.5 percent for adult females.⁹⁸ The net primary school enrollment rate is 30.4 percent.⁹⁹

If girls are able to attend school at all, many do not finish primary school because of early marriage or the need by their families for their help at home. The USDA local monitor

⁹⁶ United Nations Development Program Report: Eritrea, A Country Study, 2001.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ World Bank, 2000, World Bank Country Brief, www.worldbank.org, June 2002.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

reported that girls are often viewed as members of the community who do not necessarily need access to education. The cultural expectation is that the men in their lives will provide for their needs. Also, according to the monitor, girls carry a much heavier burden in the home and are expected to take care of the children, cook meals, and gather firewood and water. When a family decides which children will go to school, more often than not, the boys in the family are selected, particularly if the parents are required to pay school fees. Meeting the educational needs of girls is an ongoing challenge.

As a result of an assessment conducted by MC examining development needs and food insecurity, the zones of Anseba, Garsh Barka, Maekel, and Northern Red Sea were identified as target areas for the school feeding program.

Commodity Management

The donated commodities, 9,330 metric tons of soft white wheat and 8,100 tons of vegetable oil, were monetized. Because the buyer took possession of the commodities at the port, MC did not utilize inland transportation systems in the country.

Project Overview

MC's GFE schools cover a diverse area. The program encompasses four of Eritrea's ethnic and language groups, both Muslim and Christian areas, an urban/semi-urban to rural spectrum, four of six administrative zones, and both war-affected and drought-affected zones. Chronic calorie deficiency exists in these areas, and children do not have regular access to enough food. Schools do not have the resources to provide lunches, and families often do not have the resources to send food with their children for lunch.

Goals and objectives: MC's original plan was to reach 35,000 students in 150 schools. Students will be provided with high-energy biscuits. MC now projects that the project will reach up to 65,000 students in as many as 180 schools nationwide. This change in number of beneficiaries is due to conservative original projections.

Due to the large number of target schools, wide geographic coverage, and difficult terrain, MC separated the implementation process into two phases, pilot and post-pilot. This allowed opportunities to test and correct logistical systems and procedures before launching into full project implementation. The pilot phase is now complete and the program has received positive reviews from the national and regional ministries of education and, most importantly, from the students, parents, and teachers. School feeding in these areas is seen as the immediate solution to a very specific community challenge.

MC's overall goal is to assist the Ministry of Education to improve the education environment through school feeding in selected government primary schools in four regions of Eritrea. Criteria for measuring success, implementation status, and comments are shown on the following table.

Implementation status:

Criteria for Measuring Success	Status	Comments
35,000 primary school children receive high-energy biscuits.	Started in March 2002.	95 schools located in four impoverished zones are initially targeted.
Improve enrollment.	Pending baseline data results.	Enrollment is improving based on reports from teachers and parents.
Improve attendance.	Pending baseline data results.	Attendance is improving based on reports from teachers and school administrators.
Improve performance.	Pending baseline data results.	Performance appears to be improving based on reports from teachers.
Increase NGO and PTA capacity building.	Training completed.	Increase capacity of Vision Eriteria, a local NGO, to enhance capacity of 95 PTA's.
Promote girls' education.	Ongoing.	In cooperation with Vision Eriteria, information campaigns will be funded to promote girls' education. PTA's will conduct information campaigns in their communities to promote girls' school attendance.
Provide small grants to PTA's to assist with local school improvements.	Ongoing.	

Prior to soliciting bids for high-energy biscuits, MC met with Eritrea's health officials to reach agreement on the minimum nutritional content of the biscuits. Eritrea had specific requirements, based on guidelines from the World Health Organization. All agreed that MC would solicit bids for biscuits with the following nutritional specifications: minimum of 600 kcal/student/day; 24 grams of protein/student/day; minimum ratio of 10 grams of protein per 100 grams of biscuit. The biscuits procured by MC meet these requirements and have been fortified with additional vitamins and minerals.

MC solicited competitive bids in a national newspaper and received six proposals. The three Eritrean factories that submitted bids did not meet the requirements. They could not obtain the ingredients on a regular basis, ensure delivery, or wrap the biscuit into a package that school children could easily consume. MC did select two Eritrean suppliers who obtained biscuits from manufacturers in Italy and India. MC continues to work with the Eritrean Government and local biscuit factories toward the possibility that Eritrean producers will be able to meet the necessary requirements in the future. In March 2002, MC delivered the first shipment of high-energy biscuits to schools, a milestone that received radio and newspaper coverage.

Staff and PTA members participated in a three-day workshop, which provided logistical training to ensure appropriate storage and distribution of the high-energy biscuits. PTA members were also introduced to the Eritrean Ministry of Education's PTA guidelines, thereby laying the foundation for MC's future capacity-building activities. In order to meet the needs of such a diverse population, MC has hired staff with a wide range of experience, each of whom is able to communicate in at least three languages. It is common for workshops to be held in several languages simultaneously to ensure full comprehension by community members. The common thread among the schools served is enthusiasm about the project and a belief that it is making a dramatic, immediate, and positive impact on the lives of the students.

Other donor support: The Ministry of Education hired and trained two field monitors to assist MC in the evaluation and monitoring efforts. MC is working to identify other donor support for the program.

Sustainability: The most promising step toward program sustainability is the strategy to increase the capacity of PTA's. The PTA's are the heart and soul of the program. MC says that only when the importance and longer term value of education is instilled in the minds of parents will any education intervention take root and become sustainable.

Many schools have demonstrated a tremendous level of volunteerism and cooperation to ensure the success of the program. Local government officials have given their offices as storage facilities for the biscuits. Villages provided financial and in-kind contributions to repair roads to participating schools, so biscuits can be delivered. Extraordinary efforts are being made to transport biscuits to schools in areas that are inaccessible by vehicle. One school organized students to meet the MC truck at the bottom of the mountain on which the school is situated. Students then carry the cartons of biscuits up the mountain on their backs, a steep two-hour climb.

Monitoring and evaluation: USDA and MC both have monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. USDA's monitor is conducting a baseline survey covering 20 schools in the four zones and conducting unannounced visits to an additional 30 targeted schools. Collectively, a matrix was developed of the 150 schools participating in the program. The factors from which the schools were selected were geography and the level of enrollment by girls. These two factors are critical in determining the impact of school feeding. A random sample of 20 schools was selected, with a minimum of two schools selected from each cell.

Vision Eritrea prepared a number of monitoring forms that MC field monitors will use during unannounced site visits with teachers. The monitor conducts head counts and cross-matches the number with the number of attendants registered in the teacher's daily book. Monitors also match the number of biscuits distributed since the last monitoring visit with attendance figures. The monitors observe the storage situation and overall cleanliness and note infestation problems. They work with the schools and PTA's to remedy any problems.

Project Impact

Enrollment: The school feeding component of the program started in March 2002 and enrollment data is being analyzed. However, preliminary reports from USDA and MC monitors indicate that student enrollment has increased since the biscuits were introduced. According to teachers and school administrators, students who dropped out earlier in the school year are trying to re-enroll in school.

Guben Hadish, head of pedagogy for Anseba zone, Ministry of Education, has been particularly enthusiastic about the biscuit distribution. In a meeting with MC on April 8, 2002, with MC, he said, "This biscuit is making dramatic change immediately. School dropouts decreased, and some are even returning from the first semester. No latecomers now. This biscuit encourages them, really. Even physical fitness is very good. Demand is beginning now. Parents are asking to register even their 6-year-old child. Our schools are motivated by this program. It must continue."

Attendance: Preliminary feedback from teachers and administrators indicate school attendance has increased since the biscuits were introduced. According to school officials, absenteeism and tardiness have virtually disappeared in many of the participating schools.

Several examples illustrate this effect of school meals in primary schools. For instance, the father of a 10-year-old boy participating in the program reported that his son told him, "Daddy, I like the biscuits at school. Do you want me to bring one home for you?" A mother reported to the monitor that her two daughters created a song about the tasty biscuits at school and have not been absent since the biscuits started arriving.

Performance: According to teachers and school administrators, the performance of students has improved as a result of the high-energy biscuits. Teachers have noticed improved concentration, attentive behavior, and an attitude of interest in learning. Students seem more enthusiastic about classroom assignments and activities. They are more talkative and excited about their work, particularly after the biscuits are served. When the teachers ask for a class volunteer, nearly every hand goes up.

One teacher reported that student eye contact has improved. Students now look at her when she speaks during class, and their attention span has improved. They are less distracted and are now able to sit still and listen attentively. According to some reports, students' work is written more clearly, with better organization.

Special emphasis on girls: MC is preparing training materials for the girls' education component of the GFE program. Beginning in August 2002, MC plans to facilitate bi-monthly meetings with other non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and the Ministry of Education to discuss solutions to low enrollment and attendance among girls. In addition, MC will conduct public information campaigns on the importance of girls' education and launch school registration drives that target girls.

Upon completion of the pilot program, the Ministry of Education and MC plan to work on plans for flexible schooling options to allow girls to attend school on a schedule that meets the needs of nomadic communities. They will also work together to create a general literacy program for girls who are forced to leave school. MC's long-term objective is to establish a female teacher recruitment action plan with the Ministry of Education to provide appropriate role models for girls in rural communities. Specifically, the girls' education campaign will be in the form of community-based plays, songs, and picture-based stories.

Other project achievements: Stronger links have been created between the local community and school directors by arranging community sessions where community and school needs are discussed and plans put in place to address those concerns.

Unanticipated Outcomes

The capacity of a local NGO, Vision Eritrea, has increased as a result of the school feeding program. Ten Vision Eritrea members, including newly hired field monitors, received training on techniques and strategies to effectively implement the program through the PTA's. Vision Eritrea has hired additional staff and purchased equipment to assist with training and the girls' education campaign.

Jobs were created and the local economy has been stimulated. MC has entered into a number of local contracts with Eritrea transportation companies, an NGO, and storage companies to assist in the school feeding program. These contracts have created approximately 65 local jobs.

Relationships with the Ministry of Education have been strengthened. MC and its partners have urged the resumption of the Education Sectoral Coordination Committee, co-chaired by the Ministry of Education. The committee meets monthly and includes representation from Eritrea's Ministry of Education, NGO's, and United Nations agencies involved in education-related projects. Working groups on school feeding, PTA capacity building, girls' education promotion, and psycho-social projects have been created. In addition, the Ministry of Education created a position, School Feeding Officer, to coordinate with MC and its colleague agencies implementing school feeding activities.

Lessons Learned

Parental time constraints and literacy issues need to be factored into project implementation plans. Biscuit distribution has created extra work for already-overburdened teachers. MC staff expected parents to assist teachers, through the PTA's, but farm and family responsibilities make it extremely difficult for them to commit time to schools each day. In addition, many parents are largely or completely illiterate, which makes it difficult for them to complete the forms needed by the project.

MC put the responsibility on the participating schools to design their own school-specific systems and procedures for the biscuit distribution and encouraged them to find creative ways to include parents. In the end, most schools put the burden on the teachers and school director. Future efforts must continue to find ways to ensure greater participation of parents in the PTA's. Such efforts need to be sensitive to the time constraints and seasonal nature of farming and animal husbandry.

Most participating schools do not have adequate water and sanitation facilities. The distribution of high-energy biscuits exacerbates the existing need for potable water, and MC has received many requests to provide potable water to schools. Further efforts will address this issue within the small grants component of the project. The World Food Program (WFP) currently operates a school feeding program in 133 schools in five zones of Eritrea. WFP distributes dry take-home rations in the form of wheat, peas, oil, and salt. In the future, WFP plans to switch to a combination of "wet feeding" methods. WFP anticipates that the main challenges in this regard will be firewood consumption and water provisions. As MC and WFP explore wet feeding methods, further attention will be needed to ensure that water and sanitation infrastructure are sufficient. While dry feeding currently meets an important need, wet feeding will provide increased options for food programs.

Developing local capacity is integral to success. MC believes that an important aspect of the project is to ensure that steps are taken to nationalize all operations as soon as possible. From the project's inception, MC has worked closely with Vision Eritrea. Vision Eritrea has recently taken on increased responsibility in program monitoring and training. MC will continue to work to increase local responsibility for oversight of the program.

Health problems need to be addressed. Mercy Corps expects to add a health and nutrition component to the program in order to ensure that proper hygiene is observed and to introduce health education into the classroom as it relates to school feeding. A de-worming component will be added to the school feeding program because parasites threaten to negate the benefits of food supplements.

Next Steps

MC plans to enhance its school-tracking database to include all categories of information and to ensure that each site visit is systematically recorded. This process will be supported by individuals in the field who will closely monitor the progress of the program on a school-by-school basis.

MC will collect and analyze the data from the pilot schools and begin expanding the program to include all schools in the targeted areas.

MC will continue training the Small Management Committee (SMCI) at each school in the program on proposal writing and identification of school needs to prepare to request small grants.

MC will develop the capacity of Vision Eritrea to effectively work with SMCI's to monitor the distribution of the commodities

MC will develop educational materials that will be distributed in the local communities to promote girls education.

GFE in Action

Twelve-year-old Osman Mohammed Idris of the Rehay School in Anseba zone knows adversity. Both his parents are dead and he is living with elderly grandparents who are in poor health. They can do little more for him than provide a roof over his head. Osman began hanging around the army camp in his village, but the soldiers did what they could to help him. In March 2002, MC began the GFE program in Osman's school. "The biscuits help me so much because I have no mother or father," says Osman. "They are both my breakfast and lunch. They give me energy to pay attention in class and learn. This is important to me because if I do well, I can go to junior secondary boarding school next year."

Amna Mohammed Ali, age 13, attends Kertset School in Anseba zone. "Amna is clever," her teacher reports. "She is the cleverest student in the class." Amna squirms shyly as her teacher praises her. She nervously reaches to adjust her head covering but returns her left arm to its usual hiding place beneath her scarf as soon as possible. She wants no one to notice that she is missing her left hand. When Amna was a little girl, she picked up a landmine in a field near her house. Her excitement about the prospect of finding a new toy was met with tragedy. She lost a hand but was lucky that her injuries were not worse. Today, Amna again is lucky. Her school in this remote village of Kertset participates in the MC GFE program, and Amna and the other students receive a packet of high-energy biscuits every day they come to school. "I have to walk two and one-half hours one way every day to come to school. Before the biscuits, I used to miss school sometimes. I had to leave my house before breakfast and did not get home in time for lunch. Many days, I just did not have the energy to walk in the heat through the mountains," says Amna. "Now, the biscuits give me power. I am not absent from school anymore."

Fiori Ocqbit, age 9, attends Kermad School in Anseba zone. "I like school. I want to continue my studies and become a teacher," she says. It is hard to believe that she used to be so hungry that she would fall asleep in class and not do her schoolwork. All of that has changed. "When I get biscuits, I get energy and I can follow my class work," she says. "Things at home have changed, too. Now that I'm getting biscuits at school, I am not so hungry anymore, so my two brothers and three sisters get the food that I used to eat. Everybody is getting more food. Next summer, when my 6-year-old brother is old enough to go to pre-school, I will tell him that he *MUST* come to school."

Ibrahim Humed is a PTA chairperson at Rehay School and a man who understands the value of public service. He served his country as a fighter during the war of liberation from Ethiopia. After the war ended, he returned to his life as a farmer, but his reputation earned him a volunteer position as a mediator on the local judiciary. In his opinion, though, perhaps his most important public service is that of PTA chairperson at Rehay school. "I grew up during colonial times and only got to finish grade three," he says. "I understand the value of education and I want my kids to have an opportunity that I did not have. It is the same with all of the parents here."

PTA chairperson Ibrahim Humed continues: "The program is having a big impact on so many levels for both the students and the community. For the students, the biscuits help them come to school. Some students come from a village called Dareko, a three-hour walk *one way* through heat and rocky mountains. There is drought there. Before they received biscuits from Mercy Corps, if they came to school, they would sleep through class because they were so tired from making their journey with no food or water, and they certainly would not come to school two days in a row. Now, they are happy. Their stomachs are full. They come to school every day on time. Before the biscuits, students were running to the clinic all the time for sickness. Sickness is the result of what? Lack of food. There is a change. No students are going to the clinic in Melebso now (the nearest clinic, which is a three-hour walk). *There is a change.*"

He also reports a change for his children. "Before they received biscuits from Mercy Corps," he says, "as soon as they got home from school, they would complain about being hungry and ask for food. Now they do not complain any more. The biscuits are making a big difference at home."

The biscuits are having an impact within the community as well. Now, at least four people from the community, including Ibrahim Humed, show up every day to help distribute high-energy biscuits to students and to make tea for the children to drink. A student runs from the classroom to ring the school's improvised bell – the casing from a tank shell left over from the war of independence. As the bell rings and students begin pouring into the schoolyard, Ibrahim does his final check on the tea ladies and the biscuits to ensure that today's distribution will go smoothly. "Thank you, Mercy Corps, for everything," he says.

Ethiopia

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

The World Food Program (WFP) project in Ethiopia targets food deficit areas where enrollment of girls averages approximately 45 percent. Enrollment levels for the last three years have steadily increased, particularly for girls. In schools where WFP has been conducting school feeding for the last few years, the enrollment increases averaged between 20 and 28 percent for the first two years of data collection, then leveling off to approximately 4 to 8 percent for the last year of school feeding. Infrastructure facilities, such as latrines and water access, are typically available in most WFP schools. Greater emphasis on increased retention at the higher grades could benefit this country's school feeding program.

Country Overview

Ethiopia's economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for half of the gross domestic product (GDP), 90 percent of exports, and 80 percent of total employment. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent droughts and poor cultivation practices. As many as 4.6 million people need food assistance annually. The war with Eritrea forced the government to spend scarce resources on the military and to scale back ambitious development plans. Foreign investment has declined significantly. Government taxes imposed in late 1999 to raise money for the war depressed an already-weak economy. The war forced the government to improve roads and other parts of the previously neglected infrastructure, but only certain regions of the nation benefited. Recovery from the war is mostly contingent on natural factors.

Ethiopia is one of the educationally least developed countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1995, the adult illiteracy rate was 65.5 percent (54 percent for men, 74 percent for women). Moreover, due to high dropout and repetition rates, only about one-fifth of children enrolled in primary school complete grade six. These extremely low achievements in the education sector can be attributed to several factors. The protracted civil war, which ended only in 1991, destroyed educational infrastructure and severely disrupted educational services, particularly in the central highlands and in northern Ethiopia. Also, the direct and indirect costs associated with sending children to school are too high for many families. In addition, large parts of the country are inhabited by population groups, including nomadic groups, who are difficult to reach with education. Another factor is the insufficient attention and funding accorded to education by the previous government, resulting in a poor quality of education and extremely limited school facilities.

The overall primary enrollment rate for girls in 1994 and 1995 was 22 percent, compared with 36 percent for boys. However, in some rural areas, fewer than 5 percent of school-age girls attend school. Education for girls is limited by economic factors (direct cost of education for the family), the need for girls' labor at home, concerns about girls' safety at school, and many traditional beliefs and practices such as early marriage.

Household food insecurity is a national problem in Ethiopia, with an estimated 90 percent of rural households affected either by chronic or transitory food shortages. In the food insecure areas of Ethiopia, school children walk an average of three to four kilometers (or one hour) to reach the school on an empty stomach each morning, primarily due to food shortages at home. Additionally, the nutritional problems reduce the learning capacity of the school children, weaken their commitment to school, and hinder their active participation in educational activities. Physical and mental development is stunted, and morbidity rates increase as a result of the children's vulnerability to infectious diseases.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Corn-soy blend	3,000	August 2001
	990	September 2001
	4,000	November 2001
	2,310	December 2001
Vegetable oil	630	November 2001

Project Overview

In December 1996, the Government of Ethiopia launched the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP). This program is currently being implemented with full support of the donors, including the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

Recently, the government allocated an increasing share of the national budget to education and human resource development. The national budget focuses on the expansion of primary education, emphasizes quality improvements, and aims at achieving a more equitable distribution of opportunities in education while reducing gender and regional imbalances.

This project is an expansion of WFP's previous pilot activities in the education sector and involves assisting children who are attending primary schools and kindergarten in the rural areas of four regions where food insecurity is most prevalent and attendance rates are the lowest, particularly for girls. These regions are Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and Afar.

Goals and objectives: It is expected that food aid under this activity will:

- Act as an incentive to increase children's school attendance and encourage families to enroll and maintain their children in school.
- Act as a catalyst to stimulate community and parental efforts to participate in school-related activities.
- Provide a nutritional supplement and dietary support to prevent short-term hunger, increase children's attention, and help ensure more active participation of children in classroom activities.
- Contribute to meeting children's nutritional deficiencies and thus reduce incidence of diseases related to micronutrient deficiencies.

Within the framework of the government's ESDP, the activities are intended to meet the following immediate objectives at assisted primary schools and kindergartens:

- Contribute to covering an adequate proportion of daily micronutrient requirements, particularly of vitamin A, iron, and iodine.
- Improve students' capacity to concentrate and assimilate information by relieving their short-term hunger.
- Contribute to stabilizing attendance and reducing dropout rates.
- Contribute to increasing enrollment, particularly of girls.

Implementation status: WFP will provide two locally produced and blended commodities, Famix and high-energy biscuits. These products are easy and quick to prepare and are suitable in terms of demand for water and fuel. Additionally, and of great importance, the school children like the biscuits and Famix, a locally produced, high-energy supplementary food/drink provided to children under 5 years old. Local communities and especially parents groups are involved in the management of the project. They provide water, storage, and manpower for running the feeding operation at the schools.

The rations are distributed in the following manner:

- For half-day schools, an open packet of four biscuits is provided to each child upon arrival at school. The children can eat what they want right away. Using the cellophane packet, they can also safely save some of the biscuits to eat later in the day. The Famix is served at mid-morning to allow adequate time for its preparation.
- For full-day students, an open package of four biscuits is given to each child upon arrival. Famix drink is served during the mid-morning break. Porridge and an additional two biscuits are given at lunchtime.

To the extent possible, all commodities are purchased locally in Ethiopia. In order to increase resources for the project, WFP retains the option to import wheat to be exchanged for biscuits and Famix. If blended food or biscuits prove to be unavailable in sufficient quantities locally, they are imported. In all cases, the Ministry of Education is responsible for covering all relevant import duties and taxes.

All rural primary schools qualify for WFP assistance if they meet the following criteria:

- Accessibility for food transport and supervision. However, in order to not exclude remote rural schools, parents at such schools will be encouraged to take over food transport from the road head.
- Availability of a reliable and safe water source, along with adequate storage and kitchen facilities.
- Capacity to accommodate the influx of new students likely to result from the activity.
- Readiness of school staff and parents to form a School Feeding Committee to supervise the activity; this committee must have at least two female members.
- Readiness of parents/communities to support the project by providing fuel wood and water, ensuring food preparation (either by paying for cooks or by assuming the cooking through voluntary labor), constructing store room and kitchen facilities where needed, and ensuring food transport from the nearest road head if necessary.

Project Impact

Over the five-year period, the activity's outputs are projected to be the following:

- An annual average of 125,000 primary students, of whom at least 45 percent are girls, at 221 primary schools will be fed a daily snack for 200 days a year. These figures include 500 kindergarten students at four kindergartens. Half-day students will receive a daily ration of 133 grams of biscuits (four biscuits) and 50 grams of Famix drink, whereas full-day students will receive a daily ration of 200 grams of biscuits (six biscuits), 50 grams of Famix drink, and 100 grams of Famix porridge for a total of 20 million rations a year.
- Training will be provided for 288 school teachers, head teachers, assistants, and zonal and regional staff involved in the implementation of this activity. Training will cover recordkeeping and reporting, as well as proper food handling and storage.
- Training will be provided in food preparation, hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition for 96 parents and kitchen helpers. At newly assisted schools, food preparation staff will be paid a daily ration of three kilograms of wheat for the first year. After that period, the community is expected to be responsible for food preparation, providing either cash or in-kind labor.

GFE in Action

One of the teachers at the Mukadera Primary School in the Fitcha area said that the food made a noticeable difference in student behavior. "Even the children's voices change and become stronger once they get the food in their bellies."

The Gambia

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

Approximately 60,000 primary school children in 260 rural public schools receive a morning beverage and a lunch 160 days a year. Several non-governmental organizations (NGO's) participate in training sessions for parent-teacher associations to ensure that members of the community, particularly women, are actively involved in the management of school canteens and are aware of educational problems. Enrollment levels have increased significantly—more than 100 percent in the first years of implementation.

Country Overview

The Gambia is both a least developed country and a low-income, food-deficit country. It ranked 165th on the Human Development Index of 1998 and has one of the highest population growth rates in the sub-Saharan region (4.2 percent a year).

The national literacy rate is over 90 percent, but in areas such as the Upper River Division, the rate is only 52 percent for men and 22 percent for women. School enrollment rates in rural areas are only 49 percent, with striking disparities between girls and boys. Poor primary school achievement is also highlighted by low attendance and high dropout rates, especially for girls. Household poverty, cultural practices, and inadequate school facilities contribute to the poor education system.

Project Overview

Following a 1-year temporary assistance effort, the project will target food-insecure rural areas with low elementary school attendance rates. World Food Program (WFP) food aid is used to help poor families send their children to school. Meanwhile, supporting activities are undertaken in coordination with the Government of The Gambia, parent-teacher associations, the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and NGO's. These activities include rehabilitation or expansion of schools, improvement in the school environment for girls, training of more female teachers, revisions in the curriculum, and support for community-based organizations.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Corn-soy blend	300	July 2001
	690	November 2001
Rice	600	July 2001
	90	November 2001
	1,710	December 2001
Vegetable oil	80	November 2001

Project Impact

Approximately 60,000 primary schoolchildren in 260 rural public schools receive a morning beverage and lunch 160 days a year. Several NGO's are tasked with training sessions for parent-teacher associations to ensure that members of the community, particularly women, are involved in managing school canteens and in addressing local educational problems.

Ghana

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

About 29,600 students per year will benefit from the World Food Program (WFP) take-home rations over the project period. Food aid will serve as an incentive to households to enroll their girls in primary and junior secondary education and to maintain the girls' regular attendance. Each girl pupil will receive monthly rations of eight kilograms of cereals and two liters of vegetable oil as long as she attends at least 85 percent of school days every month.

Country Overview

Ghana is a low-income, food-deficit country. The population, estimated at 18.4 million, is growing at an annual rate of 2.5 percent, according to the October 2000 Ghana census. The United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) Human Development Report for 2000 ranked Ghana 129th out of the 174 countries assessed. The country's per capita gross national product (GNP) is \$390, which is below the average for sub-Saharan Africa and below the \$530-per-person average GNP for all low-income countries.

Basic education for children, which in Ghana includes primary education (grades one through six) and junior secondary education (grades seven through nine), continues to face problems of access and quality throughout the country. Between 1987 and 1997, enrollment rates at primary schools dropped from 75.5 percent to 72.5 percent. The gender gap in primary enrollment persists, although it improved slightly during the same period. In rural areas of the northern savannah, only 67 percent of eligible boys and 62 percent of girls are enrolled in primary school—rates that are substantially below the national average. Attendance rates are low. Primary school attendance rates are roughly 37 for boys and 35 percent for girls. Furthermore, the net enrollment ratio in junior secondary school is significantly lower for girls compared with boys, reflecting a number of poverty-related socioeconomic factors, including early pregnancies and the increased labor and economic value (i.e., bride-wealth) of adolescent girls. Women in the three northern savannah regions with high illiteracy rates (85 percent) not only have limited access to land, credit, and agricultural inputs, but also face more socio-cultural constraints than do women in other regions.

Food aid serves as an incentive to beneficiary households to enroll their girls in primary and junior secondary education and to maintain the girls' regular attendance. Each girl pupil will receive monthly rations of eight kilograms of cereals and two liters of vegetable oil as long as she attends at least 85 percent of school days every month. The Ghana Education Service (GES) under the Ministry of Education (MOE) will implement the activity.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Wheat	800	September 2001
Vegetable oil	270	July 2001

Project Overview

The targeting of WFP activities is based on a chronic vulnerability assessment, last carried out in November 2000 and April 2001. The assessment includes factors such as food insecurity, proneness to disasters, poverty, health, girls' share of the school population, and HIV/AIDS prevalence. This has confirmed that the incidence of absolute poverty is highest in the upper west, upper east, and northern regions, and also that the burden of poverty falls disproportionately on food crop farmers, a large proportion of whom are women. Therefore, WFP assistance continues to be concentrated in the northern savannah regions.

Goals and objectives: The immediate objectives of the activity are:

- Increased enrollment of girls, increased school attendance, and reduced dropout rates among girls.
- Reduced disparity between boys' and girls' enrollment rates in school.

Other donor support: The Government of Ghana's contribution to this activity is estimated at more than \$1.2 million, including internal transportation, shipping, and handling.

Project Impact

On average, 29,600 pupils per year will benefit from the take-home ration over the project period. Approximately two-thirds of the beneficiaries will be primary school girls, and one-third of beneficiaries will be girls at junior secondary schools. Intended benefits include an increase in enrollment and retention rates and the improved eligibility of girls for junior secondary schooling. This will give girls increased access to further education and vocational training, leading to enhanced income-earning ability.

Enrollment increases have averaged 10 percent during the last three years. The steady increases in enrollment levels for both girls and boys have drawn more commitment from the parents. Added emphasis on school infrastructure is needed in future programming. Additional donors could be helpful in providing kitchen and latrine facilities.

Guinea

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

Enrollment levels for the Guinea WFP program have increased every year for the past three years. This program has made significant in-roads for girls in the educational system and has triggered an enrollment increase into the higher grade levels. Additionally, the number of teachers has increased over the last year, reducing the student-to-teacher ratio.

Country Overview

The ongoing civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone have had spillover effects in neighboring Guinea, which became host to some 300,000 refugees, mainly in its southeast region. The difficult situation faced by Guinea is compounded by widespread poverty among the population. According to the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Human Development Report for 2000, Guineans have an average life expectancy of 54 years and an illiteracy rate of 65 percent. The country's annual gross national product (GNP) is \$570 per person, and approximately 40 percent of its population lives in absolute poverty.

Of the children who do go to school, many drop out at the end of the third year when they are transferred to comprehensive-type schools, often far away from their home villages. Children often return home at midday to have lunch and prefer to stay home rather than walk all the way back to school in the afternoon. In all regions, and especially from the fourth year of elementary school, girls are more likely to drop out, stay away, or arrive late at school. This is because of their participation in household work or in economic activities, such as caring for household livestock.

Commodity Management

The Global Food for Education (GFE) donation for this project consisted of 150 metric tons of corn-soy blend, which arrived in November 2001.

Project Overview

Emergency school feeding is provided for food-insecure individuals in areas at high risk of malnutrition. These safety net programs also encourage communities to create sustainable assets and become more self-reliant. The ration level for emergency feeding is 628 kilocalories.

The goal of the school feeding program is to contribute to improving the nutritional status of groups identified as severely or moderately at risk through curative interventions such as therapeutic, supplementary, and maternal child health feeding, institutional feeding to vulnerable groups, and emergency school feeding for children in areas highly vulnerable to food insecurity.

The WFP program in Guinea is scheduled for the years 2002–2005 and aims to support national policies of poverty reduction, improvement of food security, and reduction of gender disparities. The program's objectives are:

- To reduce food insecurity.
- To promote the educational aspects of development.
- To give the poorest areas and communities an opportunity to achieve economic development.

In order to achieve those objectives, the program focuses on two sectors regarded as priorities: primary school enrollment and attendance in rural areas, and community rural development in the poorest areas, with special emphasis on education for women and girls.

Food aid is used as an instrument to fight hunger and poverty in the poorest rural areas of the country. It helps alleviate hunger in school children and rural populations, especially during the lean season, and works to improve their food security in a lasting manner by acting on the root causes of poverty. It helps poor, food-insecure households to invest in their children's—and especially their daughters'—education.

Immediate objectives are as follows:

- To ensure that pupils in the areas targeted by WFP eat regularly, and to contribute to the food security of the families of girls receiving dry rations.
- To increase enrollment in schools in those areas.
- To improve attendance rates and reduce dropout and afternoon absenteeism rates, especially for girls.
- To increase the ratio of girls attending classes at the target schools.

Project Impact

School meals provide children with the calories that they often lack. The additional calorie intake increases their participation in school work. In the medium to long-term, school meals help primary school children to become more attentive, reduce their absenteeism, and improve their ability to retain what they are taught.

Food aid provides a dietary supplement to schoolchildren in the target communities and helps them remain in the school system through the elementary grades. The school meal

also saves children from returning home to eat lunch—often a distance of several kilometers on foot—and reduces absenteeism in the afternoon.

Through the provision of dry rations, parents will be encouraged to enroll their daughters at school and keep them there. Rations represent an income transfer to family budgets and improve the food security of households.

Lastly, WFP assistance has increased the involvement of parents and of village communities in running their schools through the creation of School Friends' and Parents' Associations, which train members to manage their school canteens.

Kenya

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

Food provided in the school environment is extremely important to both teachers and students. Most parents do not send their children to school because of the cost of enrollment. However, even with cost as the major limiting factor in sending children to school, enrollment levels and numbers of teachers have been fairly stable for the last two years and are beginning to show an increase.

Country Overview

Kenya is a low-income, food-deficit country with an Aggregate Household Food Security Index of 71.7, ranking it 51st out of 61 countries. It has a population of 29 million (1997) and a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of \$281. In 1997, 43 percent of Kenya's population was living in absolute poverty. The incidence of poverty is highest in the arid and semi-arid land areas. In 1997, the national average Human Development Index ranked Kenya 134th out of 175 countries.

Since independence, education in Kenya has developed rapidly, resulting in impressive growth of qualified human capital. School enrollment increased from 892,000 in 1963 to 5.6 million in 1996 for primary grades, and from 801,000 in 1989 to over 1 million in 1996 for pre-primary schooling. Policies aimed at strengthening primary education led to a gross enrollment rate of 95 percent in 1989. High poverty levels and increasing costs of education shouldered by parents resulted in a decline in enrollment at the primary level to 77.5 percent by 1996.

Regional disparities in enrollment and achievement exist at all levels of education, with particularly low rates in some arid districts. Although there is gender parity in pre-primary and primary schools at the national level, there are pockets in arid and semi-arid areas where girls are still highly under-represented. Economic, social, and cultural constraints affect girls' enrollment, attendance, and achievement.

Women work an average of 56 hours per week, compared with 42 hours for men. The situation is similar for young girls, who work around twice as many hours as young boys. Women's participation in decision-making about household expenditures and other areas is limited.

Almost 18 percent of Kenyan school children suffer from chronic stunting, with another 34 percent showing mild-to-moderate growth retardation, according to a study by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Nutritional deprivation was found to be much more prevalent in arid and semi-arid land areas. It is not uncommon for only one meal to be prepared daily and for children to go to school without eating breakfast. Poor nutritional status increases the risk of frequent illness and the likelihood of poorer performance and grade repetition at school.

In arid and semi-arid areas, cultural values and limited income often lead to a strong bias toward educating boys at the expense of girls, who are valued more for their traditional roles fulfilled through marriage and child labor. Girls are disproportionately affected by lack of facilities and lack of security as they walk long distances from homesteads to schools. Alternative venues for primary education for girls, such as boarding or non-formal schools, are often inadequate or nonexistent.

Nairobi is estimated to have more than 50,000 street children, orphans, and child domestic workers. Children of teenage mothers, street mothers, and mothers suffering from HIV/AIDS are highly vulnerable. About half of Nairobi’s school-age children do not attend school. Children from households headed by women are least likely to go to school as they are need for household work.

Commodity Management

Under this World Food Program (WFP) feeding program, the daily food basket for pre-primary and primary school children consists of 150 grams of maize, 40 grams of beans, and 5 grams of vegetable oil. School children receive a maize meal porridge for a mid-morning snack and maize, beans, and oil for a midday meal—a dietary contribution equivalent to 700 kilocalories and 23 grams of protein per student per day.

Maize and beans are used as an in-kind grant to communities to undertake a number of labor-intensive activities at the school level. Emphasis is placed on building the capacity of school committee leaders and community groups to identify, plan, implement, and monitor their own school-based projects. This also gives support to the efforts of the Government of Kenya and of other agencies in strengthening school services. The school feeding program and the Ministry of Education are expanding their partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), through which the WFP food assistance is channeled to the targeted schools. Food may be used to assist in the development of school-based micro-enterprises aimed at increasing food production; for example, through a one-time grant to barter for a school-based livestock herd.

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Corn	54,000	June 2001
	2,400	January 2002
Vegetable oil	2,700	September 2001
Corn-soy milk	11,800	September 2001

Project Overview

Many of the schools supported through the school feeding program have considerable problems of access to clean water, adequate fuel wood supplies, and fruits and vegetables to supplement the basic school feeding program commodities. In addition, classroom space is inadequate in many schools, especially for pre-primary students.

The long-term objective is to promote universal education of socio-economically disadvantaged and nutritionally vulnerable children, especially girls, in pre-primary and primary schools in targeted arid and semi-arid land areas.

Active participation by girls and women in basic activities is reinforced through a series of community-based training activities. WFP and partners actively identify and promote positive female role models, facilitate additional resources targeted to women's and girls' education, and use local and international media exposure to highlight issues relating to hunger and poverty.

The types of projects that are supported include activities to:

- Reduce the labor and food energy demand on women and children by bringing domestic water and fuel wood supplies closer to the school.
- Rehabilitate or build more classrooms or other facilities, such as houses for women teachers.
- Encourage enterprises that produce food or income for school feeding.

The location and outreach of the NGO partners determine the geographical coverage within a targeted division.

Goals and objectives: The objectives of the program are to:

- Increase enrollment, prevent dropouts, and stabilize attendance at selected pre-primary, primary, and non-formal schools.
- Improve school facilities and assist school committees and communities in the identification and development of enterprises to sustain school feeding programs.
- Assist the Government of Kenya, donors, NGO's, and communities in disaster preparedness activities for populations affected by high levels of food insecurity.
- Decrease malnutrition levels of children and women in selected arid and semi-arid land areas.

The immediate objectives are to:

- Increase enrollment, prevent dropouts, and stabilize attendance at assisted pre-primary and primary schools.
- Improve the attention span and ultimately the learning capacity of students by relieving short-term hunger.

- Provide a significant contribution to the nutrient intakes of pre-primary and primary school children through the continuation of the school feeding program in targeted districts of arid and semi-arid land areas.
- Improve school facilities (water supply, classrooms, housing for women teachers, school-based agro-forestry).
- Assist school committees and communities in the identification and development of enterprises to sustain school feeding programs for the future.

Other donor support: The Government of Kenya continues to increase budget allocations for school feeding to complement community efforts. The contribution is about \$2.2 million per year, and its implementation capacity is adequate.

The contribution from NGO partners is estimated at \$1.3 million. Sisters of Mercy contributes about \$1.7 million per year, and the Catholic Diocese contributes \$100,231 per year.

Implementation status: The school feeding component remains as in the current plan of operations, with implementation being the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

Under the program:

- 270,000 pre-primary and primary school children per year, 50 percent of whom are girls, are receiving a food ration, cooked and supplied daily.
- Pupils' family members, especially women and girls, in 200 schools receive uncooked family rations.
- 15,000 pre-primary and primary school children in urban slum schools are receiving a food ration, cooked and supplied daily.

WFP has been supporting the Sisters of Mercy and the Catholic Diocese in serving Nairobi's urban slums. Under this project, 15,000 pre-primary and primary school children in formal and non-formal schools are receiving a mid-morning snack and hot lunch. Sisters of Mercy and the Catholic Diocese target the absolute poor and proactively promote the education and training of girls. Currently, girls represent 52 percent of enrolled children. The Ministry of Education handles overall food management and transfers food commodities to each NGO in Nairobi. Each NGO assumes responsibility for planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on the use of the food assistance.

Sustainability: Strategies for sustaining the school feeding program include:

- School-based livestock production to provide milk and meat, and for sale to earn income.
- Poultry keeping.
- Gardens and agro-forestry.
- Community fund-raising activities for establishing revolving funds managed by parent-teacher associations and school committees.

Project Impact

An annual average of 270,000 pre-primary (195 days per year) and primary (273 days per year) day and boarding students are fed. Food grants are provided to an average of 200 schools per year to undertake the improvement of facilities and school feeding sustainability enterprises.

Lessons Learned:

The following are major lessons learned regarding WFP's operations in Kenya:

- The Ministry of Education has been a very reliable partner in reaching the most disadvantaged populations because of its network of schools throughout the country.
- Food-for-work projects have relatively high overhead costs for the quantity of food delivered, so they are more cost-effective when integrated with other projects such as school feeding.
- Women's groups are a good entry point for community-based activities.
- Greater partnership is required with other development partners, especially at the school and community levels.
- Integrated approaches are required to overcome constraints to increase girls' enrollment and achievement at primary schools.

GFE in Action

In the Masai town of Kajiado, a teacher told visiting WFP officials that in 1995 there were only 98 enrolled students (64 boys and 34 girls) at the school. But with the introduction of school feeding, the number grew to 231 students in 1999—78 girls and 100 boys in the primary school, and 21 girls and 32 boys in the pre-primary school.

In one of the poorest regions of Kenya, the Turkana region, the Minister of Education attested in March 2001 that attendance increased by 130 percent for girls and 60 percent for boys within one year after the introduction of the school feeding program.

Madagascar

Adventist Development and Relief Agency

Summary of Findings

The school feeding program began in Madagascar in March 2002 in one of the two targeted regions. The donated corn-soy blend and nonfat dry milk would have enabled the Global Food for Education (GFE) school feeding project to distribute an estimated nine million meals for 50,000 schoolchildren in 178 public primary schools over the 10 school months (September–June). As of February 2002, 49 metric tons of NFDM powder and 98 tons of corn-soy blend had been distributed to these schools. The program was halted in Antsirabe region and never got started in Antanyfotsy region because of political and economic instability in Madagascar. However, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Madagascar is scheduled to resume the GFE program in both regions as soon as the political and economic situation allows. The program will continue through the 2003 school year.

Country Overview

Madagascar, an island nation of predominantly mixed Asian and African origin, has a population of about 15.5 million people. The gross domestic product (GDP) is about \$3.8 billion, with agriculture accounting for 29 percent of GDP. Annual capita income is about \$269, making Madagascar one of the poorest countries in the world. In fiscal year 2000, Madagascar's exports were valued at \$1.06 billion, mainly made up of apparel, shrimp, vanilla, coffee, sugar, cloves, graphite, essential oils, industrial stones, and gemstones. Imports were \$1.5 billion, including consumer goods, foodstuffs, crude oil, machinery and vehicles, iron and steel, electronics, computers, and accessories.

In December 2000, the boards of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank concurred that the country is eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. On March 1, 2001, the IMF board granted the country \$103 million for 2001-03 under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). Resources freed up under HIPC were to be directed toward improving health, education, rural roads, water, and direct support to communities. In addition, on March 7, 2001, the Paris Club approved a debt cancellation of \$161 million. On Feb. 28, 2001, the African Development Bank (ADB) approved under the HIPC a debt cancellation of \$71.46 million and granted in June 2001 an additional credit of \$20 million to fight AIDS and poverty¹⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁰ World Bank Report, Madagascar, 2002, and CIA Country Fact Book, 2002.

Partly as a result of these credits but also as a result of previous reforms, average GDP growth exceeded the population growth rate. Madagascar's appeal to investors' stemmed from its competitive, trainable work force. However, the country then plunged into civil unrest as a result of disputed elections held in December 2001.

Chronic malnutrition is as high as 51 percent in Madagascar among children less than 5 years old. As many as 52 percent of rural children show signs of stunted growth by the age of 24 months. Severe malnutrition affects about 5 percent of rural children under 5 and about 3 percent of urban children.

The province of Antananarivo, in which the two selected school districts are located, has some of the highest levels of malnutrition. The ratio of caloric intake from proteins is less than 10 percent for this region and is as low as 8.5 percent in rural areas. The recommended ratio is 10-12 percent. The majority of the caloric intake (about 60 percent) is from rice, with another 25 percent from roots and tubers such as sweet potatoes and manioc. The population of this region also suffers from an acute shortage of iodine, despite efforts to promote iodized salt through commercial channels.

The two districts are located in the central high plateau of Madagascar, which is bisected from north to south by the main roadway from the capital city of Antananarivo to the second largest non-port city of Fianarantsoa. This access to transportation, along with the pleasant highland tropical climate, made this region one of the most densely populated rural agrarian areas of Madagascar. The poor quality of the iron-rich red soils, along with nutritive depletion, results in comparatively low crop productivity relative to many other parts of the region. Rice production is the primary agricultural activity. The total rice production in the province of Antananarivo provides less than half of the consumption demand for the area.

The selected districts had these characteristics:

- Centrally located in Madagascar and accessible, making them ideal for a high-profile pilot program.
- High density of rural population, with chronic cyclic food shortages.
- Low protein intake in the diet.
- Low school enrollment rates of children ages 5-8 (40-50 percent).
- High dropout rates for children ages 12-14, especially among girls (up to 50 percent).
- Local district administrators keen on promoting development and working with ADRA.
- ADRA's access to a distribution site located directly between the two districts.
- Within the strategic operating zone of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other ADRA partners.

Given high poverty rates in these two districts, even by Madagascar standards, ADRA chose to implement the GFE program in these two districts.

Commodity Management

ADRA/Madagascar requested and received 4,900 tons of various commodities—corn, corn-soy blend, and non-fat dry milk.

Commodity	Packaging	Metric Tons
Corn	50 kg bag	3, 400
Corn-soy blend	25 kg bag	900
Non-fat dry milk	25 kg	600
Total		4, 900

Of the donated commodities, ADRA had planned to monetize 3,550 tons, including 3,400 tons of corn and 150 tons of non-fat dry milk, and directly distribute the remaining 1,350 tons. As of March 2002, 1,350 tons consisting 900 tons of corn-soy blend and 450 tons of non-fat dry milk had been shipped to Madagascar.

The first shipment of 450 tons of corn-soy blend arrived in the port of Tamatave on Dec. 30, 2001, and was transported to Antsirabe warehouses for distribution in the school feeding program. ADRA received 150 tons of nonfat dry milk powder on Jan. 9, 2001, which has also been transported to Antsirabe for distribution in the school feeding project. ADRA received another 450 tons of corn-soy blend, which has been sitting at the port since Feb. 4, 2002. This product is also destined for distribution in the Antsirabe school feeding program. Another shipment of 300 tons (18 containers) of non-fat dry milk arrived in the port of Tamatave around March 10, 2002. This shipment is partly for monetization (9 containers) and partly for distribution (9 containers).

Due to the civil strife, the commodities remain in warehouses. Organizations such as the Peace Corps, USAID, and all non-essential U.S. Embassy personnel have been evacuated from the country.

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: ADRA's primary goal is to provide a meal of corn-soy blend porridge prepared with iodized salt every school day during two school years for up to 90,000 primary school students in two rural school districts of Antsirabe II and Antanyfotsy.

These districts are located in the central highlands of Madagascar within the province of Antananarivo. The program is geared to school children in both public and private schools within the district. It calls for students to receive a ration of 125 grams of cooked corn-soy blend per day. A pilot group of about 9,000 students are to receive a similar ration of instant breakfast cereal, a locally processed product of precooked, flaked, corn-soy blend with vitamins, minerals, and sugar added. The cost of this value-added product

is to be partially paid through exchange for corn-soy blend, which will be transformed into the same instant breakfast cereal with different packaging for commercial sale near where the product is being tested in the schools. This is intended to enhance the chances of sustainability of the program by getting consumers used to the taste and value of the vitamin-enriched product.

As a secondary objective, ADRA planned to monetize the corn to collaborate with the local government husbandry services and commercial veterinary services to stimulate commercial chicken and egg production in Madagascar and particularly in the target region of the school feeding project. Specific goals for the program are as follows:

- 5-percent increase in enrollment rates.
- 10-percent increase in retention of students through their final year.
- Improved physical growth rates of beneficiary children.
- Improved passing rates on school exit exams.
- Increased parent association participation in school improvement activities.
- 50-percent increase in commercial chicken/egg production in target region.
- Increased consumption of protein from chicken/egg source in regional diets.

Implementation status: As of March 2002, ADRA/Madagascar's GFE program operated in 178 public primary schools in the Antsirabe region. The imported corn-soy blend and non-fat dry milk powder would have enabled the GFE school feeding project to distribute an estimated nine million meals for 50,000 school children in these 178 public primary schools over the next 10 school months. As of February 2002, 49 tons of non-fat dry milk powder and 98 tons of corn-soy blend flour had been distributed to these schools. The program was halted in Antsirabe region and never got started in the Antanyfotsy region.

Sustainability: The ADRA agreement makes sustainability a major goal for the GFE program in Madagascar.

Monitoring and evaluation: ADRA has developed a monitoring and evaluation system under the agreement, the objectives which are to:

- Collect basic data regarding the distribution and the number of beneficiaries.
- Collect pre- and post- intervention statistics on enrollments, retention rates, student health and growth records, and exit exam pass rates.

ADRA also planned to conduct a final evaluation survey through a random cluster sample of households in the target area to assess project impacts. ADRA also set up a monitoring system with full-time monitoring staff to visit each implementing school to collect the necessary data for evaluation. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to set up infrastructure in Madagascar to hire a local monitor to collect data on a sample of 20 schools participating in the GFE program. Because of the political and economic instability in Madagascar, these plans have been postponed.

Project Impact

Until political and economic instability returns, implementation of the GFE program in Madagascar will be severely hampered, making it impossible for ADRA to accomplish its objectives.

Unanticipated Outcomes

Clearly, ADRA did not anticipate the political and economic instability that has engulfed Madagascar since GFE program began, resulting in the following unanticipated outcomes:

- There were larger than usual (approximately \$3,000 per day) demurrage charges for commodities at the port.
- ADRA was unable to pay the \$38,000 for customs clearance and transport of these goods to ADRA warehouses in Antsirabe. This account for services provided has been outstanding since the beginning of January 2002. ADRA also needed another \$30,000 to pay for the clearance and transport of the second and third shipments to Antsirabe for distribution in the project.
- The instability and financial crisis affected ADRA/Madagascar's ability to successfully negotiate planned monetization sales.
- In addition, ADRA had to begin paying the extended port storage fees at Tamatave for the 23 containers that have been sitting there since the beginning of February.
- The inability of ADRA to realize the projected operational budget from monetization estimated at \$221,000 put the entire GFE project in jeopardy.

Next Steps

USDA will monitor the political and economic situation in Madagascar and formulate a plan of action for monitoring and evaluation of the GFE program. In the interim, ADRA/Madagascar will keep USDA abreast of the situation in the implementing schools. As soon as the instability subsides, USDA plans to set up the monitoring infrastructure, hire a local monitor, select sample schools, and collect relevant data for the evaluation of the GFE program.

Mozambique World Food Program

Summary of Findings

By covering part of the costs of schooling through school feeding, this project will enable poor households to enroll and keep their children in school, including in boarding facilities. Providing two meals per day in day schools will reduce students' short-term hunger and improve the concentration of children who have walked long distances from home to school. This is expected to lead to improved performance and reduced repetition and dropout rates.

Take-home rations will cover part of the costs sustained by families in sending their children to school. Take-home rations for girls can reduce the significant gender gap in education by providing an effective incentive in overcoming the obstacles to letting girls attend school. A similar logic applies to orphans. They are usually cared for by foster families who do not have the means to support their schooling and who depend on the labor of the orphan children to cover the additional costs of supporting them.

Country Overview

Despite growth rates of around 10 percent over the past four years, Mozambique remains among the poorest countries in the world. Its per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was \$240 in 1999. Moreover, economic progress is not evenly distributed: About 68 percent of the people live in absolute poverty, and 64 percent live in food-insecure households. Total population is 17.2 million, and population density is only about 20 persons per square kilometer. With 80 percent of the population living in rural areas and the economy based predominantly on agriculture, Mozambique is particularly vulnerable to recurring natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and pests.

In schools, the net enrollment rate drops from 53.8 percent for the first level of primary education (grades one through five) to only 2 percent for the second level of primary education (grades six and seven). There are not enough primary and secondary schools within walking distance of all rural communities. Therefore, strategically located boarding institutions for primary, secondary, technical, and professional education are a necessity. Most rural and peri-urban families have an income far below the average GDP of \$240 per year and are, therefore, not able to pay the \$32 per year it would cost (using local prices) to feed each student.

Children in rural and peri-urban areas must walk long distances to reach one of Mozambique's 626 second-level primary schools. As a result of socio-economic conditions and dietary habits (only one meal per day, usually at night), most children are hungry when they arrive at school and have difficulty concentrating and learning. This

contributes to high dropout rates (about 20 percent between grades five and six) and high repetition rates (25 percent).

The main deterrent to sending girls to school is the socio-economic situation of their families. Faced with limited financial resources, parents send their sons rather than their daughters to school. From the age of 10, girls often have to stay at home in order to carry out domestic and agricultural tasks. Cultural and religious habits also play an important role in girls' low participation in primary education.

The number of orphans under age 15 is currently about 504,000. By 2006, their numbers are expected to more than double to 1.1 million, with the increase mainly reflecting the deaths of parents suffering from HIV/AIDS. Current estimates of HIV infection rates are almost 25 percent in the rural areas of the central region for people ages 15-45, and around 15 percent for the same age group in other regions. Studies indicate that children in households where one or more adults are infected by AIDS or are deceased are less likely than other children to perform well in school and more likely to be absent from classes or to drop out of school entirely.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Rice	2,000	September 2001
	5,000	January 2002
Corn-soy milk	200	September 2001
	1,000	January 2002
Vegetable oil	100	September 2001
	200	December 2001
	300	January 2002

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: This activity pursues the following objectives:

- To increase access for children from poor households to day schools and improve their learning achievements (grades one through seven).
- To increase the percentage of girls at schools for the second level of education.
- To secure access to the second level of education for orphans.
- To secure access to boarding institutions for all levels of education for children from poor households.

This activity will contribute toward fulfillment of the right to education and improved learning capacity through increased enrollment and attendance at school, particularly for girls and orphans.

Implementation status: The targeting of WFP activities is based on a chronic vulnerability assessment, which includes factors such as food insecurity, proneness to disasters, poverty, health, the percentage of girls in the school population, and HIV/AIDS prevalence. The groups targeted for WFP assistance include:

- Students and parents' associations at rural and peri-urban schools at the second level of primary education (grades six and seven), as well as those at primary schools.
- Education systems (grades one through seven) where long walking distances and short-term hunger reduce children's concentration and their capacity to learn.
- Girls and their families in schools participating in the school feeding activity in provinces where girls' share of the school population is under 30 percent.
- Orphans (defined as children up to age 15 who have lost one or both parents) and their families in the schools participating in the school feeding activity in the provinces, where HIV/AIDS prevalence among adults ages 15–49 exceeds 20 percent.
- Students and staff of boarding schools.

Boarding school directors are responsible for implementing the activity at their schools. A parent-teacher association establishes the necessary infrastructure and ensures access to safe drinking water, sufficient manpower, and fuel for food preparation. The association also organizes food preparation and the distribution of meals.

At the beginning of each semester, (twice per year), mothers of enrolled girls present themselves at the school with their daughters to receive the family take-home ration. Based on the Ministry of Education's criteria for sitting exams, a minimum attendance rate is the criterion for receiving take-home rations. Care providers and the orphans in their care present themselves at the school twice a year in order to receive the take-home ration.

WFP provides the necessary non-food items, such as kitchen utensils, to enable each day school to start its canteen activities. Training is provided for the parents' association in overall management, gender issues and girls' education, food storage, cooking, and sanitation. Training is also a part of project implementation for all relevant partners.

Other donor support: The education sector receives substantial support from a large number of bilateral and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the Danish International Development Agency, and the Swedish International Development Agency. Several of these programs complement WFP's activities in such areas as the rehabilitation of boarding school infrastructure and provision of teaching materials. WFP is actively participating in the donor coordination group for the education sector.

The Government of Mozambique's contribution over 5 years is estimated at \$4.95 million.

Project Impact

The beneficiaries of this activity are:

- Children at schools selected for day school feeding. Their selection is based on criteria that include poverty or chronic food insecurity and an average walk to school of more than 5 kilometers. Each year, 30,000 pupils enrolled in primary schools (grades one through seven) in rural and peri-urban areas will receive two nutritious meals on each school day.
- 6,400 girls enrolled at the selected day schools in the provinces where the percentage of girls in the school population is below 30 percent. These girls receive two take-home rations per school year.
- 1,600 orphans enrolled at these schools in the provinces where HIV/AIDS prevalence among those ages 15-45 is above 20 percent. These orphans receive two take-home rations during each school year.
- Boarding school students whose families are considered so poor that the cost of food would exclude the students from access to continued education. In addition to 40,000 pupils in boarding schools, 1,800 teachers and 1,700 staff receive three daily meals throughout each school year.

Effective beneficiary targeting under this program, as well as strong donors (including local organizations), lead to greater impacts in schools under this program. Enrollment increases measured in newly participating WFP schools are greater than increases in those schools participating over the last few years (an average of 16 percent compared to 8.5 percent). However, average attendance levels in existing schools are higher than in new schools (89 percent as compared to 86 percent). This trend would indicate that the value placed on education increases as more children and their parents are brought into the school environment through school feeding programs.

Senegal Counterpart International, Inc.

Summary of Findings

The Counterpart International, Inc., (CPI) Global Food for Education (GFE) program in Senegal, originally scheduled to start at the end of fiscal year 2001, did not begin until late in April 2002 as a result of a disagreement between CPI/Senegal and the Government of Senegal on monetization of commodities in Senegal. CPI plans to monetize 6,960 tons of rice and use the proceeds to fund an information campaign on the importance of education and nutrition. CPI also plans to distribute 590 tons of various commodities directly to 53,925 school children in grades one through five in the Podor district in St. Louis Prefecture. The disagreement delaying the project was resolved in April 2002. The commodities for distribution and monetization have been "called forward." The GFE feeding program will start in September 2002 and continue through July 2003.

Country Overview

Senegal, situated in West Africa with a population of about 9.8 million, is among the countries that pioneered democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰¹ The country gained independence in 1960 and for a long time was highly visible in the international arena. It has maintained a relatively stable political and social environment but, for the past several years, has been confronted by a rebellion in the southern part of the country.¹⁰²

Senegal has a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$4.4 billion and annual per capita income of \$490, with a population growth rate of about 2.7 percent a year. A total of 47 percent of the population is under the age of 15. The adult literacy rate is 38 percent, with primary school enrollment at 56 percent of the primary-school-age children.¹⁰³ Seventy percent of the rural population works in the agricultural sector, and rural areas contain 80 percent of the country's poverty. In addition, Senegal faces structural food deficits because production covers only 50 percent of consumption requirements. Progress on the economic front has not yet been sufficient to make a dent in poverty. In February 2001, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a third annual arrangement under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF).¹⁰⁴

Although the Government of Senegal has repeatedly expressed a strong public and private commitment to education since independence, the quality of schooling and percentage of female students remain low, while the student-teacher ratio is high. The result has been a high rate of adult illiteracy and few graduates from rural areas.

¹⁰¹ CIA World Fact Book, 2002.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ World Data Indicators, 2002 and World Bank report #15523-SE, 1996.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Just four years ago, only 31 percent of students passed grade six and only 53 percent passed grade nine examinations. Not enough children have access to schooling and educational quality is low for those who do. In 1980, public expenditure on pre-primary and primary education was 42.8 percent of the total expenditure on education. That figure increased to 50.1 percent in 1985, but had fallen to only 34.2 percent by 1996.¹⁰⁵ In 1997, the public expenditure on total education was only 3.7 percent of the gross national product.¹⁰⁶

According to the World Bank in 1999, more than one million children attended primary school, while only 174,114 attended secondary school. In 1980, 568,000 children of primary school age were not enrolled in school. This number increased to 583,000 in 1997. At the same time, children of secondary school age who were not enrolled in school increased from 685,000 to 1,092,000.¹⁰⁷

These low rates of education extend beyond the urban areas, affecting all levels of education in the rural communities. While Dakar has a primary education enrollment rate of 91.5 percent, other regions average only 55.4 percent.¹⁰⁸ According to the Demographic Health Survey in 1992/93, only 21 percent of rural females attended primary grades, while 78 percent of their urban counterpart attended. The primary school completion rate for the same demographic group was 2 percent in rural areas and 23.9 percent in urban areas. Rural males had a 28.8-percent primary school enrollment rate and a 7.1 percent completion rate, while rates for urban males were 92.3 percent and 42.5 percent, respectively.¹⁰⁹

The percentage of girls enrolling in grade one who reached grade five increased from 82 percent in 1980 to 85 percent in 1996, while boys remained the same at 89 percent. The percentage of eligible girls who were not enrolled in primary school increased from 55 percent to 57 percent from 1980 to 1997.¹¹⁰ The percentage of girls in total primary school enrollment increased from 39 percent in 1970 to 45 percent in 1997.¹¹¹

Issues contributing to the education problems faced by Senegal's population include: an inadequate number of schools; the prevalence of schools offering only five grades (35.6 percent of children are enrolled in these schools)¹¹²; high pupil-teacher ratios, which have reached 56:1 in primary schools¹¹³; and continuing gender inequalities resulting in girls still accounting for only about 45 percent of students in primary schools.

¹⁰⁵ USAID: Global Education Database, 2000.

¹⁰⁶ World Bank: World Development Global Education Database, 2000.

¹⁰⁷ Op cit., World Development Indicators, 2000.

¹⁰⁸ World Bank: Senegal-Quality Education for All, 1999.

¹⁰⁹ Op cit., Global Education Database, 2000.

¹¹⁰ Op cit., World Development Indicators, 2000.

¹¹¹ Op cit., Global Education Database, 2000.

¹¹² Op cit., Senegal-Quality Education for All, 1999.

¹¹³ Op cit., World Development Indicators, 2000.

These factors have resulted in high levels of illiteracy, so that only 10 percent of the poor rural population can read and write.¹¹⁴ While the current situation appears dire, the Government of Senegal has pledged to improve the educational system by increasing the capacity of primary schools, constructing new classrooms, and redeploying teaching staff. Through these initiatives, supported by the World Food Program (WFP), the number of primary school students should increase from 950,000 in 1997 to 1.6 million in 2003, with a gross schooling rate of 80 percent of eligible children (82.5 percent for boys and 79.3 percent for girls).

Within this framework, CPI proposed the Fouta-Toro Project for Education and Food Security in Senegal (EFFS).¹¹⁵ In St. Louis Prefecture, high rates of malnutrition have been recorded as a result of inadequate food in homes; lack of important micronutrients; poor food utilization; poor maternal, infant, and child care; nominal health services; poor sanitation and hygiene; and inadequate household incomes.¹¹⁶

Commodity Management

CPI signed the GFE agreement on Aug. 20, 2001, and requested the following commodities for the GFE project:

Commodity	Metric Tons	Shipment Date
Long-grain rice	6,960	July 2002
Non-fat dry milk	50	July 2002
Soy-fortified bulgur wheat	430	July 2002
Vitamin A fortified vegetable oil	110	July 2002
Total	7,550	

CPI plans to monetize 6,960 metric tons of rice and use the proceeds to fund an information campaign on the importance of education and nutrition. CPI also plans to distribute 590 tons of various commodities directly to 53,925 school children between grades one and five in the Podor district in St. Louis Prefecture.

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: CPI targeted Podor district in the St. Louis Prefecture to implement the GFE program. All school children at the cooperating institutions and

¹¹⁴ Op cit., Senegal-Quality Education for All, 1999.

¹¹⁵ USDA-CPI Agreement, Number GFE-685-2001/681-00, August 2001.

¹¹⁶ World Bank Report, quoted in CPI Agreement #GFE 685-/2001-681-00.

families in the selected communities were to be eligible for appropriate program components. Estimated beneficiary numbers for the Podor District are:¹¹⁷

- 8,925 school children.
- 45,000 other children.
- 13,500 women.
- 13,500 men.

The CPI GFE program in Senegal, originally scheduled to start at the end of fiscal year 2001, did not become activated until late in April 2002 because of a disagreement between CPI/Senegal and the Government of Senegal on monetization of commodities in Senegal.¹¹⁸ This disagreement was resolved in April 2002, and the feeding program should start with the beginning of the next school year in September 2002.¹¹⁹

CPI plans to work predominantly with educational institutions, formally and informally organized community groups including women's associations, and local NGO partners, specifically, the *Programme Intégré de Podor* (PIP) and the *Union de Jeunes Agriculteurs de Koyli-Wirnde* (UJAK). Measurable results will be achieved through the implementation of school feeding, nutritional and sustainable agricultural technical assistance and community training, and an information campaign on the importance of education and nutrition.

Sustainability: CPI hopes to connect with a number of local partners to implement the project in a participatory and sustainable manner. It will complement work performed by the Government of Senegal, other non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and international organizations in the areas of education and food security. CPI also plans to work closely with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Agriculture throughout this project.

Monitoring and evaluation: The project will begin with a baseline survey, which will provide information for the project and help establish more accurate annual and project targets. Knowledge, attitudes, and practices with regard to household food security and education data (using an adapted household food economy model) will be collected. All aspects of the baseline, mid-term, and final surveys, and monitoring and evaluation will be participatory with the partner NGO's, government ministry staff, and communities.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

Tanzania

World Food Program

Summary of Findings

The World Food Program (WFP) Tanzania project is being implemented under the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture. At the district level, the district education officer represents the education ministry. The day-to-day operations of the activity, however, are delegated to the local communities and school committees.

Assistance is targeted in three chronically food-insecure regions on the mainland: Dodoma, Singida, and Arusha. An estimated 75,000 children annually in primary day and boarding schools are directly benefiting from WFP assistance.

Monitoring data from the ongoing school feeding pilot project has shown that, in schools where cooked meals are being provided, school attendance rates (traditionally falling below 40 percent in the targeted areas in the lean season) have been consistently maintained at 60 percent. Enrollment, teacher levels, and classroom sizes have all improved over the last three years of school feeding program operations.

Country Overview

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita gross national product (GNP) estimated at \$240 in 1999. The United Nations Development Program's 2000 Human Development Index ranked Tanzania 156th out of 174 countries. It is classified as a least developed country and as a low-income, food-deficit country. More than 40 percent of its 31 million people live in chronically food-deficit regions, where irregular rainfall patterns cause repeated food shortages.

Primary school enrollment rates in Tanzania are currently estimated at 50 percent, a sharp decline from the 80 percent that was achieved in the 1980's. Of those enrolled, 52 percent are boys and 48 percent are girls. Rural areas, however, have marked gender imbalances in enrollment rates. In these areas, most of the primary schools are boarding schools, and boys account for 62 percent of total enrollment, while girls make up the remaining 38 percent. Among the reasons for this imbalance are the limited number of girls' dormitories, the fact that facilities are not used to their full capacity, and the lack of government funds to feed all boarders. Within this context, parents have little motivation to send their daughters to school, and they are also often too poor to pay the fees that contribute to the cost of running these schools.

Monitoring of the pilot project has confirmed that seasonal dropout rates are higher among boys than girls, because boys are deemed more suitable for undertaking casual labor and hunting and farming/pastoral activities during times of economic stress. In the

higher grades of primary schools, many boys drop out permanently, leaving more girls than boys attending in these grades. However, even where educational statistics show little gender discrepancies, many girls still suffer from negative practices, including sexual harassment, early pregnancy, early marriage, and circumcision.

Commodity Management

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Corn	1,250	September 2001
Corn-soy blend	800	September 2001

Project Overview

This activity aims to:

- Contribute to increasing enrollment, improve attendance, and reduce the dropout rate at assisted primary day schools for both boys and girls.
- Improve the concentration span and learning capacity of students at assisted primary day schools by alleviating their short-term hunger.
- Allow primary boarding schools to function at full capacity by increasing the enrollment of girls.
- Inform teachers and students regarding HIV/AIDS.

The intended outputs include:

- Provision of an early-morning snack and cooked midday meal, 180 days per year over a 5-year period, to an annual average of 67,500 students at selected primary and pre-primary day schools.
- Provision of two meals per day (breakfast and lunch or dinner, while the Government of Tanzania provides a third meal), 230 days per year over a 5-year period, to an annual average of 7,500 students at selected primary boarding schools;
- Improvement of school infrastructure for operating a feeding program (storage, water supply, separate latrines, cooking facilities, and cooking and eating utensils).
- Training of 200 head teachers as trainers in HIV/AIDS and integration of the subject in the school curriculum.

The total Government of Tanzania contribution over 5 years is estimated at \$263,000.

Project Impact

The following results are expected from WFP assistance:

- Improved enrollment rates for girls in targeted rural areas.
- Improved attendance and reduction of dropout rates for both boys and girls at assisted schools.

Food aid will serve as an incentive for enrollment, attendance, and retention at primary day schools, as well as a dietary support at primary day and boarding schools.

While targeting of girls has been the main focus of this school feeding initiative, the greatest impact over the last year has been measured in the enrollment of boys (over a 45-percent increase). However, the take-home rations have a greater impact on the girls' attendance levels (averaging 75 percent of those eligible).

Uganda

Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance, in Collaboration with Catholic Relief Services

Summary of Findings

The goal of the Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA) program is to improve access to primary education for 20,000 Universal Primary Education students in 20-30 schools in the disadvantaged districts of Gulu and Kitgum. ACDI/VOCA is responsible for the monetization component of the program, and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) will focus on implementation of the program objectives. Under the project, 6,560 tons of commodities are scheduled to be shipped, of which 4,850 tons will be monetized. CRS plans to work toward parent-teacher association capacity building through curriculum-based lesson plans and provide seeds, tools, and technical assistance for the development of school gardens. The program is scheduled to continue through March 2003.

Country Overview

The East African country of Uganda is finally experiencing a degree of political, social, and economic stability after decades of turmoil, which completely devastated the country. Due to its political leadership, Uganda is making gains in many areas, but many problems remain. While much of the country is peaceful, long-term conflicts in neighboring countries have allowed insurgencies in border areas to continue. Poverty is a major concern in Uganda, with 35 percent of the population in abject poverty.¹²⁰ Twenty-six percent of children under age 5 are malnourished. Male illiteracy is estimated at 29 percent and female illiteracy at 48 percent.¹²¹ Extreme seasonal food shortages occur, and even during the better times, children are fortunate to receive one basic meal each day.¹²²

In Uganda, girls are more likely than boys to be tasked with significant household responsibilities.¹²³ By the end of primary school, there are only two girls remaining in school for every three boys.¹²⁴ Early pregnancy is an additional reason for girls to drop out of school. By age 17, 43 percent of young Ugandan women give birth.¹²⁵ Girls are more likely than boys to be pressured to drop out of school by parents to aid in economic activities or to free parents from chores so they can engage in economic activities. This situation often results in low-paying, sporadic employment.

¹²⁰ World Bank, 2000 World Bank Country Brief. www.worldbank.org June 2002.

¹²¹ World Bank, Summary Gender Profile.

¹²² District Officer Report, Nakasongola, District, April 2002.

¹²³ Save the Children, Country Report, June 2002.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ministry of Health, April 2002.

If a child is receiving food at school, the opportunity cost of education for all children will lessen the uneven pressure on girls to drop out.¹²⁶ ACDI/VOCA, in conjunction with CRS, plans to address girls' lower rates of enrollment and attendance through working with parent-teacher associations (PTA's) and district education offices to provide information to parents.

In the Gulu District and Kitgum, the program targeted areas where it is very common for school children to go the entire day without food and have only one meal in the evening. Based on this data, ACDI/VOCA and CRS submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide a daily meal to primary-school-age children in Uganda's Gulu District. The proposal commodities were scheduled for shipment in August 2002.

Commodity Management

Fiscal 2001 Commodities	Preferred Packaging	Monetization (Metric Tons)	Distribution (Metric Tons)	Total (Metric Tons)
HRW wheat	50-kg bag	4,850	0	4,850
Vegetable oil	4-liter cans	0	110	110
Corn-soy blend	25-kg bag	0	1,200	1,200
Rice	50-kg bag	0	400	400
Total		4,850	1,710	6,560

ACDI/VOCA intends to monetize 4,850 tons of hard red winter wheat. ACDI/VOCA will distribute all food commodities from its primary warehouse in Kampala. ACDI/VOCA will transport commodities to in Gulu, where they will be stored before being forwarded under CRS management to schools or collected by PTA groups. ACDI/VOCA will also manage the monetization process and sale.

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: The goal of the ACDI/VOCA program is to improve access to primary education for 20,000 Universal Primary Education students in 20-30 schools in the disadvantaged districts of Gulu and Kitgum. Specifically, ACDI/VOCA will focus on:

- PTA capacity building through training on curriculum-based lesson plans, methodological techniques, classroom management, educational needs of female students, and the government's teacher supervision system.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

- Feeder road linkage to schools by linking ACDI/VOCA's current P.L. 480-supported community feeder rehabilitation program in Gulu with the school feeding program through shared information sessions and coordination efforts with local staff.
- Establishment and maintenance of school gardens to provide schools with a local, sustainable source of food and income. CRS will provide seeds, tools, and technical assistance to develop school gardens.

Implementation status: ACDI/VOCA, in cooperation with CRS, will implement a 1-year food-assisted education program that includes PTA development, take-home food rations to primary students, teaching support to educators and administrators, and the promotion of school gardens. ACDI/VOCA is responsible for the monetization component of the program, and CRS will implement the program objectives.

The overall strategy is to bolster the ability of rural families to send their children to school, help school districts provide quality education, and assist communities in becoming more involved in the school environment. All activities will be carried out in partnership with the district education system and communities, and in consultation with international and national education organizations in Gulu and Kitgum. An emphasis will be placed on district- and community-level engagement in the program to promote the eventual graduation of program schools from external assistance to sustainable self-reliance.

CRS will monitor the impact of the take-home ration activity on educational quality. Also, along with government officials, CRS will address potential negative effects in terms of increases in the pupil-to-teacher ratio.

CRS-Uganda has selected two disadvantaged districts in northern Uganda to target through this program. This region of Uganda has experienced uncertainty for the last 15 years, with political unrest, drought, and societal instability combining to displace populations and jeopardize livelihoods. As a result of the Universal Primary Education policy and recent displacement patterns, primary schools in Gulu and Kitgum have an average enrollment of 768 students, according to the Ministry of Education.¹²⁷ Both districts exhibit the following indicators of poor educational quality relative to national averages:

- Low girls' enrollment rates.
- High percentage of untrained teachers.
- High student-to-teacher ratios.
- High dropout rates.

¹²⁷ In 1997, Uganda launched a policy of Universal Primary Education (UPE) to help reconstruct a national education system devastated by 20 years of political and social unrest. The UPE policy seeks to make primary school accessible for the majority of Ugandan children by removing the burden of school fees from parents and guardians.

A total of 20-30 public and private schools will be selected to participate in this program. Schools within the selected districts will be evaluated and chosen based on the following criteria:

- School is designated a Universal Primary Education school by the Ministry of Education.
- School is located in a rural area.
- School is accessible by delivery truck.
- School already has or is willing to establish a functional PTA.
- School authorities express a need for the above interventions.
- School community has a desire to participate in the program.
- School does not have functional school feeding or school food program.
- District education officer is willing to cooperate with CRS to conduct teacher training.

One CRS project officer and two assistant project officers will manage the overall distribution and secondary activities under the supervision of CRS' senior staff, and will ensure program quality in commodity management, pedagogical support, community capacity-building, and inter-agency collaboration. Five animator/end-use checkers will be responsible for training and supporting the PTA and school feeding management committees, following up with teaching and administrative staff training through this program, and monitoring the use of food commodities.

PTA's and the school food committees will manage school community-level activities. CRS-Uganda will apply lessons from CRS' global experience implementing food-assisted education and community capacity-building programs to ensure proper management and community ownership of the take-home ration activity. To ensure accountability, PTA members will fill at least two-thirds of food committee positions. Clear responsibilities among the committee members, as well as lines of communication between the committee and CRS, will be developed in advance of the distribution component. Committee members and school authorities will be trained together in the principles of commodity management and in CRS' reporting requirements, so that an internal monitoring system is established. Throughout the school year, the animators/end-use checkers will carry out refresher training sessions in these subjects and develop new themes to strengthen the management and implementation skills of the PTA and food committees.

Other donor support: CRS will work with both governmental and NGO's in the implementation of this program. In particular, the agency group will work with government and private primary schools, community-based organizations, district education offices, the national Ministry of Education and Sports, and education-focused international NGO's operating in the program area. Given similar strategies for educational support and the collaborative agreements in other sectors, CRS-Uganda will coordinate closely with the World Food Program throughout this program to identify common goals, implementation methods, and impacts. Collaboration between all of the sectors will ensure that the school feeding program activities and training curriculum

correspond to national goals and standards, meet the needs of communities and households, and support other intervention in the education sector.

The overall strategy of this program is to strengthen community and district government capacities to support primary education through the combined provision of teacher-administrator training, PTA development, local food/income sources for school, and food-assisted support to vulnerable households. The program will also buttress the Ministry of Education's efforts to provide pre-service training to its untrained teachers in rural areas. It is expected that as these capacities grow, the need for external food and material support will diminish, and the communities and local education system will be better able to sustain the success of UPE at their own level.

Monitoring and evaluation: Both CRS-Uganda and USDA will monitor and evaluate the program. CRS-Uganda's monitoring and evaluation team will conduct a baseline survey to obtain pre-intervention and control data on the program's performance indicators for all program schools. Other collaborating organizations, like the Ministry of Education and program school authorities, will be invited to participate in the survey and add questions that are relevant to their own related programs. USDA efforts include hiring a local monitor who will conduct a baseline survey in the target area and conduct focus groups on attendance, enrollment, and performance.

Food committees will submit regular commodity status reports, distribution records, and stock inventories to the PTA and CRS-Uganda. PTA's will also provide regular reports on their meetings and activities. Finally, progress reports on the training workshops and school gardens are to be provided by the appropriate district and/or community-level implementers.

At the CRS-Uganda level, animators/end-use checkers will visit each school twice per quarter to review and strengthen on-site commodity management, verify attendance levels, and meet with PTA's and food committee members to review the status of activities and discuss any problems that might arise. CRS project officers and the program manager will visit each school at least once per academic year to evaluate the program's progress toward its broader objectives. The district education officers in each targeted area will be invited on these visits to provide effective decentralized supervision and management.

In collaboration with CRS-Uganda, ACDI/VOC will submit semi-annual reports, which will include data on performance indicators, to USDA. ACDI/VOCA-Uganda will verify with spot checks that all recipients are using proceeds and commodities consistent with the plan of operation. The following indicators will be used to measure achievements of the program.

Process indicators:

- Number of schools receiving food commodities for distribution.
- Number of students receiving monthly take-home rations.
- Total tonnage delivered to schools, per year.
- Number of teachers and administrators trained.
- Number of PTA members trained.

Outcome indicators:

- Percent increase in average student attendance rates over baseline, by gender.
- Number of PTA's conducting at least one school fundraiser or special event per year.

Sustainability: Sustainability is a key component of the school feeding program. ACDI/VOCA intends to work with local communities to develop small gardens that will serve as sources of food if the school feeding program does not continue to be funded through USDA. Additionally, community leaders have been encouraged to ask families to allow school children to bring a vegetable/fruit item to school as often as possible, thus enhancing the diet and strengthening the community involvement in the education of their children. The pilot aims to reinvigorate community contributions and involvement in the schools, and particularly in the provision of food in the schools. The project is supplying commodities and technical assistance, infrastructure, labor, and materials. The communities themselves provide the actual feeding. This promotes a sense of ownership and long-term sustainability.

UGANDA

Save the Children

Summary of Findings

School feeding for about 5,000 students was scheduled to begin in July 2002. Beneficiaries represent the entire school population of the two poorest sub-counties in the Nakasongola district. A total of 640 metric tons of commodities arrived in April 2002. Twenty school management committees have been established out of 25 schools. The committees will assume an active role in preparing the meals at the school sites and monitoring the effectiveness of the program. The Ugandan Ministry of Education has increased its awareness and commitment to the school feeding program by attending a series of training courses conducted by Save the Children on effective monitoring and evaluation. This Global Food for Education (GFE) program is scheduled to continue through March 2003.

Commodity Management

All commodities will be directly distributed to schools to provide a lunch for children. Monetization is not a component of this project. The types and quantities of commodities are shown in the following table.

Commodity	Metric Tons
Corn-soy blend	160
Rice	150
Cornmeal	150
Soybean oil	60
Non-fat dry milk	120
Total	640

Although duty-free clearance had been arranged prior to shipment, there was a miscommunication between the Government of Uganda and Save the Children, and the commodities were delayed when they arrived. After discussions with the government to confirm the duty-free status of the donated commodities targeted for direct distribution, the government released the commodities on May 31, 2002, with the exception of the vegetable oil, which was released on June 27, 2002. Demurrage charges were waived through negotiation with the government.

Save the Children will distribute the commodities from the main Kampala warehouse to the warehouse in Nakasongola on an as-needed monthly basis. From there, the dry foods will be distributed to each school. Stock control systems are in place, and the schools are completing the upgrade or construction of food storage areas. A school storekeeper selected by the school management committee will receive the commodities. Upon receipt, the storekeeper will enter the number of items in the ledger books and complete the forms provided by Save the Children, USA. The storekeeper will issue daily rations to the cooks, who will then prepare the food and distribute it to the children. The number of meals provided each day will be checked against the daily school attendance register.

Project Overview

Goals and objectives: The goals of Save the Children's GFE program are to provide one meal a day to primary school children in the impoverished Nakasongola District for one full academic year, to maintain attendance at schools, and to enhance educational opportunities, especially for girls. The feeding pilot project is designed to increase enrollment, retention, and academic achievement, as well as to reinvigorate community involvement in primary schools. Save the Children has identified three specific objectives:

- Provide a daily meal to 5,000 students for one full academic year.
- Develop school management committees that will be responsible for drawing up schedules and menus for preparing and serving food on-site.
- Develop small gardens at various school sites.

Implementation status: Commodity distribution was scheduled to begin in July 2002 to 25 schools. Beneficiaries represent the entire school-going population of the two poorest

sub-counties in the Nakasongola District. The Nakasongola District is approximately 150 miles outside of Kampala, the capital city. The area is rural, with families involved mainly in fishing and farming. There are 8,959 children enrolled—4,571 girls and 4,388 boys, many of whom suffer from malnutrition.¹²⁸ However, since enrollment levels determine government funding, the figures are often inflated.

Save the Children encourages strong community involvement, support, and contribution to schools. Community involvement includes the establishment of school management committees in each school. Save the Children has worked with these committees in both its community-based schools and the formal primary schools in these two sub-counties. In the GFE project, the school management committee is responsible for menu development and time allocation to prepare and serve food at the school site. Save the Children project staff have trained the committees in food storage, preparation, and nutrition, and will deliver the dry foods and monitor the program on a weekly basis.

Meetings have been held in each school with the head teachers and committees, as well as with parents, who are very excited about the project. The schools have established food committees and have identified a cook, storekeeper, and a guard. The schools submitted to Save the Children a list of materials they would need to ensure that the food could be properly stored. For the formal schools, this primarily meant renovation of existing stores, which they were able to do themselves. For the community-based schools, many requested iron sheets and doors to attach to the huts they built. Save the Children has also provided water storage containers to each school.

Meetings have been held at various levels within the district to explain the project and ensure support. The district education officer, the community development officer, chief administrative officer, and other members of the district council have been active partners in implementing the school feeding program.

Other donor support: Save the Children will work with community-based organizations, district education offices, the national Ministry of Education and Sports, and education-focused international non-governmental organizations (NGO's) operating in the program area. Given similar strategies for educational support and the collaborative agreements in other sectors, Save the Children will consult closely with the World Food Program to identify common goals, implementation methods, and impacts. Collaboration between all sectors will ensure that the school feeding program activities and training curriculum correspond to national goals and standards, meet the needs of communities and households, and support other intervention in the education sector.

Sustainability: Sustainability is a key component of Save the Children's GFE program. The project supplies commodities, training, and basic equipment. Manual labor, materials, and volunteers work to implement the feeding program. This involvement promotes a sense of ownership and long-term sustainability.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Education, Kampala Uganda, April 2002.

Save the Children has started working with local communities to develop small gardens that will serve as sources of food for the schools. Additionally, community leaders have been encouraged to ask families to allow students to bring a vegetable or fruit item to school as often as possible to enhance the diet and strengthen community involvement in the education of their children.

Monitoring and evaluation: Monitoring and evaluation is the responsibility of both the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Save the Children. USDA's local monitor and Save the Children staff developed a matrix consisting of all the schools participating in the program. They divided the 27 schools according to two criteria: type of school, either formal or non-formal; and type of community, fishing, farming, or both. A random sample of 20 schools was selected.

Save the Children is conducting a baseline survey and intends to collect data throughout the pilot year. Training is underway for field monitors and food committees on data collection and report completion. Five female community field monitors have been identified and trained to work with the food committees, the children, parents, and teachers on a regular basis. These volunteers will report to the Save the Children monitor and will receive occasional incentives, such as a bicycle and/or tee shirts.

Project Impact

Food distribution was scheduled to begin in July 2002, and baseline data is being collected. Reports indicate that parents are re-enrolling their children in schools where they believe food distribution will take place. Twenty school management committees have been established out of the 25 schools. The committees will take an active role in preparing the meals at the school sites and monitoring the effectiveness of the program. The Ministry of Education has attended a series of training courses conducted by Save the Children on effective monitoring and evaluation.

Lessons Learned

Clearing commodities is not easy in Uganda, presenting a widespread problem impacting all NGO's that import commodities. The government frequently changes requirements without informing the NGO's.

NGOs should ensure that all commodities are shipped in 20-foot containers. Forty-foot containers (used for the vegetable oil) at the port in Nakawa must be transported overland to Kampala. The international freight forwarding company responsible for shipping and clearing the commodities does not bond the Nakawa port area.

Next Steps

- Develop schedules and timelines for program implementation.
- Clear the remaining vegetable oil from the in-land port.
- Transport commodities to Nakasongola District to begin food distribution.
- Continue working with the school management committees to ensure proper preparation of school meals.
- Identify areas at school sites for the small gardens and organize community members.
- Continue training local staff on monitoring and evaluation techniques.
- Meet regularly to determine best practices and go over the lessons learned.

GFE in Action

In Nakasongola, the children were all very excited about the program and expressed a great deal of appreciation. When asked if they would like a meal at school, all of the children said yes. Many children in the government schools go without a meal or water all day long. During soccer games, which take place in the hot sun, the children do not have water. One little girl said, "I'm dizzy and I do not want to play with the other children because I'm hungry." A number of the children were eating plants that grew near their school because there was no other source of food.

The chief administrative officer of Nakasongola District pledged his full support to the school feeding project. "Combining school work with the distance children have to walk on a hungry stomach will greatly affect the learning process, performance, and attendance. This project is long overdue," he said.

A community leader said, "Girls who normally stay at home to cook meals for other siblings who are in school will now be able to get an education, too."

A mother offered this comment on the program: "Because of poor nutrition, our children are sick frequently. We hope that this program will help keep the children healthy and lead to better performance in school."

Uganda World Food Program

Summary of Findings

The project is expected to increase and maintain school attendance for 60,150 beneficiaries. Enrollment rates of both boys and girls have increased by close to 10 percent over the last year. U.S.-contributed commodities, with the exception of corn, are blended together to prepare a morning porridge for the school children. Two meals are

provided to all students attending both day and boarding schools. Additionally, an evening meal is provided to boarders.

In order to promote girl's attendance, a take-home ration of 300 grams of cereal is given to all girls attending day, pre-primary, and primary schools. Also, parents, primarily mothers, who attend adult literacy classes at the schools receive a take-home ration of 300 grams of corn.

The targeted area, Karamoja, is a drought-stricken and chronically food-deficit region in northeastern Uganda. Even in good years, the grain deficit alone average 14,000 tons. Between 100,000 and 180,000, people in Karimojong face severe food shortages annually during the preharvest lean season (May to August), with small children, the elderly, women, and the disabled being the most vulnerable.

Within Uganda, Karamoja has the worst social indicators of any region in the country with literacy, enrollment, combined education and gender-related indices being three to four times below national averages. Only 6.8 percent of the local population age 15 and above have completed primary school. Literacy is 18 percent for men and 6 percent for women. The majority of primary schools offer only the first 3 years of schooling. Young boys are traditionally required to herd cattle, while young girls do domestic chores and agricultural work.

Commodity Management

USDA contributed the following commodities and quantities for direct feeding purposes:

Commodity	Metric Tons	Arrival
Corn	3,800	July 2001
	600	September 2001
Corn-soy blend	1,320	September 2001
Corn-soy milk	1,220	September 2001
Vegetable oil	340	July 2001

Project Overview

Food aid serves two main functions: 1) as an incentive for encouraging children and parents to attend formal schools, alternative education programs, vocational training, and adult literacy classes; and 2) nutritional and dietary support for school children and women and men in food-deficit locations.

The morning porridge is cooked and provided to the pupils at 10:00 a.m. and again at 1:00 p.m. Cooks are hired and paid by the schools, either through Universal Primary

Education (UPE) program allocated funds and/or through parents' contributions. The World Food Program (WFP) does not make any provisions for payments for the cooks. The take-home rations are distributed every Friday upon completing the week's attendance.

Goals and objectives:

- Increase enrollment and consistent attendance of children, especially girls, in pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools.
- Improve children's capacity to concentrate and assimilate information by relieving short-term hunger.
- Promote participation of women in the adult literacy programs.
- Encourage adoption of alternative basic education programs for Karimojong children and parents who are unable to attend formal schools.
- Promote girls' education through take-home rations for girls attending day, pre-primary, and primary schools.
- Support the introduction of school farms and gardens.

This program is supporting the following activities:

- 900 pre-primary pupils (400 girls and 500 boys) are receiving food assistance.
- 49,000 primary pupils (20,400 girls and 28,600 boys), consisting of 8,600 boarders and 40,400 day students, are receiving food assistance.
- 3,500 secondary boarding schools students (1,295 girls and 2,205 boys) are receiving food assistance.
- 3,250 parents (2,000 women and 1,250 men) of nomadic children or previously inaccessible under the formal education system are being given food as an incentive to send their children to learning centers.
- 3,500 women are benefiting from food aid by attending an adult literacy program.
- 10 schools are received WFP support on annual basis to nurture school gardens and farms.

Each institution receiving food assistance will be required to establish a tree nursery. Similarly, each student and adult benefiting from this program will be responsible for planting and maintaining one tree per year.

Project Impact

Expected measurable outcomes include:

- Continuous attendance (reduction of dropout rate) of some 49,000 primary and 900 pre-primary pupils, including 20,400 female day scholars in primary school for 190 days.
- Alleviation of short-term hunger for these children, with assumed improvements in attention span and cognitive performance.

- Attendance of 3,500 adult women in literacy classes for 190 days.
- Enrollment and sustained attendance of 3,250 nomadic or previously inaccessible children for 260 days.
- Sustained attendance of 3,500 secondary boarding students.
- School gardens established by 60 schools, and the planting and maintenance of 150 trees annually.

Sustainability: To promote sustainability, community sensitization campaigns have been undertaken to mobilize parents to freely contribute cereals during times of surplus. In addition, school gardens/nurseries are being established. The program includes a reduction in take-home entitlements of schools in areas where enrollment and retention targets have been attained, while maintaining assistance to those in need.

Other donor support: The Ministry of Education and Sports contributes 25 percent of internal transportation, shipping, and handling, as counterpart funding to be paid to WFP. This accounts for \$30 per metric ton of donated commodity. For the U.S. contribution of 7,280 metric tons, this equates to \$218,400.

The Universal Primary Education program was launched to ensure that the disadvantaged have free access to primary education. Under this program, funds are provided to targeted schools to cover the cost of school registration, uniforms, books, teachers, equipment, cooks, and other required school resources that cannot be paid by the parents. Traditionally, Ugandan parents are required to pay for the basic costs of educating their children.