



School Feeding

WFP Myanmar

Context and Response: In rural areas of Myanmar, less than half of all children complete primary school. High dropout rates in primary school remain a serious concern, especially in remote areas. In 1996, WFP launched school feeding in northern Rakhine, which has some of the lowest education and food security indicators in Myanmar. Ever since, WFP has expanded its school feeding programme also to Chin, Magway, Shan, and Wa.

Under the current three-year Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation, launched in January 2013, WFP school feeding covers early childhood development (ECD) centres and primary schools in two separate modalities: i) in-school feeding with a daily food snack of fortified high energy biscuits (HEB), and ii) take home family rations of rice in severely food-insecure areas, with at least 90 percent attendance. The fortified food snack diversifies the diet and increases micronutrient intake, containing a premix of various vitamins and minerals, which helps tackle important deficiencies that are common among children of primary school age, such as lack of Vitamin A or C, weakening the immune system, or iodine, affecting the ability to learn. HEB also contributes to iron and folate content in adolescent girls, helping ensure that they are better prepared for reproductive age. The take-home rice ration helps build a safety net mechanism against food insecurity at the household level with families more likely to meet their minimum consumption needs and thus encouraged to keep sending their children to school, especially girls from certain ethnic communities. In consequence, school feeding improves nutritional status, enhances cognitive abilities and encourages participation, resulting in increased enrolment, attendance and retention.

Investment case: The investment case is a modeling tool that quantifies the value created for each dollar invested in school feeding, building on available evidence from benefits such as education, health and income transfer, which is the value of the school feeding ration at local market prices. Drawing on this model, WFP and The Boston Consulting Group joint global research (imminent publication) estimates a substantial monetary return on investment – for every US\$1 at least US\$3 is gained through a variety of economic measurements.

SCHOOL FEEDING YEARLY INDICATORS AS OF JANUARY 2015

SCHOOLCHILDREN*	BENEFICIARIES**	COVERAGE
184 thousand	269 thousand	1,700 schools
NEEDS (US\$)	FOOD (MT)	SHORTFALL (US\$)
6 million	4,610	5.6 million

Objectives

- Increase school enrolment, attendance and retention rates
- Address short-term hunger and improve micronutrient status
- Build a safety net mechanism at the household level
- Maintain gender balance

Activities

- **In-school feeding**, of 150,000 children, who receive a daily snack of 75g fortified HEB in school
- **Take-home rations** of 10 kg rice monthly to 34,000 schoolchildren as well as to their 85,000 family members

Effects

- Immediate relief through increased household income
- Increased lifetime earning from increased productivity, reduced morbidity, and prolonged life expectancy

* 92,000 boys and 92,000 girls attending school

** Schoolchildren and their family members

For example, positive returns on education are such that a higher attendance rate increases a child's productivity, which in turn should lead to higher earnings later in life. The benefit from increased time spent in school multiplies with higher concentration during that period. One additional year of primary schooling can lead to five percent higher earnings in the future. The returns from casual chain i.e. from school feeding to educational attainment to higher future wages make up nearly half of the total return. For adolescent girls, investing in their education transforms lives and subsequently breaks the intergenerational cycle of poverty, becoming a powerful investment for development. Better nourished and educated women marry later, while their children are healthier and better educated.

In Myanmar, with US\$33, it is possible to feed a child in school for the entire academic year (eight months) - that is only 19 cents per day.



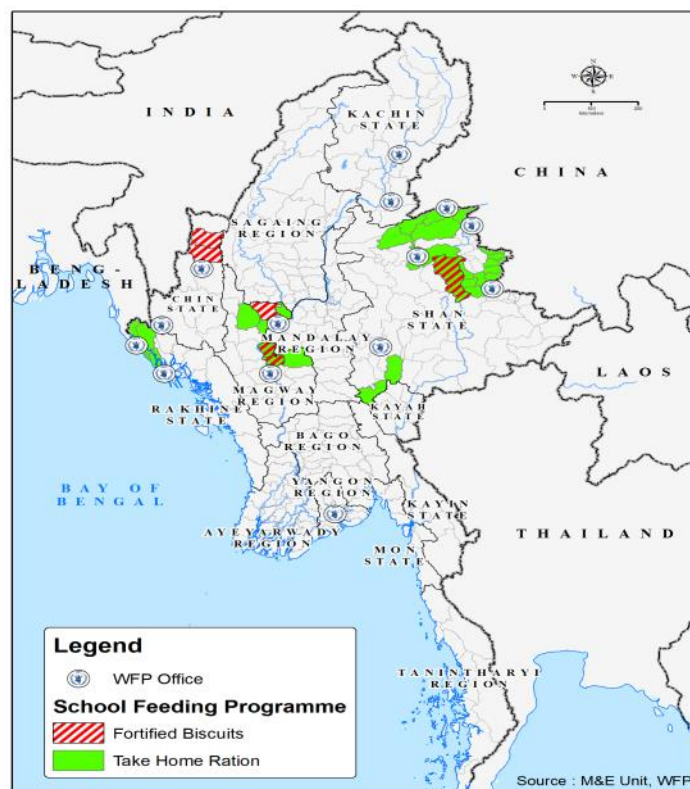
Funding shortfalls and suspension: Due to immediate funding shortfalls, WFP was obliged to suspend take-home rice rations for all schoolchildren across the country as of November 2014. In-school feeding with HEB for the remaining schoolchildren has been suspended since January 2015. WFP has continued working with partners to secure funding but it will not be able to resume school feeding activities until sufficient resources are secured.

Termination of school feeding in Laukai: Recent assessments showed that the livelihood opportunities of the majority of the population in Kokang improved since WFP had begun providing assistance in 2003. Based on these findings, WFP phased out from Laukai in December 2014, terminating school feeding in 193 schools.

Partnership and coordination: As a global leader in school feeding and in line with its new policy, WFP is committed to working with partners to share knowledge in order to better support the Myanmar government in implementing sustainable national programmes. Educational development is a major government policy goal, and thus WFP Myanmar coordinates with the Ministry of Education and partners with UNICEF on school feeding, with a view to improving children's access to and retention in primary schools. WFP implemented school feeding through further valued partnerships with nine local and six international NGOs*, which carried out food distribution. WFP school feeding activities in 2013-2014 were made possible thanks to the timely contributions from the Governments of Australia, Canada, Switzerland, Japan Association for WFP (JAWFP), Unilever, and Yum! Brands Asia.

The way forward: In July 2012, WFP Myanmar piloted the HEB snack modality, introducing a more child-centered approach in school feeding. In 2014, WFP provided daily snacks to almost 54,000 schoolchildren. Based on preliminary feasibility and cost efficiency

analysis, WFP intends to replace take-home rice rations with in-school feeding with HEB at the beginning of the new academic year in July 2015. The new approach to be introduced in all target areas except Wa will enable WFP to expand the programme and reach even more schoolchildren across the country.



*All Country Agency for Rural Development (ACRD), Community Association for Rural, Development (CARD), Grassroots Empowerment and Ecosystem Nurturing (GREEN), Health Poverty Action (HPA), Koruna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS), Myanmar Heart Development Organisation (MHDO), Network Activities Group (NAG), Noble Compassionate Volunteers (NCV), Renewable Energy Association Myanmar (REAM), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA), Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement (OISCA), Partenaires (PARTNERS), Terre des Hommes, Italia (TdH-IT), and World Vision.



World Food Programme

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