



## **Strengthening knowledge about school health and nutrition: WFP's strategic shift towards evidence, data and results**

Side event on the margins of the Second Regular Session of the Executive Board, 2020  
Tuesday, 17 November 2020, 13:15-14:15  
Virtual via ZOOM

The recently awarded Nobel Peace Prize winning World Food Programme (WFP) is inviting its members and partners to a side event that presents early achievements in strengthening the knowledge base for school health and nutrition and discusses the importance of this data for governments and the whole international community to strengthen an evidence-based approach that ensures no child is left behind.

### **Context**

In January 2020, WFP launched its new strategy in support of school health and nutrition for the school children of the world. One month later COVID-19 emerged and within weeks became a pandemic that led to 1.6 billion school children being excluded from schools globally by April 2020. School health and nutrition were always important for the growth and development of school children, but in this new COVID world they are even more important.

WFP has been working with partners to help countries now to maintain care and support for the out-of-school children, and next to use school health and nutrition programmes as a key incentive for families to send their children back to school and to build back schools better.

As we have responded to COVID on the ground, WFP has been simultaneously laying the foundations for a stronger, evidence-based approach to school health and nutrition, laid out in the strategy. As the leading international agency supporting school feeding, WFP has the responsibility to house and make available global knowledge so that countries can use that information to improve programmes and provide adequate support to vulnerable children.

This side event at the November Executive Board is meant to present some of the early achievements in strengthening the knowledge base for this important area of work.

### **Objective**

Specifically, this session will touch upon and present some of the major commitments WFP made in the strategy related to thought leadership, which are the following:

- Better data: drawing from decades of engagement in school feeding, WFP will support the development of global public goods such as a comprehensive school feeding database and will document and share global lessons learned, best practices, standards and norms more effectively.
- A research agenda and a research consortium: As it did in 2009, WFP will work with partners to establish a research agenda for school feeding for the next ten years, based on a mapping of learning needs, to ensure that global gaps in the knowledge base are being filled. A research consortium will be set up and managed by an academic partner, not by WFP, to ensure evidence work is credible and rigorous.
- Flagship publications: A periodic flagship publication will consolidate and report back on the state of school feeding worldwide. Better outcome indicators to document and track results of school feeding operations will be developed, in particular those related to nutrition and capacity development.

## Agenda

### **Welcome and opening comments**

Ms Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, WFP

### **Opening comments: The WFP School Health and Nutrition Strategy and our new approach to knowledge, data and evidence**

Ms Carmen Burbano, Director School-based Programmes, WFP

### **Opening Intervention: On Dubai Cares investment in global public goods**

H.E. Dr Tariq Al Gurg, Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Cares

### **Facilitated panel discussion**

**Moderator: Ms Carmen Burbano**, Director School-based Programmes, WFP

- **Prof. Donald Bundy**, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- **Ms Bibi Giyose**, Senior Advisor food and nutrition security, African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)
- **Mr Arif Husain**, Chief Economist & Director Research, Assessment and Monitoring, WFP

**Q&A from the audience** will be addressed through the Zoom chat function concurrent with the session.

### **Closing comments**

Ms Valerie Guarnieri, Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development Department, WFP