

The [Ghana School Feeding Programme](#) (GSFP) in collaboration with development partners [World Food Programme](#) (WFP), Netherlands Development Organisation, [SNV](#), [Partnership for Child Development](#) (PCD) and [Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa](#) (AGRA) recently held a two-day intensive Home Grown School Feeding National Learning Event in Accra.

The event was themed “Sustaining the Ghana School Feeding Programme: Opportunities, Challenges and Lessons.” At the end of the session participants issued a communiqué, which reaffirmed the third objective of the GSFP as a strategy to promote an increase in domestic food production and consumption; increase the incomes of poor rural households; and improve the health and nutritional status of the pupils in such deprived schools.

The GSFP has had a positive impact on school enrolment, it initially began with a pilot in 10 beneficiary schools in 2005. Statistics in March 2012 indicated that the average number of pupils enrolled in GSFP schools increased by 18 per cent from 2005 to 2011, and now covers all the 216 districts within all 10 regions of the country.

During the 2013/2014 academic year the total enrolment of beneficiary pupils increased by 320.6 per cent from the 2006/2007 level from 413,498 to 1,739,352 in 4,887 public primary schools. This figure represents 39.43 per cent of the total national public primary school enrolment.

Event Findings

The communiqué outlined the role of development partners such as the Dutch government, WFP, SNV, PCD, AGRA and UNICEF cannot be over-looked in contributing to the success the GSFP.

Specially it outlined:

- The Dutch government provided tremendous support in the early years of the programme.
- WFP has played a crucial role in providing direct feeding in some schools in the three northern regions of Ghana.
- PCD continues to contribute significantly towards the implementation of the GSFP through technical assistance, to improve both the health and nutrition of school-aged children and the local livelihoods of smallholder farmers.
- PCD's technical assistance can be most demonstrated by the development of a Technical Assistance Plan signed off by the government in 2012, alongside a more recent GSFP Policy Framework. Both of these documents guide the government in its implementation of a sustainable and effective programme.

Other Partner Roles

- SNV who have been partnering with the GSFP since 2007 is currently implementing the procurement governance of the HGSP project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation linking 10,000 smallholder farmers to the school feeding market
- AGRA through its "Market Innovations for Development" (MIND Project) is supporting the agricultural objective of the programme.
- The programme's Monitoring and Evaluation plan, (M&E), Operation manual, and piloting of a Result Based M&E tool are currently underway by UNICEF.

The communique also appealed to the government through the Ministry of Finance to rectify the current fund flow gaps for the benefit of our children in deprived communities who look up to these meals for their survival in the classroom.

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