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## Home-Grown School Feeding in Kenya

### **KENYA COUNTRY CONTEXT**

With a population of 48.5 million, Kenya's economy has developed rapidly during the past decade, and the country achieved lower-middle-income status in 2014. Social and economic inequalities persist, with significant challenges to food and nutrition security driven by rapid population growth, climate change, stagnating agricultural production, gender inequalities and underperforming food systems. Despite this, school feeding remains highly successful in the country. WFP has run a school feeding programme in Kenya since 1980, working with the Ministry of Education to provide nutritious meals to 1.5 million children in the most food-insecure districts. In 2009, the

programme transitioned from WFP to a government-led home grown school meals programme, which ensured that food is bought from local farmers, helping support educational achievement and also stimulating the local economy.

Following the transition, the Government of Kenya will undertake a capacity needs assessment for the implementation of the national school meals programme. This assessment will lead to the development of an action plan to strengthen implementation and management of the programme. The continued commitment to school feeding by the government highlights the positive impact it can have on children and local communities.



## OVERVIEW OF HOME-GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING IN KENYA

Alongside the WFP Regular School Feeding Programme, the government of Kenya leads a Home-Grown School Feeding Programme that is separated into two categories:

- The Home-Grown School Meals (HGSM)
- Njaa Marufuku Kenya (NMK) / Eradicate Hunger in Kenya.

The HGSM programme was started by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in 2009 as part of a broader strategy to transition school feeding to government ownership and implementation. After 30 years of the Regular School Feeding Programme administered by WFP, we reduced the caseload from 1.2 million beneficiaries to 770,500 beneficiaries in 2009 due to increased commodity and transport costs. In light of the reduced coverage by WFP and prevailing food insecurity, the Government of Kenya responded by launching in 2009, the HGSM programme which had a beneficiary level of 538,000 school children in 1,777 primary schools in 55 semi-arid sub-counties. This launch demonstrated the government's commitment to home-grown school feeding as the programme was intended to promote food security through increased demand that is predictable, while offering a stable and accessible market to smallholder farmers.

The NMK programme was started by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2005 and is geared towards agricultural

development and capitalizes on the agricultural expertise present within the Ministry of Agriculture. The NMK programme provides support to school meals over a three-year period within the target schools where funding is provided for: 100% of the children to be fed in the first year; 75% of the children to be fed in the second year; and 50% of the children to be fed in the third year. Parents contribute the remaining percentage as a sense of ownership. The funds given to the school are also used to initiate agricultural production activities on school gardens which act as demonstration plots for appropriate technologies for the parents and local farmers. The food produced in the school gardens supplements the school meals.



## OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

Kenya’s Home-Grown School Feeding Programme pursues the following objectives:

- Improve education, health, and nutrition of school-age children.
- Improve smallholder farmer income through structuring market demand from the Programme.
- Improve nutrition, quality, and quantity amongst smallholder farmers.

## WHICH INSTITUTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS ARE INVOLVED?

Due to the multi-faceted nature of the Kenya school feeding programme, there is a broad range of stakeholder involvement. By 2013, key institutional partners included the Ministries of Agriculture; Education, Science and Technology; and Health.

The lead Ministry for the HGSM programme is the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the lead Ministry for the NMK programme is the Ministry of Agriculture. Both ministries have similar management structures, from policymakers to programme managers.

## INTEGRATION OF SMALLHOLDERS AND PROCUREMENT MECHANISM

As shown in Figure 1 below, smallholder farmers are fully integrated into the supply chain, and are considered crucial actors for Kenya’s home-grown school feeding programme. They provide food either directly to schools or through a trader in exchange for cash. In the HGSM programme, the procurement process is undertaken at the school level and coordinated by the School Meals Committee. The process used is a replication of the same process used in the procurement of school instructional materials. Cash is transferred directly to the school accounts on a biannual basis. Schools are informed of how much money has been credited into their school accounts. A competitive procurement process for food with registered / licensed local farmers or suppliers is then undertaken. Procurement procedures are guided by circulars from the Ministry of Finance. Procurement is performed on a termly basis and depends on the storage capacity at the school.

For the NMK programme, procurement is not envisioned as the driving force behind the longevity of the meal provision. Over a three-year period food commodities are procured for school feeding at a diminishing rate of 100%,

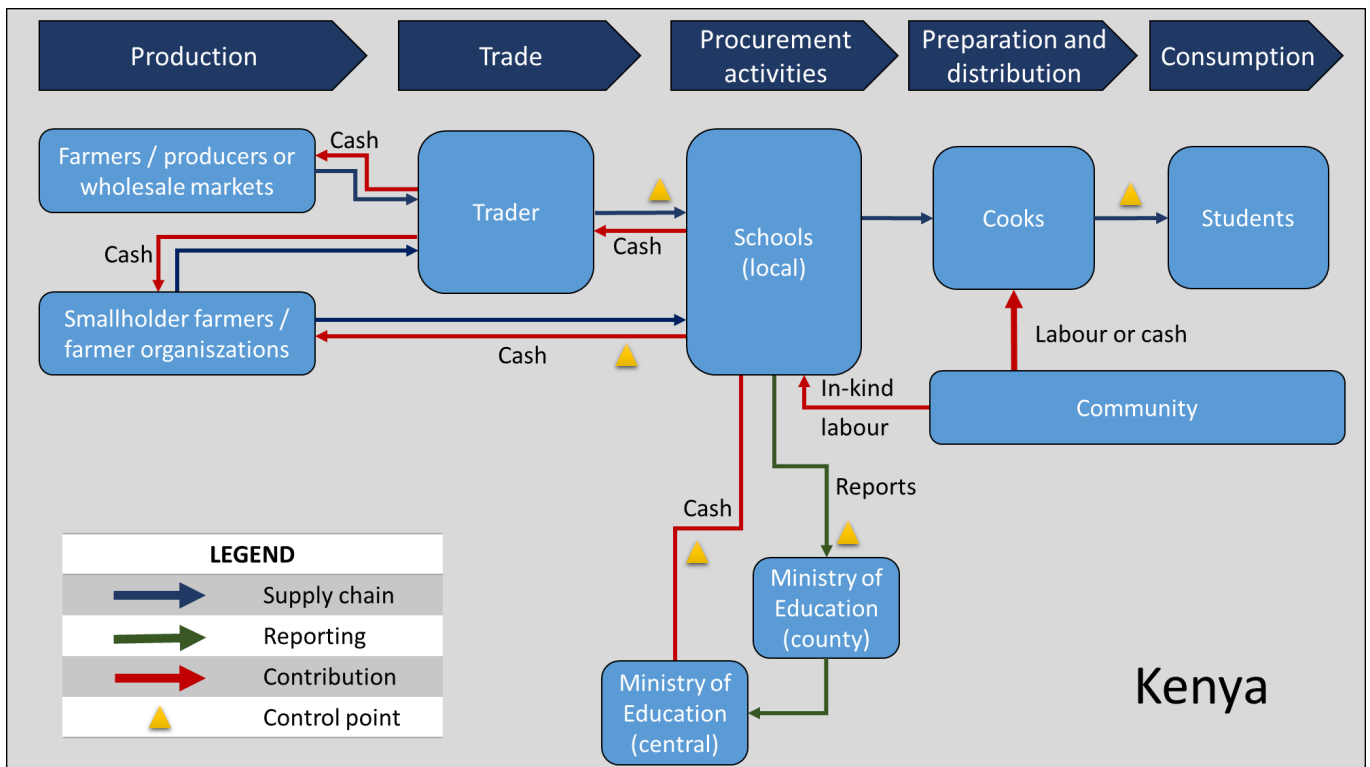


Figure 1: Supply Chain for Kenya’s Decentralized Operating Model

75%, and 50% respectively. The NMK programme funds are transferred to bank accounts of the target schools without a rigid procurement system like that of the HGSM programme. The School Meals Committee and parents are responsible for setting up the modalities for food procurement and purchases. Explicit procurement steps are therefore not generic across the programme as each community has its own unique method of decision making and the school pays for commodities via a bank cheque.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The supply chain also incorporates a reporting mechanism with the Ministry of Education, who monitor regularly at national, county, sub-county and school levels. The databases are developed in collaboration with the Education Management Information System, and the monitoring and evaluation units of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, as well as development partners, are closely involved in the implementation of the programme. Items monitored include:

- Flow of funds from the ministry to the schools;
- Adherence to procurement procedures;
- Proper completion of forms and submission to relevant authorities;
- Number of school children under the programme on a daily basis against the number of school days in a term;
- Rations served to the children;
- Hygiene and sanitation of the kitchen, food stores and toilets; medical examinations of food handlers within the school; and
- Contributions from the community/parents towards the HGSM for ownership purposes.

Each of the three Ministries: Agriculture; Education, Science and Technology; and Health; as well as other relevant stakeholders, study the data generated and take action to address any identified problems.

The NMK programme is managed by the NMK Coordinating Unit. Policy direction is given by the National Steering Committee and the NMK Coordinator (from the NMK Coordinating Unit) reports directly to the NMK Secretariat on school feeding issues. Monitoring and evaluation activities in the NMK programme are carried out by the Ministries of Agriculture; Education, Science and Technology; and Health on a regular basis at national (headquarters), county, sub-county divisional, and school levels.

## PROGRAMME IMPACT

Kenya stands out amongst the other countries for developing innovative and complementary school feeding programmes led by two different ministries (Agriculture and Education, Science and Technology). The NMK programme is particularly interesting because it integrates community food and nutrition security with school feeding as part of agricultural extension services whilst the HGSM programme is taking school feeding with locally procured food to scale. Both program models provide appropriate services to beneficiaries.

Kenya's Home-grown School Feeding Programme continues to improve the lives of smallholder farmers while contributing towards an increase in enrolment rate compared to schools with no school feeding. It is indeed a positive impact on the country with hope for a better future.

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