TECHNICAL REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAMMIN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME IN REFUGEE SETTINGS UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency World Food Programme



INTRODUCTION

The Technical Review on School Feeding in Refugee Settings has been developed for the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Cooperating Partners, Operational Partners and Government Counterparts to guide the design, implementation and monitoring of school feeding programmes in refugee settings.

The Technical Review is guided by the commitments outlined in the Global Compact on Refugees, with the ultimate aim of contributing to and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for both Refugees and Host Communities.

It is informed by WFP's School Feeding Strategy 2020-2030; WFP's 2021 State of School Feeding Worldwide; UNHCR's Refugee Education Strategy and the UNHCR/WFP Joint Strategy for enhancing self-reliance in food security and nutrition in protracted refugee situations (2016). The Review is shaped by the first-hand account of refugees who have shared their experience and reflected upon the challenges, opportunities and hopes for the future that school feeding represents. During the development of this body of work, field missions have been carried out in three different refugee operations (in Kenya and Rwanda) to identify and inform good practices, assess policy and capacity gaps, and develop understanding

of the refugee experience. The field missions, dialogue with refugees through focus group discussions (FDGs), key informant interviews (KIIs), as well as extensive research about school feeding in refugee settings, lay the foundation of the technical review and guidance. It was also drafted with inputs from multiple functioning units at WFP and UNHCR, including: the School Based Programmes (SBP) Service, Nutrition Division, Emergencies and Transition Unit (PRO-P), Climate & Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Unit (PRO-C), Regional Bureau for East Africa (RBN), Regional Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa (RBC), UNHCR's RB for EHAGL region, UNHCR HQ/GVA, and UNHCR HQ/Education, amongst others.

The document is developed under the framework of the UNHCR/WFP Global Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)-2011, which outlines the ultimate objectives and areas of cooperation between the two agencies and delineates roles and responsibilities based on the comparative advantage of each agency. These are an elaboration of the accountabilities of each agency with regard to school feeding programmes, outlined under the education sector in the global MOU; and provides practical suggestions and operational standards for the implementation of the programme.

OBJECTIVES OF THE TECHNICAL REVIEW

The overarching objectives of the Technical Review are to ensure that school feeding programmes in refugee settings are of high quality, as consistent as possible across different contexts, provide a meaningful coverage for refugee children in school, and ultimately contribute to:

- a) facilitating the enrolment, attendance and retention of refugee school-aged children and youth in formal and non-formal education programmes, thus contributing to the improvement of their academic performance and success;
- b) improving the overall health and nutrition of school-aged refugee children by increasing their access to nutritious food, dietary diversity and micronutrient intake;
- c) child protection by enabling children to remain in a safe space, thus reducing their exposure to protection risks including the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), exploitation and abuse;
- d) narrowing the gender gap and help break the cycle of gender discrimination, by incentivizing families to send girls to school and enabling them to complete full cycles of schooling;
- e) household food security by conserving resources and time at the household level and providing a safety net for parents and caregivers;

- f) fostering good relations and peaceful coexistence between refugees and their host communities in support of wider refugee inclusion efforts;
- g) supporting overall access to education, health and nutrition, food security, protection in a way that best support strategic efforts to include refugees into national education systems to the extent possible.

The document provides an overview of the organizational commitments and directions related to school feeding across the two agencies, summarizes findings and best practice and outlines key design features and coordination for refugee school feeding programmes. It complements and draws on detailed guidance issued by both agencies across different platforms. It is structured in five key chapters. Chapter 1 provides a broad overview of agency policy and commitments; Chapter 2 presents a global view of school feeding operations in refugee contexts; Chapter 3 outlines design options for school feeding programmes; Chapter 4 provides operational requirements; Chapter 5 outlines the key stakeholders and coordination. Lastly, annexes provide further details, tables and documents consulted in the writing process of this review.

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CHAPTER 1:

PRINCIPLES & KEY CONTRIBUTORS

THE BUILDING BLOCKS

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TECHNICAL REVIEW – CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES IN REFUGEE SETTINGS

PRINCIPLES & KEY CONTRIBUTORS

This section outlines the major global policy frameworks pertaining to refugee protection and assistance and aligns the school feeding programme in refugee settings to the overall goals and objectives of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. Chapter 1 is designed to provide a broad overview of the key building blocks on which school feeding programmes in refugee settings are anchored in, as well as give a broad overview of the key contributors to school feeding.

Chapter 1 is divided into four sections, with part four outlining two critical subsections that complement and enhance the contribution of school feeding programmes in refugee settings. The main headings of this section are:

- 1. Refugee Protection
- International Instruments for the Protection of Refugees
- The Global Compact
- 2. Right to Education
- **■** Education for All
- Investing in a Brighter Future: School Feeding Programmes Contributing to Education
- UNHCR's Refugee Education 2030 Strategy
- 3. Gender Equality: Women & Girls; Men & Boys
- Gender Dynamics in Refugee Settings
- How School Feeding Programmes Can Promote Gender Equality
- 4. Food Security and Nutrition
- Supporting the Right to Food Through School Meals Programmes
- A Chance for Every Schoolchild: WFP's School Feeding Strategy 2020-2030
- School Feeding as an Integral Part of the Food Assistance Package
- 5. Energy and Environment
- UNHCR's 2019-2025 Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy
- How Energy Sources Affect School Feeding Programmes
- How School Feeding Programmes
 Can Catalyse Sustainable Energy &
 Environmental Impact





1. REFUGEE PROTECTION

WHAT ARE THE INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES?

The 1951 Refugee Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol are the most comprehensive instruments which have been adopted to safeguard the fundamental rights of refugees. The 1967 Protocol broadens the applicability of the 1951 Convention, and as such, they are fundamental to the international regime of refugee protection. The 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol mandates UNHCR to coordinate international protection of refugees and other persons of concern, including asylum seekers, stateless persons, and returnees. The unprecedented increase in the number of forcibly displaced persons within and across borders and continents prompted the international community to adopt new approaches for the protection and assistance of refugees, including launching the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in 2018. The GCR is a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility sharing, recognizing that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation. It provides a blueprint for governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives.

FOUR KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES

- Ease pressure on host countries
- Enhance refugee self-reliance
- Expand access to third country solutions
- Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity

KEY AREAS REQUIRING SUPPORT: MEETING NEEDS & SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

EDUCATION;

WOMEN & GIRLS; CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH;
JOBS & LIVELIHOODS; FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION; HEALTH;
ACCOMMODATION, ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT;
FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS & PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

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CHAPTER 1: PRINCIPLES & KEY CONTRIBUTORS





2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES AND EDUCATION

- Expand resources and enhance the quality and inclusiveness of national education systems to facilitate access by refugee and host community children (both boys and girls), adolescents and youth to primary, secondary and tertiary education in line with national education laws, policies and planning and in support of host countries.
- Mobilize efforts to minimize the time refugee boys and girls spend out of education, ideally a maximum of three months after arrival.
- Mobilize and expand educational facilities and teaching capacities. Address specific education needs of refugees including safe schools and online education, and to overcome obstacles to their enrolment and attendance through flexible certified learning programmes, especially for girls as well as people with disabilities and psychosocial trauma.
- Depending on the context, expand educational facilities (including for early childhood development, and technical or vocational training) and teaching capacities (including support for, as appropriate, refugees and members of host communities who are presently or could be engaged as teachers, in line with national laws and policies). Provide support for the implementation and development of national education programmes that include refugees.
- Facilitate recognition of equivalence of academic, professional and vocational qualifications.

EDUCATION & AGENDA 2030 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- **SDG 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **SDG 4.1** Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education
- **SDG 4.2** Ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development care and pre-primary education
- **SDG 4.5** Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations

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SDG 4.6 Ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

EDUCATION FOR ALL

- The right to education for refugees is affirmed in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and reaffirmed for both primary and secondary schooling in the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees.
- The right to education is an enabling right for children and youth of all ages and abilities and provides a foundation for protection in current and future situations, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention Against Discrimination in

- Education, and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Access to quality education enables progress towards productive employment for individuals and sustainable economic growth for communities, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG8); toward full participation in society, as articulated in the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and toward peaceful and inclusive societies, as articulated in Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG16).

INVESTING IN A BRIGHTER FUTURE: SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCATION

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- Children in conflict-affected countries are more than twice as likely to be out of school, and specifically girls in conflict-affected countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than girls in stable contexts. An estimated 3.4 million refugee children were out of school, and based on 2021 data, 68% of refugee children are enrolled in primary education. Enrolment of refugees in secondary education is at 34%, and only 3% for higher education.
- Schools provide platforms for the integrated delivery of education and health services. When school feeding programmes are part of a package of investment in education, they help increase enrolment and attendance rates and improve the nutritional status, health and cognitive development of children.
- School feeding programmes generate a lasting impact. A systematic review of 216 education programmes in 52 low- and middle-income countries (3IE 2016) found that school meals programmes are one of the few education interventions that show positive impact

- in both school participation (enrolment, attendance, completion) and learning (scores on cognitive, language and mathematics tests).
- The value of school feeding to help lower the barriers to education is well established. Studies have shown that school feeding programmes can help get children into school and remain there; meals in school can *increase enrolment by an average of 9%*. Furthermore, 45 studies of school meals programmes around the world show that children receiving a school meal throughout the school year *attend school 4 to 7 days more* than children who do not receive school meals.
- In <u>Madagascar</u>, for example, attendance rates increased from 88% to 98% over two years after the introduction of take-home rations.
- The same 3IE systematic review of 216 education programmes in 52 low- and middle-income countries found that school meals programmes *increase children's learning performance* on cognitive, math

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- and language tests; the standardized means differences are respectively +0.11, +0.10 and +0.09.
- School are power hubs for education, development, and innovation. Ensuring that girls and boys stay in school and are able and ready to learn is an investment in the human capital of the future.

UNHCR'S REFUGEE EDUCATION 2030 STRATEGY

In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Refugee Education 2030 strategy aims to foster the conditions, collaborations and partnerships to support all refugees, asylum seeker, returnee and stateless children and youth and their hosting communities, to access inclusive and equitable quality education through national education systems of host governments. Access to education will enable them to learn, thrive and develop their potential, build individual and collective resilience, and contribute to peaceful coexistence and civil society.

An essential element of the Global Compact on Refugees is creating synergies between humanitarian and development responses, and it is within this principle that Refugee Education 2030 proposes coherent action across humanitarian and development responses that support inclusion of all students in host country education systems, regardless of legal status

RESOURCES & TOOLS

- Coming Together for Refugee Education (UNHCR, 2020)
- Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion (UNHCR, 2019)
- Staying the Course The Challenges Facing Refugee Education (UNHCR, 2021)
- The Impact of Education Programmes on Learning and School Participation (3IE, 2016)
- Cost, and Cost-Outcomes of School <u>Feeding Programmes</u> (Kristjansson et AL, 2016)
- The Impact of School Feeding
 Programmes (WFP, 2019)

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3. GENDER EQUALITY: WOMEN & GIRLS MEN & BOYS

HOW DOES THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES ADDRESS GENDER EQUALITY

- Adopt and implement policies and programmes to empower women and girls in refugee and host communities and promote full enjoyment of their rights and equal access to services.
- Promote the meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls, and to support institutional capacity and participation of national and community-based women's organizations, as well as all relevant government ministries.
- Security and safety of women and girls, including the prevention of all forms of violence such as sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Measures to strengthen the agency of women and girls to promote women's economic empowerment, and to support the access to education (including secondary and tertiary education).

GENDER EQUALITY & AGENDA 2030 ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- **SDG 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- **SDG 5.1** End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere
- **SDG 5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- **SDG 5.3** Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child and early marriage and female genital mutilation
- **SDG 5.4** Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructures and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within households and the family as nationally appropriate

