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WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME KENYA

INFOBRIEF [No. 22]

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School Meals Programme in Kenya

Quick Facts

- The school feeding programme started in Kenya in 1980, benefitting **240,000 children** in that year.
- In 2009, the Home-Grown School Meals Programme was launched, with responsibility for school meals for **540,000 children** handed over to the Government. A further gradual handover strategy was developed.
- In June 2018, the handover was completed and all schools under the WFP school meals programme were handed over to the Government.
- A total of **1.6 million children** in **4,048 schools** are receiving a hot lunch under the school meals programme in 2018, all financed by the Government.
- In 2018/2019, the Government has allocated **US\$24 million** to the **Home Grown School Meals Programme** budget.



World Food Programme



Overview

The national school feeding programme supports the Government’s goal of education for all. Since 1980, WFP and the Ministry of Education have successfully implemented a school meals programme targeting the most food-insecure districts with the lowest enrolment and completion rates and high gender disparities. This included all primary schools in the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya and in the unplanned urban settlements of Nairobi.

A daily hot lunch at school boosts learning by allowing children to focus on their studies and not their hungry stomachs. The meals provide poor families with a strong incentive to send children to school, directly contributing to Kenya’s *Vision 2030* and to the Sustainable Development Goals of providing quality education and zero hunger. In early childhood development centres, children also receive a nutritious meal through support from county governments.

Kenya’s national Home Grown School Meals Programme started in 2009 by providing a meal to children at school to support education achievements while also stimulating local

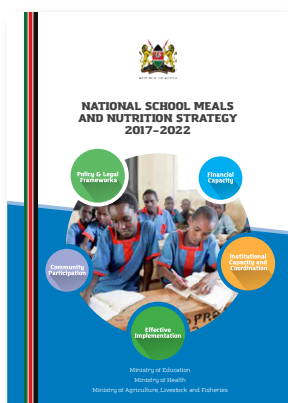
agricultural production through purchase of food from smallholder farmers and local food suppliers.

Since 2009, WFP has been steadily handing over responsibility for school meals in Kenya to the Ministry of Education for inclusion in the Home Grown School Meals Programme. WFP supported the handover through training, joint missions and exchange of staff to build national capacity in procurement, data collection, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and programme management.

The Government fully took over responsibility for providing school meals to primary school children in the arid and semi-arid counties of Kenya in July 2018. With WFP and international donor support, Kenya’s school meals programme has evolved into one of the strongest in Africa.

The school meals programme has contributed to increased enrolment, attendance and higher levels of learning. According to a 2016 evaluation, provision of school meals has resulted in a 2–4 percent increase in school attendance in the arid counties and informal settlements. In 2017/2018, the Ministry of Education **increased the school**

meal programme budget from **US\$16 million** to US\$25 million. In 2018/2019, the Government has allocated **US\$24 million**.



School Meal and Nutrition

Strategy: To guide implementation of the Home Grown School Meals Programme after the handover, the Government launched, through the Cabinet Secretaries for Education, Health and Agriculture,

the *National School Meals and Nutrition Strategy*. Developed and approved by the ministries with the support from WFP Kenya and the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil, the strategy encourages inter-ministerial coordination, multi-sectoral planning, stable funding and monitoring and evaluation for school meals to all children in Kenya. The strategy envisages nationally owned, sustainable and cost-effective school meal initiatives that will address school enrolment, retention and transition rates, food and nutrition insecurity and health and hygiene practices. The formulation and launch of this strategy is considered a bold statement of commitment from the Government towards achieving a universal and sustainable school meal programme.



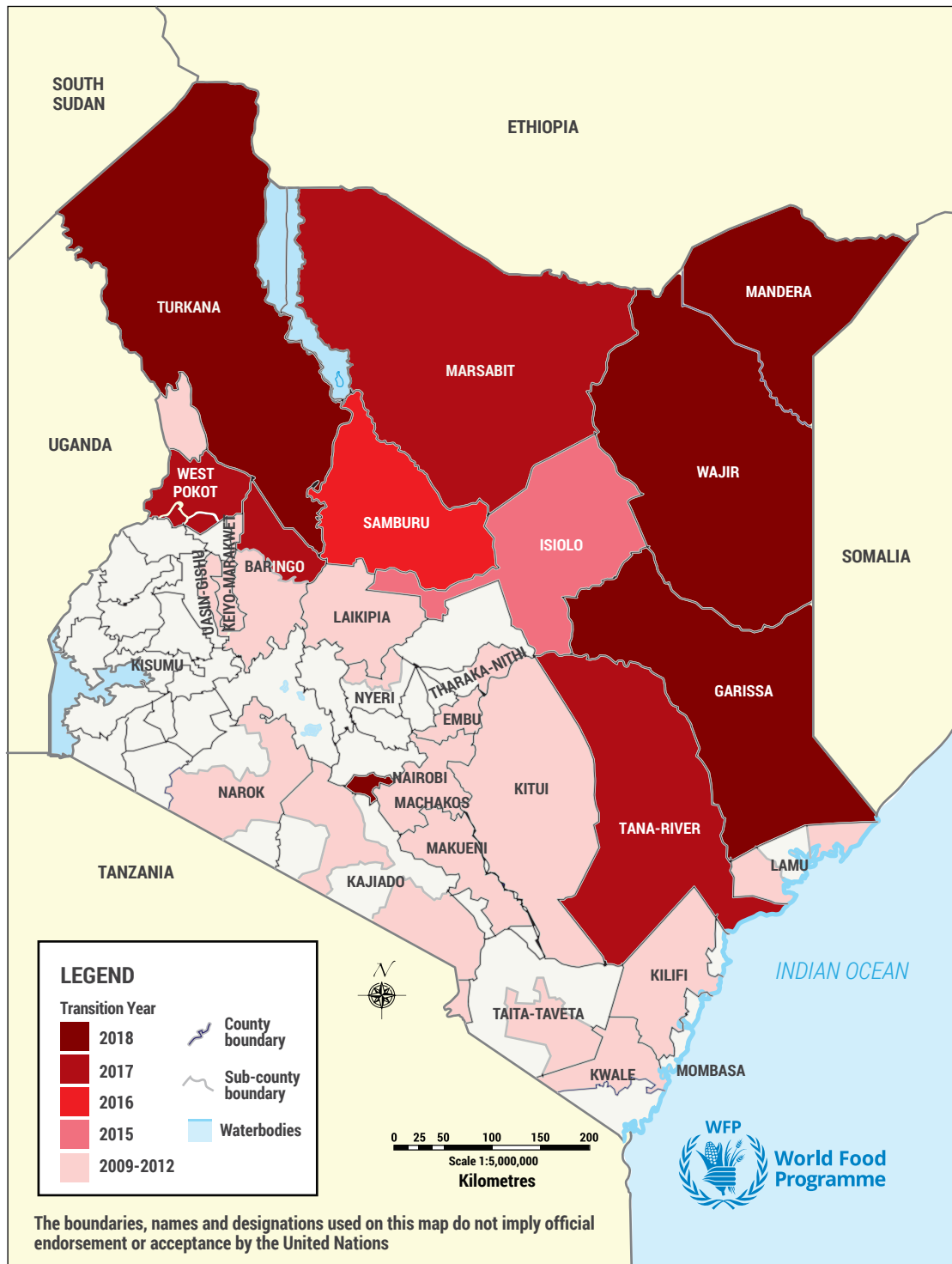
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WFP further focus on the Home Grown School Meals Programme

- **Strengthening the data and management information system** through digitization of Home Grown School Meals Programme processes to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.
- **Providing training on implementation and management of the school meals programme for education officers, teachers and parent representatives.**
- Establishing and strengthening **coordination structures** at national, county and school levels with the Ministry of Education.
- **Providing technical assistance** through a seconded officer who is strengthening capacity of Ministry of Education officers who are managing the school meals programme.
- **Improving and building kitchen and storage facilities** in 20 schools in six counties.¹ The kitchens will act as models to demonstrate to county and national governments how food can be prepared and stored hygienically and safely, with the aim of encouraging investment in this area. All kitchens will be fitted with fuel-efficient stoves.
- **Developing policies and guidelines to streamline feeding in early childhood development and education centres.** These will ensure effective and efficient supply chains that provide safe, nutritious and quality food to children. Mainstreaming of the early childhood development and education programme within county integrated development plans is also being promoted. To date, WFP has provided support to Nairobi and Baringo, Marsabit and Turkana counties to draft policy and feeding guidelines, while Garissa and Tana River counties are targeted for the coming months.

¹ Baringo, Garissa, Marsabit, Tana River, Wajir and West Pokot.

Transition of School Meals from WFP to the National Home-Grown School Meals Programme



List of Donors in Alphabetical Order (Since 2014: CP 200680)



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