**Kingdom of Lesotho**

**National School Feeding Policy**



November 2014

# Foreword

**To be inserted**

# Executive Summary

In a context of widespread poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, school feeding has been an important safety net in Lesotho for 50 years, ensuring that all children of Lesotho can participate in primary education, and receive a daily minimum healthy diet. However, the various models of school feeding that have been in place in Lesotho each have their disadvantages, among them high financial and administrative costs, little dietary diversity, and little or no contribution to the local economy, in particular in terms of local food production and processing.

For this reason, the Government of Lesotho has taken a step back to analyse past experience and present challenges, and to devise a Lesotho model of school feeding that addresses the observed shortcomings. At the core of this new model is the wish to pursue a more ‘home-grown’ school feeding model. This is expressed in the policy’s vision of a sustainable school feeding programme that ensures nutritious and healthy school meals to all Lesotho primary school pupils on every school day, using to the largest possible extent food produced and processed by local farmers, farmers’ associations and companies, and implemented entirely by national actors and agents.

Many of the details of the future National School Feeding Programme will still have to be laid down in specific School Feeding Implementation Guidelines. However, the policy establishes a number of guiding principles, which determine the spirit of this policy, and which will inform and guide the further process of specifying the detailed processes and standards for the future National School Feeding Programme. These principles encompass:

* Mutuality
* Multi-sectoral
* Reliability
* Predictability
* Transparency
* Accountability
* Community-participation and ownership
* Complementarity
* Cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness
* Flexibility
* Sustainability

The goal of this policy is to promote the development of children, farmers and communities in all areas of Lesotho by ensuring that school feeding is recognised and treated as a multi-sectoral programme that receives the support from and provides benefits to a multitude of sectors and actors, including Government at central and district level, communities, private sector, civil society, etc.

The long-term development objective of this policy is to ensure that school feeding contributes to the goals of the National Strategic Development Plan and the Vision 2020 of a healthy, well-developed human resource basis by providing children with a sound basis for their further education, contributing to children’s nutritional basis to lead a healthy and productive life, and by supporting the material, awareness and skills basis for parents to make good choices for themselves and their children. Achieving this objective will take several generations of primary education with reliable school feeding, good quality schooling and sound educational outcomes.

On this foundation, the policy establishes specific objectives that school feeding should pursue in the sectors of

* **Education:** Increased and equitable access and adherence to and performance in school of Lesotho pre-primary and primary school learners (regardless of gender, poverty, or other forms of vulnerability);
* **Health and Nutrition:** Reduced chronic and acute malnutrition, including reduced protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies;
* **Social Development:** Increased levels of food and nutrition security – for children by receiving regular and reliable meals, and for households through increased livelihood opportunities, in particular in rural areas;
* **Agriculture:** Increased national food production and processing;
* **Trade and Industry:** Enhanced and strengthened food value chains in Lesotho in terms of an increased number of commercially marketed food products, increased processing, improved storage, increased food quality and safety, and increased job opportunities and incomes for all actors involved in these value chains, and not least
* **Poverty reduction**: Increased incomes for poor household incomes.

The future NSFP will apply a flexible approach, where the food required for school feeding will be purchased both internationally, nationally and locally.

The definition of school meals or food baskets will follow three decisive criteria:

* Minimum nutritional requirements
* Maximum prices and
* Preferences for local food purchases.

Several measures will be taken to promote an increasing share of food being purchased locally, with corresponding increasing benefits for the local economy:

* Food produced and processed locally may be purchased at a slightly higher price than imported food;
* Communities and farmers’ associations will be involved in the discussion of school feeding baskets. This will make it possible to prioritise (nutritionally adequate) food that can be produced locally; and
* Contracts with National Management Agents will include targets for the percentage of food that should be bought from national and local producers and processors.

To ensure that also the poor and most vulnerable can benefit from the market that the NSFP will constitute, National Management Agents will also be instructed on how in particular vulnerable households (those that are poor, affected by HIV and AIDS, female headed, etc.) can be included in food purchases. The inclusion of poor households will further be promoted by ensuring swift payment procedures (including advance payments) and the promotion of tools such as forward contract farming, which reduces the risk of farmers and guarantees them the sale of products at a certain price.

The National School Feeding Programme will be lead by the Office of the Minister of Education and training, who will be advised by a multi-sectoral Advisory Board, in which representatives of the relevant ministries as well as of farmers and food processors will participate. A secretariat, based in the Ministry of Education, will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight of programme implementation, for the preparation and follow-up of the recommendations of the Advisory Board and the decisions of the Minister’s Office, , and of ensuring reliable and timely monitoring and reporting on the programme. Monitoring and evaluation will in future be separated from the implementation of the programme.

The actual implementation of school feeding will be contracted to one or more National Management Agents, following national procurement regulations.

At schools, school boards will form specific school committees, which will continue to ensure that the programme is implemented well at their school, by verifying the reception and use of food, and ensuring a high level of information for communities.

National Management Agents will be contracted for several years (potentially with a probationary period), to allow them adequate investments. A capacity building programme will be devised for both the NSFP secretariat, for the selected national management agents, and other relevant actors, so each can reliably, efficiently and effectively carry out the tasks entrusted to him.

It is foreseen that the comprehensive capacity building programme is completed and that as of 2018 all functions of implementing the National School Feeding Programme will be assumed by national actors.

Until then, the World Food Programme has been contracted to ensure that during the transition period school feeding is carried out without disruption. Upon approval of this policy, WFP will gradually switch the implementation of school feeding to the new model, following several pilot projects. Furthermore, WFP will carry out a detailed capacity gap assessment of all actors involved, and will develop and implement a comprehensive capacity programme to ensure that as of 2018, all tasks in relation of the coordination, management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the school feeding in Lesotho will be carried out by national actors.

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# List of Abbreviations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AIDS | Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome |
| ECCD | Early Childhood Care and Development |
| ESSP | Education Sector Strategic Plan |
| FAO | Food and Agricultural Organisation |
| FMU | Food Management Unit |
| FNCO | Food and Nutrition Coordination Office |
| FPE | Free Primary Education |
| HGSF | Home-Grown School Feeding |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| LNNP | Lesotho National Nutrition Policy (draft) |
| M | Maloti, the Lesotho currency. M1 corresponds to ZAR 1 (South African Rand) and to US$ 0.09. US$ 1 corresponds to M11.1 |
| MALF | Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries |
| MOET | Ministry of Education and Training |
| MOF | Ministry of Finance |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| MOSD | Ministry of Social Development |
| MOTIMC | Ministry of Trade, Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives |
| NMA | National Management Agent |
| NPSD | National Policy on Social Development |
| NSDP | National Strategic Development Plan |
| NSFP | National School Feeding Programme |
| NSPS | National Social Protection Strategy |
| PMO | Prime Minister’s Office |
| SCF | Save the Children’s Fund |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

# Context and History of School Feeding in Lesotho

School feeding has been an important element supporting primary education in Lesotho for the past 50 years. The first 10 schools in Maseru district were supported by the Save the Children Fund (SCF) starting in 1961. National coverage of school feeding was achieved for the first time in 1965, when the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) began its support, reaching all primary schools in all ten districts.

In 1990, the Government of Lesotho introduced its policy of “Education with Production” with the intention of rendering the school feeding programme more sustainable, being increasingly based on schools producing their own food. Schools were provided with farming tools and other inputs (such as piglets, layers, broilers, vegetable seeds, roofing material and cement) to start agricultural projects. Parents contributed in various ways, including the provision of labour for infrastructure (e.g. livestock shelters), producing vegetables in school gardens, and making small monetary contributions for school activities that would enhance school meals. At the same time, to promote agricultural education, teachers used the school gardens to teach nutrition and agricultural syllabi.

The introduction of self-reliance projects in schools entailed the gradual phase-out of WFP-assisted school feeding: during a first phase (1990 – 1994), WFP handed over school feeding in the lowlands, and in a second phase (1995 – 1999) in the foothills.

In 2000, the Government introduced Free Primary Education (FPE), which includes as one of its components school feeding for primary school children. This, combined with the continued provision of school meals, led to a 12.5% increase in overall enrolment in primary school from just under 360,000 to more than 410,000 pupils.

Since then, there have been two different school feeding schemes in Lesotho: Government covering 1,044 schools with about 330,000 children in the lowlands and foothills, and WFP covering 429 schools in the mountains with about 80,000 pupils.

Government school feeding was based on the use of caterers recruited from the poor communities surrounding primary schools using specified guidelines. This was intended not only to ensure the reliable provision of school meals to all primary school children on every school day, in order to promote enrolment, attendance and the ability to concentrate and learn, but also to provide employment and income for the poor. Caterers were expected to procure, store and transport food to schools, and there to prepare and serve daily meals according to a nationally prescribed menu.[[1]](#footnote-1) For this, they were paid a fixed amount corresponding to M 3.50 per child, per day. The profit margin of caterers was estimated at M1.64 per child per day.

The WFP-assisted school feeding scheme in the highlands relies mainly on internationally procured food, which is quarterly transported to schools by the Food Management Unit (FMU), Government’s food logistics arm. As pupils often have to walk long distances to school in the morning, they are provided two meals: a morning meal of soft maize-meal porridge; and a lunch of maize meals, pulses and vegetable oil. Meals are prepared and firewood is provided by cooks, who are recruited by MOET from among the unemployed people in the surrounding communities, and are paid a rate of M 1.50 per child per day. Total costs for the WFP-model are calculated at M 2.75 per child per day.

A hand-over of the WFP-assisted schools in the highlands was planned to start in 2000. However, attempts for this had to be postponed repeatedly, as Government capacity to implement this food-based model of school feeding was found insufficient to guarantee a reliable continuation of school feeding in these areas, and as a model that would appear more manageable for Government was not yet identified. In the meantime, a number of studies were carried out which informed of the advantages and disadvantages of the various models, and pointed to a way forward.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Both existing models of school feeding have shown to have a number of advantages and disadvantages:

* The WFP model is cheaper and more cost-efficient. It also functions in areas that are difficult to access, and maintains at all times a high level of accountability. However, it provides a highly monotonous meal, with virtually no dietary diversity unless additional (fresh) food is contributed free of charge by communities. Furthermore, the WFP model only warrants very little local participation, and generates hardly any economic or other side benefits for local communities.
* On the other hand, the Government’s catering model has a somewhat more varied menu, and includes some fresh food. It also seeks to promote employment and income opportunities to local poor. However, this model is almost 30% more expensive than WFP’s model.[[3]](#footnote-3) In addition, it was found that caterers normally do not have the capacity to advance sufficient funding for the procurement and transport of food until (often delayed) payments are made by MOET. Thus they often depend on (expensive) credit provided by traders and business people. This not only erodes their estimated profit margin, but also leads to temptations for fraud (by e.g. inflating the number of children fed per day, cutting rations, etc.).

Not least, both models share a number joint disadvantages:

* The fact that two different models of school feeding exist inherently leads to inefficiencies.
* School meal menus are not adapted to local preferences and capacities, thus limiting the possibilities of communities to provide the required commodities; and not least
* Government spends limited human and institutional resources on the non-core area of implementing school feeding programmes, including the payment of cooks and caterers, at the detriment of core functions. At the same time, sound monitoring mechanisms are lacking.

For this reason, the Government of Lesotho has decided to take a step back and to launch a comprehensive process of policy formulation and restructuring of a new, unified, truly Lesotho model of school feeding. While this process is on-going and the required national capacities are being built, Government has agreed with WFP to temporarily implement school feeding, applying the new school feeding model once it has been defined, and gradually handing over the management of the programme to national agents until the end of 2017 (see also section on transitional arrangements).

# Purpose of the school feeding policy

In Lesotho, 57% of households (more than one million people) are estimated to live below the poverty line for basic needs (US$1.08 per day), and 34% of households (about 650,000 people) to live below the food poverty line (US$0.61 per day). A staggering 84% of the population are deemed vulnerable to poverty. Food insecurity exists all over the country, but is most widespread in the mountains. According to the Lesotho Demographic and Health Survey of 2009, 39.2% of children are stunted and 14.8% are severely stunted. Serious micronutrient malnutrition is expressed by high rates of iron and vitamin A deficiency (anemia). The prevalence of iodine deficiency disorders is suspected serious. Not least due to the effects of HIV and AIDS, life expectancy has fallen to 48 years.

In this situation, school feeding constitutes a crucial safety net, providing school children with a minimum of a healthy diet and safeguarding their possibilities to participate in education and building a basis for more stable and prosperous livelihoods.

The combination of FPE and school feeding has led to gross enrolment rates above 90%, net enrolment rates above 80%, and attendance rates above 90%. Still today, in particular in rural areas of Lesotho, where children often have to walk long distances, they do not go to school if they know that there is no school meal to be expected there. For this reason, school feeding in Lesotho should continue as a national programme, covering all primary schools in the country. However, the shortcomings of the previous schemes described above need to be addressed to render the programme more cost-efficient and effective, and sustainable.

The purpose of the present National School Feeding Policy is to provide a framework for cooperation between relevant sectors and actors, as well as a mechanism for the effective, efficient and transparent implementation of the National School Feeding Programme, ensuring among others the meaningful involvement and participation of communities, by

* providing the basis for an entirely national school feeding programme in Lesotho that is embedded in and supports the national framework of policies and strategies;
* ensuring national ownership of the school feeding programme across sectors and districts;
* describing one Lesotho Model of School Feeding which
* ensures the efficient and reliable provision of healthy school meals in primary schools, and
* ensures that school feeding increasingly generates benefits for local communities and economies in the entire country; and
* ensuring that MOET can focus its resources on its core-business, including the promotion of quality education.

In devising this policy, the Government of Lesotho builds on experience and lessons learned with respect to school feeding from a number of other countries. Essentially, when developing the Lesotho Model of School Feeding, the policy tries to the largest extent possible in Lesotho (1) to apply the logic of Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF); and (2) to ensure the preconditions for successful school feeding models that have been identified in recent years.

1. In HGSF, food for school meals is to the largest possible extent bought from farmers as close as possible to schools. In this way, HGSF facilitates the access of farmers to a solid, significant, predictable and local market, and ultimately promotes local agricultural development. Both the African Union’s Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme[[4]](#footnote-4) and the United Nations’ Committee on World Food Security[[5]](#footnote-5) have endorsed HGSF as a social protection mechanism that supports smallholder farmers and contributes to food security efforts – besides contributing to school enrolment, adherence, performance and not least equitable access to school for vulnerable or excluded groups. HGSF also provides opportunities to provide fresher and more culturally appropriate food to school children. Therefore, HGSF can contribute to improving rural livelihoods and reducing poverty, while supporting school feeding programmes to become sustainable.
2. Global research[[6]](#footnote-6) has identified five aspects that determine successful and sustainable school feeding programmes:
   1. Clear policy frameworks that link school feeding to national and sector policies and strategies
   2. Sufficient financial capacity to reliably maintain school feeding at an adequate level;
   3. Institutional capacity to implement and coordinate school feeding and required complementary activities;
   4. The design and implementation of school feeding programmes well adapted to the national context; and
   5. Strong community participation and involvement.

A successful and sustainable country-owned school feeding programme depends on the integration of school feeding into national laws, and into relevant sector policies, strategies and plans. Strong communication and coordination between Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Health, the Prime Minister’s Office and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (and others as appropriate), as well as between national governments and donors, is also essential.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The present policy aims to provide a solid basis for the creation and sustainable maintenance of these preconditions for the future National School Feeding Programme.

While this policy has been developed with a specific view to primary schools, its principles as well as the model for programme coordination and implementation will be directly applicable also for other national feeding programmes, in particular in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centres, with adjustments mainly required with respect to specific meals and commodities to be included.

# The National Policy and Regulatory Framework

This section highlights the links of relevant national or sectoral policies and strategies, and how the National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) can contribute to their priorities. Very short summaries of the mentioned policies and strategies are provided in annex.

The **Lesotho Vision 2020** proposes the strengthening and promotion of small, micro and medium sized enterprises (SMMEs), and an improvement of food security and the overcoming of hunger through a number of measures in the agricultural sector.

The **National Strategic Development Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17** (NSDP) promotes the sustainable commercialisation and diversification in agriculture, as well as increased value-addition and market integration, including support to small-medium scale agro-processing, distribution and marketing at community level, agri-business development, and the facilitation of commercialization and diversification.

The **Agricultural Sector Strategy of 2003** promotes, among others, sustainable land use, diversified agricultural production, improved access to inputs, reduced output instability, improved household food security through more efficient subsistence agricultural practices, and activities creating labour and employment.

The **Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17** promotes an economic development of Lesotho characterized by growth, innovation, enabling environment for trade, investment, and industrial development for private sector led job creation and poverty reduction.

*With its more ‘home-grown-focus,’ the NSFP will provide a steadily increasing market for local, in particular fresh, food. The increased domestic demand will complement measures supporting increased food supply and availability. Forward contract farming*[[8]](#footnote-8) *and medium-term supply contracts can reduce farmers’ and processors’ risks, increase their access to credit, and allow commercial investments into increased food supply, while securing predictable, stable prices.*

With specific respect to **education**, Article 28 of the **Constitution of the Kingdom of Lesotho** (2009) stipulates that Lesotho shall adopt policies aimed, among others, at securing that primary education is compulsory and available to all.

The **Education Act of 2010** establishes free and compulsory primary education. It obliges all actors to ensure that learners are free from any form of discrimination in accessing education and are availed all educational opportunities provided.

The **Education Sector Strategic Plan** (2005 – 2015) establishes specific sector objectives, including the improved access, efficiency and equity of education and training at all levels; and the improved quality of education and training (…).

*School meals enable all parents to send their children to school. The NSFP directly promotes enrolment and attendance of children (also those that are vulnerable or otherwise excluded) in schools. By relieving short-term hunger, they help pupils to concentrate, participate meaningfully in classes, and to learn.*

With a view to **Health and Social Protection**, the NSDP proposes among others improved community health and nutrition programmes, growth monitoring and promotion, as well as nutrition education.

The **(draft) Lesotho National Nutrition Policy of 2011** (LNNP) foresees Government to promote increased nutrition security through several strategies, among them to review and strengthen institutional feeding initiatives in schools, ECCDs and prisons.

*The NSFP can support these initiatives by providing school (and ECCD) children with healthy and diverse meals on every school day. In addition, schools provide a channel to communicate the importance of a healthy and diverse diet with children and communities. By constituting a dependable market for diverse, local food products, the NSFP can provide a decisive incentive to farmers and food processors to diversify and increase their production of such food, with additional positive spin-off benefits for households’ own consumption and dietary habits.*

The purpose of the **National Disaster Risk Reduction** **Policy** is to provide a framework for effective planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction measures in Lesotho. With respect to risk reduction and development, the policy states that Government shall develop and strengthen social safety nets.

The **National Policy on Social Development 2014/2015–2024/2025** (NPSD) foresees Government to develop and implement a comprehensive social protection system, which includes, but is not limited to, social insurance, social assistance/social safety nets, universal benefits, basic social services, labour market policies and livelihood support.

The **National Social Protection Strategy** (NSPS) of 2014 shows that school feeding is the largest social safety net in Lesotho, covering 61% of all persons reached by social protection programmes (NSPS Table 1, p. 7). It also raises the question, if attendance and performance in school are best promoted by direct cash transfers to poor households, or through school feeding; and proposes to review with MOET the costs and benefits of alternative models of school feeding.

*With an ever-increasing share of diverse food procured from among local farmers, the NSFP can provide new and growing livelihood opportunities to poor rural households. By stimulating local food production on a commercially viable basis, it can also contribute to increasing rural households’ food and income security. The new national model of school feeding aims at providing reliable school meals at lower cost. It is an indispensable complement to other social programmes to ensure educational outcomes. As the model will apply for ECCDs, it will also lead to enhanced positive nutritional outcomes at an early age.*

# Guiding principles of the policy

A wide range of decisions will have to be taken when the specific Implementation Guidelines for the National School Feeding Programme are elaborated, and when the programme is actually implemented. These decisions will not take place in a vacuum, but will be guided by a number of principles, which will ensure that the spirit of the present policy is fully maintained and realised in the daily work of providing school meals to children in Lesotho. These principles are established by the present section as follows:

**Mutuality** – The NSFP is based on a spirit of business, not welfare! For children, education and the provision of daily, healthy meals is a right. Correspondingly, children have the duty to enrol, attend and fully participate in classes. Local farmers receive access to a significant market, but they have to fulfil contractual obligations and have to provide quality food at competitive prices.

**Multi-sectoral** – School feeding is not the business of only one Ministry or actor, but of the entire government at central and at district levels, of schools, parents, teachers, of farmers and producers. All these stakeholders have been involved in the preparation of this policy, and will be involved in its implementation, including its monitoring, regular reviews and evaluations.

**Reliability** – parents and children can count on school meals being provided on every day of school.

**Predictability** – All actors involved in the implementation of the NSFP shall know sufficiently early, what is expected of them and which resources they will have at their disposition to fulfil their tasks.

**Transparency** – All decisions with respect to the implementation of the NSFP shall be based on agreed-upon, objective and verifiable criteria; and reached through processes that include the relevant stakeholders, and that are clearly described and adhered to.

**Accountability** – Throughout the implementation structure of the NSFP, a clear chain of accountability shall ensure that Government and the public have access to accounts that fulfil international standards for public service accounting.

**Community-participation and ownership** – One of the core features of the National School Feeding Programme is the participation of communities in the implementation of the programme – not just as the providers of free labour or food, but as contributors to the design of school meals, suppliers of food to be procured, and monitors of the quality of programme implementation.

**Complementarity** – In order to ensure ever-growing benefits for local communities as well as the national development and economy, the increasing local demand for in particular fresh food brought about by school feeding shall be accompanied by support along the entire relevant food value chains. This will secure a correspondingly increasing local supply of quality food, as well as sustainable jobs, income and livelihood opportunities.

**Cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness** – To be sustainable, the available national resources have to be used as efficiently as possible, providing quality school meals at the lowest cost. At the same time, beyond providing school meals, the National School Feeding Programme wants to generate important additional benefits for local farmers and the rural poor. The cheapest solution may not always generate these effects to the same extent as an alternative solution at a slightly higher cost. The National School Feeding Programme will establish clear guidance and criteria on how to strike the right balance between efficiency and effectiveness.

**Flexibility** – The diverse situation and context of schools in Lesotho warrants a flexible approach to school feeding. This means that meals served at schools in different regions may differ (based on objective criteria and within established standards of quality, nutritional value, and price), and that procurement sources (import, national or local markets) may change. This flexibility will also allow pursuing the vision of gradually increasing the share of food that is procured locally, commensurate with the intended growing capacity of local farmers to provide sufficient quantities of quality food at an acceptable price.

**Sustainability** – The National School Feeding Programme is conceived as a long-term programme that will continue as long as its underlying reasons – rural food insecurity, poverty, low agricultural production, low education (of parents) etc. – prevail. This continuous expense is justified for two reasons:

(1) To some extent, it is simply a necessary investment into the education of the Lesotho Nation to which the Government is committed and which is indispensable for the longer-term development of the country; and

(2) It is intended that over time, the short-term benefits of the programme in terms of enhanced livelihoods and food security – and thus reduced dependence of rural households on external assistance – will continuously reduce the net costs of the programme to the country.

# Vision, Goal, Objectives and Prerequisites of the Policy

# Vision

This policy pursues the vision of a sustainable school feeding programme that ensures nutritious and healthy school meals to all Lesotho primary school pupils on every school day, using to the largest possible extent food produced and processed by local farmers, farmers’ associations and companies, and implemented entirely by national actors and agents.

# Goal

The goal of this policy is to promote the development of children, farmers and communities in all areas of Lesotho by ensuring that school feeding is recognised and treated as a multi-sectoral programme that receives the support from and provides benefits to a multitude of sectors and actors, including Government at central and district level, communities, private sector, civil society, etc.

# Development Objective

The long-term development objective of this policy is to ensure that school feeding contributes to the goals of the National Strategic Development Plan and the Vision 2020 of a healthy, well-developed human resource basis, by providing children with a sound basis for their further education, contributing to children’s nutritional basis to lead a healthy and productive life, and by supporting the material, awareness and skills basis for parents to make good choices for themselves and their children. Achieving this objective will take several generations of primary education with reliable school feeding, good quality schooling and sound educational outcomes.

# Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the policy reflect the different sectors for which the National School Feeding Programme will be relevant.

In the area of **Education**, the policy and the NSFP should lead to increased and equitable access and adherence to and performance in school of Lesotho pre-primary and primary school learners (regardless of gender, poverty, or other forms of vulnerability) by supporting households in letting children go to and stay in school, and by ensuring that short-term hunger does not impede the ability of pupils to concentrate and to learn.

In the area of **Health and Nutrition**, the policy and the NSFP should lead to reduced chronic and acute malnutrition, including reduced protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, by providing children in ECCDs and in primary schools with a healthy, diverse and nutritionally sufficient meal on every day of school, accompanied by complementary interventions such as deworming and increased nutritional awareness and skills of children and parents.

In the area of **Social Development**,the policy and the National School Feeding Programme should lead to increased levels of food and nutrition security – for children by receiving regular and reliable meals, and for households through increased livelihood opportunities, in particular in rural areas.

In the area of **Agriculture**, the policy and the National School Feeding Programme should lead to increased national food production and processing by providing a stable and predictable market for local products and by encouraging an increased professionalization and commercialisation of agriculture, allowing farmers and farmers’ associations to make investments on the basis of longer-term and forward purchasing contracts.

In the area of **Trade and Industry**, the policy and the National School Feeding Programme should lead to enhanced and strengthened food value chains in Lesotho in terms of an increased number of commercially marketed food products, increased processing, improved storage, increased food quality and safety, and increased job opportunities and incomes for all actors involved in these value chains.

Not least, in the area of **Poverty reduction**, the policy and the National School Feeding Programme should lead to increased incomes for poor household.

# Assumptions and Prerequisites of the Policy

This policy is based on a number of assumptions, and several prerequisites have to be in place in order for the National School Feeding Programme to work and foster the benefits described above:

* The Government has a strong political will to secure the sustainable funding and implementation of school feeding in Lesotho. Government has proven this political will through 25 years of reliable and increasing support to school feeding.
* Parents and children recognise the importance of schooling for the long-term development and prosperity of themselves as well as for the nation. The willingness of households and children to participate in primary education has been manifested by soaring enrolment rates with the introduction of Free Primary Education in the year 2000. In addition, the enactment of the 2010 Education Act, which does not only make education free but also compulsory, will ensure that children of school going age are actually sent to schools.
* Different sectors of Government recognise school feeding increasingly as a multi-sectoral concern. School feeding has previously been supported (e.g. by health and nutrition, agriculture) – and the envisaged cross-sectoral benefits described above are expected to promote the formalised multi-sectoral coordination and implementation of the programme in the future.
* Relevant food products can be produced within the country in sufficient quantities to cover at least part of the programme, with an adequate quality and at competitive prices. A pilot on local food purchases for school feeding has confirmed that not all required food can be produced locally within a foreseeable future. Some areas of Lesotho may be able to provide some food items, while others can provide others, and most not (yet) in sufficient quantities. The present policy addresses the identified shortcomings as follows:
  + The flexible approach of this policy allows a mixture of combining food imports with local purchases, ensuring cost-efficiency, quality and maximised local benefits at any given time;
  + By involving communities in the determination of school meals (see section 7.1 for details) and defining food groups rather than specific food items to be included in school meals, preference can be given to different food items for which farmers in the different areas have a comparative advantage. This is particularly important in the highly diverse agricultural conditions in the different areas of Lesotho.
  + The Implementation Guidelines will allow the payment of slightly higher prices to local food suppliers, allowing these to compete even in the context of difficult conditions for production.
  + Contracts with National Management Agents (NMAs, see below) will include targets for minimum percentages of food procured locally, and can include rewards (or penalties) for achieving these targets (or not).
  + The NSFP is conceived as a long-term, sustainable programme, providing a reliable, local market for farmers, processors and traders. This will allow investments in the capacity of local actors in local food value chains to produce increasing food quantities at good quality and in an increasingly commercial way, which in turn will allow a gradual increase of the share of locally produced food being used by the programme.
* Government has the capacity to implement the programme in a cost-efficient, cost-effective and transparent manner. Government has implemented school feeding for 25 years. Reviews of this implementation have shown that in the past, this implementation was not cost-efficient, and has bound too many government resources in the non-core activity of programme implementation. The NSFP will address these lessons in several ways:
  + In future, Government will focus on the planning, oversight, guidance, supervision and monitoring of the programme, and contract national management agents for its actual implementation.
  + The above-mentioned flexibility of the programme will ensure a high level of cost-efficiency combined with strong and increasing local benefits.
  + The separation of programme implementation and monitoring will increase transparency and accountability of the programme.
* A sufficient number of qualified potential national management agents can be found to secure an adequate level of competition and the reliable implementation of the programme. There are commercial enterprises as well as non-governmental organisations in Lesotho that can qualify as national management agents. The transitional arrangements foresee a specific assessment and programme to identify and address capacity gaps of potential national management agents.
* Learning outcomes in Lesotho primary schools justify the efforts of households, children and partners in participating and contributing to schooling. Without adequate learning outcomes, ultimately reflected in increased employment and income opportunities and life skills, it will be difficult to secure the households,’ children’s and partners’ interest in investing in schooling. The present policy and the future National School Feeding Programme aim at making school feeding more efficient, saving resources that can be invested in the increased quality of schooling. Similarly, by freeing Government from the task of implementing the school feeding programme (and rather secure its efficient implementation through contracts with national management agents that are closely supervised, the Ministry of Education and Training will be in a better position to focus its resources on the quality of primary education.
* The World Food Programme and other partners will provide necessary, in particular technical support to the National School Feeding Programme, in particular during the transition phase. WFP and the Ministry of Education and Training have entered a Memorandum of Understanding for the entire transitional period, ensuring that WFP will support the Government as well as candidate national management agents to acquire the necessary capacity for the efficient, effective, reliable and transparent implementation of the programme. By their mandate, WFP and other UN organisations are committed to support the Government and the People of Lesotho in their efforts to develop, graduate from poverty, and pursue healthy and productive lives.

# Policy Directives

The following directives express the will and decisions of Government with respect to the National School Feeding Programme, and relate directly to the set goals and objectives of this policy.

**The purpose** of this policy is to provide a framework for cooperation between relevant sectors and actors, and a mechanism for the effective, efficient and transparent management and implementation of the NSFP, ensuring among others the meaningful involvement and participation of communities.

**Policy Directive:** All relevant Government entities (Ministries, Departments, Agencies and organisations) will participate in an active and productive way in the coordination and implementation of the National School Feeding Programme as laid out in this policy and the Implementation Guidelines to be developed.

**The goal of this policy** is to promote the development of children, farmers and communities in all areas of Lesotho by ensuring that school feeding is recognised and treated as a multi-sectoral programme that receives the support from and provides benefits to a multitude of sectors and actors, including Government at central and district level, communities, private sector, civil society, etc.

**Policy Directive:** Every Government stakeholder identified by this policy (Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, Social Development, Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives, Finance and Development Planning, PMO, FNCO, etc.) shall ensure that school feeding and the NSFP are considered in a relevant way in their strategies, programmes and activities both as a potential partner and source of support, and as a potential contributor to their own priorities.

**Specific Objective for** **Education:** Increased and equitable access and adherence to and performance in school of Lesotho primary school learners (regardless of gender, poverty, or other forms of vulnerability) by supporting households in letting children go to and stay in school, and by ensuring that short-term hunger does not impede the ability of pupils to concentrate and to learn.

**Policy Directive:** Government will provide culturally appropriate healthy and nutritious school meals to every child in primary schools in Lesotho on every day of school. The Ministry of Education and Training is the lead Government entity in ensuring that this effort is carried out in an efficient, effective, reliable and transparent way. To this effect, it will establish a secretariat (see below section 7) equipped with the required resources for efficient and effective oversight, monitoring and reporting of school feeding implementation.

**Specific Objective for** **Health and Nutrition:** Reduced chronic and acute malnutrition, including reduced protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, by providing primary school children (and children in Early Childhood Care and Development centres) with a healthy, diverse and nutritionally sufficient meal on every day of school, accompanied by complementary interventions such as deworming and increased nutritional awareness and skills of children and parents.

**Policy Directive:** Within the limits of available national funding for the NSFP, the composition of school meals will be oriented at the nutritional requirements of primary school learners in general and in Lesotho – and the specific geographic area – in particular. The composition of school meals (if applicable and relevant, potentially with the help of nutritional supplements such as sprinkles) will thus explicitly consider priority nutritional concerns, including chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

**Specific Objective for Social Development:** Increased levels of food and nutrition security – for children by receiving regular and reliable meals, and for households through increased livelihood opportunities, in particular in rural areas.

**Policy Directive:** Government will promote the participation of rural households in the food production and supply to the NSFP by involving rural communities and farmers’ associations in the design of school meals. This will ensure that school meal baskets (within the limits of maximum price and minimum nutritional requirements) will include food products for which local farmers and processors have a comparative advantage.

**Specific Objective for Agriculture:** Increased national food production and processing by providing a stable and predictable market for local products and by encouraging an increased professionalization and commercialisation of agriculture, allowing farmers and farmers’ associations to make investments on the basis of longer-term and forward purchasing contracts.

**Policy Directive:** Government will ensure that school feeding constitutes a stable and increasing market for locally produced and processed food in order to provide employment and income to local farmers, farmers’ associations and companies. To this effect, Government will apply several tools: (1) The Implementation Guidelines will establish maximum prices for school meals. These maximum prices may be higher for locally produced and processed food than for imported food. (2) In its contracts with NMAs, Government will set targets for the share of locally produced and processed food to be used by the NSFP (and may include rewards or penalties with respect to these targets).

**Specific Objective for** **Trade and Industry**: Enhanced and strengthened food value chains in Lesotho in terms of an increased number of commercially marketed food products, increased processing, improved storage, increased food quality and safety, and increased job opportunities and incomes for all actors involved in these value chains.

**Policy Directive:** Government will support Lesotho food producers and processors to strengthen the local participation in food value chains. This includes support to the production of relevant and adequate food crops through extension and provision of inputs; facilitating access to improved food storage; and support to quality assurance, food safety, marketing and processing through standard setting, expert advice and access to information and tools. In this effort, Government counts on the support by its multi- and bilateral partners, as well as the complementary efforts by NGOs and the Lesotho private sector itself (see also section 9).

**Specific Objective for** **Poverty Reduction:** Increased incomes for poor rural households.

**Policy Directive:** Government will promote the participation of poor households, including those affected by HIV and AIDS and orphan- or female-headed households, in the NSFP and in Lesotho food value chains. To this effect, NMAs will be directed to employ salaried cooks and potential other local staff from among the poor within each community with a primary school. Government will prioritise poor farmers when providing support to production, e.g. with respect to awarding agricultural subsidies. Furthermore, Government will promote the inclusion of poor farmers in farmers’ and processors’ associations (e.g. by asking NMAs to include forward contract farming, see above) and early payments of food supplies from such associations. Not least, Government will ensure that the NMAs are enabled to make such early payments by securing a reliable and timely flow of funds to these agents, based on clear and transparent processes and performance criteria.

# The Lesotho Model of School Feeding

The present section provides an overall description of the main features of the National School Feeding Programme. This description is composed of three sub-sections:

* Definition of school meals;
* Coordination and management; and
* Implementation and flow of funds

# Definition of school meals

Three factors will determine the definition of school meals:

* Minimum nutritional requirements
* Maximum costs per meal; and
* Preference for locally produced and processed food

1. **Minimum nutritional requirements**

School meals at half-day schools and ECCDs should provide children with 30-45 percent of the recommended daily intake in terms of kilocalories and micronutrients. The table below shows the nutrient content that the daily school meal and ECCD ration should provide as a minimum (yellow rows):[[9]](#footnote-9)



The observation of the minimum requirements are not only crucial to avert short-term hunger of children in school, but in particular with respect to prevailing nutrition challenges in Lesotho, notably protein-energy malnutrition, as well as Vitamin A, iodine and iron deficiency. Owing to the fact that many children do not receive all of their remaining nutrient requirements at home, school meals should ideally provide more than these minimum requirements.[[10]](#footnote-10)

This nutrient content of meals can be achieved by many different combinations of

* dried food (e.g. cereals and pulses);
* fresh food (e.g. vegetables, fruit, or animal products including milk and eggs);
* processed food (e.g. bread, pasta, vegetable oil, sugar, salt, etc.)

A cost-efficient and reliable way of providing sufficient amounts of micronutrients can be the use of fortified food, such as iodised salt, Vitamin A enriched vegetable oil, or fortified corn-soy blend. Also micro-nutrient sprinkles can be used, significantly increasing the micro-nutrient content of any meal at comparatively low cost.

1. **Maximum costs per learner per day**

An in-depth study carried out in 2011[[11]](#footnote-11) showed that the costs of Government’s school feeding programme using caterers amounted to M3.50 (US$ 0.32) per learner per day, with a theoretic profit margin for the caterers of M1.64. By contrast, WFP’s school feeding in mountainous areas, providing a breakfast of maize meal porridge and a lunch, costs M2.75 (US$ 0.25) with a guaranteed margin for cooks of M1.41.

The average cost in 2011 per learner per day under the previous two school feeding schemes in Lesotho is calculated on the basis of these costs per programme, and their relative weight with respect to the number of pupils covered:



The average cost per learner per day under the new NSFP should not exceed the average cost of school feeding of M3.40 (US$ 0.31) under the previous schemes, adjusted for inflation, if all food is imported. Government has decided that food produced and processed locally can be purchased at a slightly higher price than imported food. The maximum average cost of a school meal can thus exceed the above price depending on how much of the food is purchased locally.

The costs of providing healthy, nutritious and diverse meals will not be identical in all areas of the country, not least given e.g. the different costs of transport. Furthermore, in some areas children have to walk long distances to school, which warrants the provision of an early meal in addition to lunch. This means that the cost of school meals may differ between areas. However, any cost increase in some areas has to be compensated by lower prices in other areas.

1. **Preference for locally produced food**

WFP was able to provide school feeding at a lower cost mainly due to the limited number of food commodities used, and the fact that almost all food was purchased internationally and in bulk. However, WFP’s ration had no dietary diversity – if not fresh food could be added from school gardens – and entailed no benefits to the local economy besides the payment for cooks. Government’s scheme was more diverse, but the profits of caterers were significantly eroded by credit providers. Furthermore, while the caterers had bought food locally, it had been imported by traders.

Lesotho is a food deficit country. In particular, the domestic production of cereals is lagging far behind domestic requirements: while the country produced 80 percent of its cereal requirements in 1980, this share had fallen to 30 percent in 2004 and has since continued to decrease. While in some areas of the country, sufficient cereals are or can be produced to supply sufficient surplus quantities for school meals in these areas, such surpluses will not be sufficient for the entire National School Feeding Programme in the near future. This has recently been confirmed by a pilot project on local cereal purchases undertaken by WFP. The situation could however be different for other food products, in particular vegetables, fruit, and animal products such as milk and eggs.

The use of locally produced food is preferred, as this secures a stable and significant market for local food suppliers, with all the expected additional benefits for the local economy, livelihoods, and community development described above. While the exclusive use of local food is not realistic given the country’s production capacity, the exclusive use of imports is not acceptable, neither, as it would mean losing a considerable opportunity of spurring local production and promoting rural livelihoods. This means that the National School Feeding Programme will seek to satisfy its food needs through a combination of imported and locally produced and processed food that corresponds to international quality standards for school feeding.

Given its geography, climatic conditions and other aspects, it is difficult for Lesotho farmers and processors to compete with foreign companies producing food at industrial scale. The present policy foresees two tools that can stimulate the domestic ability to compete and provide food at good quality and acceptable prices:

* Food produced and processed locally may be purchased at slightly higher prices than imported food; and
* Communities and farmers’ associations will be consulted with respect to the food crops to be included in the school meals. This way, there is the possibility to prioritise such food that can be produced in a competitive way in the area of the schools – as long as this food is acceptable in terms of nutrition and costs.

1. **Process of determining school meals**

Specific school meals will be determined by the School Feeding Implementation Guidelines, applying the above criteria of minimum nutritional requirements, maximum costs, and preference for local food. This will include the following steps:

1. In each district, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Training, Health, Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry, and Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives (as applicable), as well as farmers’ associations, will conduct a series of community consultations. In these consultations, communities will be informed of the new form of school feeding, and of the above criteria. Furthermore, they will be informed of the kind of food that can satisfy the nutrient requirements. Communities can then suggest different food they think they would be able to produce. Facilitators will assist in assessing the nutritional adequacy of these foods, and the quantities that would be required, using easily accessible tools.[[12]](#footnote-12) Where food is found adequate as such, facilitators will also assist in calculating and discussing with farmers and farmers’ associations the cost of such locally produced food.
2. Based on these consultations, each district government then proposes a potential food basket. This food basket will allow some flexibility by including food groups (e.g. cereals, pulses, fresh vegetable, etc.) rather than specific food (e.g. maize, beans, etc.). Furthermore, districts will suggest the optimal time at which – in their respective districts – school meals should be provided so that optimal outcomes can be attained, or if a first snack would have to be served early, when pupils arrival at school.
3. A group of experts endorsed by the Advisory Board and the Minsters’ Office (see section 7.2) will, under the leadership of the secretariat, review the district proposals received, and will make specific recommendations for review by the Advisory Board. In its work this group will include considerations of nutrition, costs, local preference, as well as cultural appropriateness, diversity, the number of meals to be provided per day – e.g. where pupils have to walk far to reach school in the morning – and the administrative burden (e.g. a preference for a high degree of standardisation of school meals). With respect to the latter aspect, the proposed school meal basket[[13]](#footnote-13) should ideally be the same for the entire country. However, the proposed school meal may make allowance for different food baskets where this is warranted

* by the specific needs of children in the specific areas (e.g. the need for an early meal); or
* by the fact that even the basket of food groups would de facto exclude a whole area from supplying any of the food to be purchased by the National School Feeding Programme.

1. The final decision on the food basket, the time of meals and the requirement of a potential arrival snack to be used in the future NSFP in the different regions of Lesotho rests with the Minister’s Office. This food basket will be inscribed into the School Feeding Implementation Guidelines and be made part of the contracts with National Management Agents.

# Coordination and Management

The coordination structure presented in this section attempts to strike a balance between a number of considerations and requirements:

* As laid out above, school feeding, while ‘hosted’ at school and thus in the natural domain of the Ministry of Education and Training, depends on and can benefit a range of different sectors. For this reason, it is important that all of the relevant sectors actually own school feeding in Lesotho.
* Furthermore, if the school feeding programme should in fact lead to all the additional benefits aimed for, it is crucial that policies, strategies and activities are well coordinated, in particular with a view to securing the required complementary support to national food value chains.
* At the same time, it is important that the school feeding programme can function even if the involved stakeholders for any reason are not able to reach consensus on all questions.
* It is furthermore important that all Government entities can focus on their actual core business, and can minimise the workload required for programme implementation. For this reason, the Lesotho NSFP will be coordinated and managed as illustrated below.

The coordination and management structure of the school feeding programme includes five levels and actors, each with their distinct tasks:



The **Office of the Minister of Education and Training** will have the ultimate responsibility to make policy decisions for the programme, ensure its implementation and coordination, and not least enforce ethical and governance issues, i.e. potential conflicts of interest, compliance of procedures, etc.

A **multi-sectoral Advisory Board** will make recommendations with respect to policy decisions for the programme, provide overall guidance and ensure a high level of information and coordination of the programme with respect to the strategies and programmes of other relevant stakeholders. Standing members of the Advisory Board are the Ministry of Education and Training (chair), the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives, the Prime Minister’s Office (with respect to Food and Nutrition Coordination, Food Management and Disaster Risk Management), the Ministry of Local Government and not least the Ministry of Finance. In addition, it will include representatives of farmers (e.g. farmers’ associations) and food processors. The Advisory Board can decide to invite additional standing members or invite ad hoc members for specific issues and aspects of the programme. The Advisory Board will meet once per quarter.

A **Secretariat** will ensure the daily oversight of the national agent(s) and will function as the executive arm of the Minister’s Office, preparing all relevant documentation for Advisory Board discussions, and following up on policy decisions. As the end-product of programme implementation will be felt most directly at schools, the secretariat for the programme will be based as a specific unit within the Ministry of Education and Training. The secretariat will work both at central and at district level.

One or more **National Management Agents** will be responsible for the actual implementation of the programme. National Management Agents can be private sector companies, Non-Governmental Organisations, a parastatal organisation or any other entity that fulfils the criteria to be decided by the Minister’s Office.

At each school, a **School Feeding Committee** will oversee the provision of school meals at the school, communicate with the NMA responsible for its school, and ensure the involvement and participation of communities in the implementation of the NSFP. School Feeding Committees will be established by school boards from among their members, and will include the head teacher, one teacher with the particular task of overseeing school feeding, and at least three parents of learners at the school. School Feeding Committees will meet once every month.

A more detailed proposal of the tasks of each of these actors is included in *Annex 3*.

# Implementation and Flow of funds

As outlined above, the actual implementation of the National School Feeding Programme will be managed by one or more national management agents (NMAs). The present section explains how their work will ensure the reliable provision of school meals on every school day, and how funds will flow from central government to agents and sub-contracted service providers. The work flow is illustrated below:



After a pre-selection (based on expressions of interest and minimum criteria), capacity strengthening and final assessment of the NMAs, the Minister’s Office will award contracts for several years (with a probationary period) to one or more NMAs. These contracts will describe the tasks of agents in detail. Contracts will refer to and include the School Feeding Implementation Guidelines, set maximum prices and methods for the specific geographic areas to be covered by each agent, and establish targets for the share of locally produced and processed food to be purchased. Contracts will also specify payment schedules, including the share of the annual contract value to be paid in advance.

Based on these contracts, NMAs will request and – if recommended by the secretariat and approved by the Minister’s Office – be paid an advance which will allow them to start operating. Arrangements that ensure security for any advance payments will be laid out in the Implementation Guidelines.

Schools will provide up-to-date enrolment figures, which will be verified by the District Education Officer. These figures, in conjunction with the established food basket for the area in question, will determine the food requirements for the school year or term.

In a procurement procedure corresponding to national standards for public purchases, the NMAs will request offers for the provision of the required food both internationally, nationally and locally. Based on the offers received, the NMAs will award contracts to the food suppliers promising the best combination of good food quality, local origin, and price. Once the flow of food is identified, NMAs will also contract other service providers ensuring reliable and cost-efficient logistics (storage, handling, and transport up to schools) as well as preparation of food at schools.

As existing logistics infrastructure and expertise should be used to the largest extent possible, the Food Management Unit (FMU) under the Prime Minister’s Office will have an important role. Either, the FMU can apply to be accepted as an NMA, and as such carry out the required logistics tasks. Alternatively, other selected NMAs will contract FMU to carry out these tasks (in the same way as presently WFP contracts FMU to ensure logistics in its implementation of school feeding).

NMAs will use part of the advance received to provide early payment to in particular farmers’ associations supplying locally produced or processed food, and cooks receiving monthly payments (see below).

Food is brought by suppliers to agreed hand-over points (e.g. FMU warehouses), from where logistics service providers (FMU or others) will be in charge if its handling, storage and transport to schools. NMAs will inspect and control the quality of food delivered to logistics service providers before food is sent on to schools.

At school, a designated teacher will control the quantity and quality of food delivered. Local cooks contracted by the NMA will prepare daily meals, and the designated teacher will prepare school feeding reports. These will be verified by the school feeding committee and the head teacher, before being sent to the District Education Officer, who ensures their quality and consolidates them.

Based on the consolidated district reports, the secretariat prepares quarterly (or termly) reports to the Advisory Board and the Minister’s Office. These reports will also include additional monitoring information to be specified in the Implementation Guidelines.

Based on accounts on delivered food, NMAs present a request for payment to the secretariat. This request will take remaining balances into consideration, and will also include a request for advance for the next period.

The secretariat will review the request for payment based on the district reports and other monitoring information. Where discrepancies are observed, the secretariat will address these immediately with the NMA in question. Based on this, the secretariat makes recommendations to the Minister’s Office with respect to the approval of the request.

Following the authorisation by the Minister’s Office, the National Treasury sends funds directly to the NMA, who uses the funds received to settle any outstanding payments to food suppliers.

Local cooks will be paid monthly based on a fixed rate per child provided with school meals during the month, regardless if the NMA already has received payment for all services during the period.

# Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

The previous section has included the description of tasks of the bodies within the NSFP coordination, management and implementation structure. By contrast, the present section describes the contributions that Government stakeholders at central, district and local level will provide. Section 9 then summarises the complementary contributions expected from non-government actors such as local communities, civil society, private sector as well as the UN and bilateral partners.

# Central level

**The Ministry of Education and Training** will

* act as the lead Government entity for the coordination, management, implementation and monitoring of the National School Feeding Programme.
* chair the Advisory Board of the NSFP
* establish a secretariat and ensure its operational capacity with respect to the tasks described above (supervision of NMAs, monitoring of programme implementation, reporting, preparation and follow-up of Advisory Board sessions)
* determine the specific tasks of District Education Officers with respect to the monitoring and supervision of programme implementation and the preparation and verification of reports;
* determine the specific tasks of designated teachers at primary schools with respect to the monitoring and supervision of programme implementation and the preparation of reports;
* include in its plans the continuous improvement of school infrastructure with respect to school feeding, in particular adequate storage of food, preparation of meals and sanitation and hygiene installations;
* undertake the inclusion in school activities of programmes aiming at increased nutritional awareness and skills for children and their parents; and

**The Ministry of Health** will

* participate in the Advisory Board of the NSFP;
* provide guidance during the determination of school meals;
* support the monitoring of the nutritional status of primary school children;
* implement school level activities aiming at increasing nutritional awareness and skills of children and their parents; and
* endeavour securing complementary funding (from Government or other sources) for potential specific nutritional supplements, such as e.g. micronutrient sprinkles, if applicable.

**The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry** will

* participate in theAdvisory Board of the NSFP;
* assist with expert advice on the suitability of different food crops in different regions, and their potential to be produced in greater quantities;
* advise on any specific requirements for different food crops, including water, climatic conditions, shelf-life, potential for preservation and processing, etc.
* through its extension services, provide training and demonstration for local farmers with respect to crop cultivation and harvesting, storage, soil preservation, water harvesting and storage, etc.
* provide agricultural subsidies to rural poor or otherwise vulnerable households to ensure that they can participate in the production for the NSFP market;
* implement, where applicable, agricultural training at school gardens for children and their parents; and
* provide access to services and tools at its stations throughout the country.

**The Ministry of Social Development** will

* participate in theAdvisory Board of the NSFP;
* strengthen its registry of poor households, in particular in rural areas;
* liaise with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives and in particular with farmers’ associations and the private companies active in the relevant food value chains with a view to ensure that poor households are included in both on- and off-farm activities and participate in increasing market and livelihood opportunities;
* provide support to poor rural households through own programmes or referral to relevant programmes of other government or non-government actors with a view to strengthening the capacity of these households to participate in market and livelihood activities; and
* include the National School Feeding Programme in its comprehensive overview of national safety net programmes to ensure that poor households have access to the best possible support and to opportunities for increased self-sustenance.

**The Ministry of Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives** will

* participate in theAdvisory Board of the NSFP;
* provide technical support to farmers’ associations and cooperatives producing or processing food that can supply school feeding with respect to cooperatives’ work (organisation and management) and marketing, including the possibilities and conditions in forward contracts;
* provide technical support along relevant local and national food value chains;
* ensure the safety and quality of food destined for school feeding, and train food producers, processors and handlers to ensure conditions conducive to safe and good quality food; and
* provide farmers’ associations and the private sector as a whole with information for production, processing and marketing of food relevant for school feeding.

**The Prime Ministers’ Office will**

* advise all members of the Advisory Board of relevant cross-cutting concerns under the auspices of the PMO, which include food and nutrition coordination, food management and disaster risk management; through its relevant specialised institutions the PMO will thus

in the area of disaster risk management:

* + inform all actors on crop forecasts in light of observed or anticipated weather and other climatic conditions; and
  + advise on realistic targets for local purchases in light of these crop forecasts;
  + advise if meals provided at schools or the numbers of children to be covered should be adjusted in light of anticipated effects of natural disasters.

in the area of food and nutrition coordination:

* + assist with expert advice on nutritional requirements and focus areas for the national nutrition strategy to the extent relevant for school meals;
  + advise on the nutritional qualities of various foods, including traditional foods of Lesotho;
  + advise on the requirements and potential of different ways of food fortification, and developments in research and development in this respect; and
  + provide guidance during the determination of school meals;

Furthermore, the PMO will

* advise how such concerns can best be taken into consideration in the further design, coordination, management and implementation of the NSFP;
* ensure that the various bodies under its responsibility, among them FMU and the FNCO, prioritise and have the means to include NSFP into their strategies and activities and participate in a meaningful way in its implementation; and
* ensure that required support action for the NSFP, including complementary activities, are promoted by the highest political level.

**The Ministry of Finance** will

* participate in theAdvisory Board of the NSFP;
* advise the Advisory Board when future budgets for the National School Feeding Programme are prepared and submitted;
* promote the predictability and reliability of funding, including a reliable and timely cash-flow, for the National School Feeding Programme;
* advise the Advisory Board on the prospects and possibilities of future funding, including the possibilities and preconditions of a comprehensive multi-year funding framework;
* provide guidance and assistance to the secretariat when preparing budget proposals and potentially multi-year funding proposals; and
* provide guidance with respect to procedures and processes that secure a transparent and swift transfer of funds from Central government to national management agents.

The **Ministry of Local Government** will

* participate in the Advisory Board of the NSFP;
* advise the board on the interests, requirements and opportunities of local governments with respect to the planning and implementation of the NSFP;
* assist actively in the considerations and preparations for a gradually increasing decentralisation of the programme, as circumstances and capacities allow;

**Representatives of farmers and food processors** will

* participate in the Advisory Board of the NSFP;
* advise the board on developments and opportunities for increasing the share of locally produced and processed food to be purchased by NMAs;
* proactively support their constituencies to participate in the NSFP, including by supporting the increased efficiency and effectiveness of food value chains with the aim of supplying more and better food at acceptable prices;

During the transition period (see below), also the **World Food Programme** will be a standing member of the Advisory Board, informing the board on any developments with respect to implementation of the programme and the strengthening of required capacities of relevant national actors. The Advisory Board can decide to ask the World Food Programme to stay on the Advisory Board also after the transition period in the function of a technical adviser.

# Decentralised and local level

At decentralised level, Government actors are found at district level, and at schools. Districts include both local governments and district offices of central government ministries.

**Local governments** will

* be kept informed by the secretariat on all relevant developments with respect to the coordination, management and implementation of the National School Feeding Programme;
* take the National School Feeding Programme into consideration when preparing their own district development plans and budgets;
* consider the provision of additional support – e.g. in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives – with a view to strengthening the conditions for local food value chains (e.g. investments in infrastructure such as access roads, warehouses, refrigeration, etc.);
* support the efforts of the Ministry of Social Development in ensuring that poor rural households can participate in increasing market and livelihood opportunities opened by the National School Feeding Programme;
* advise the secretariat on developments in the district that are relevant to the management and implementation of the National School Feeding Programme;
* participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme.

District offices of central government include those representing at district level the actors at central level described above. They comprise both district offices themselves, as well as extension and other services, such as agricultural extension, health posts, school inspectors, etc. These **district representations of central government** will

* participate in the preparatory work for the determination of school meals by informing and discussing with communities about the new model for school feeding, nutrition and cost requirements, as well as local opportunities in providing food to the national School Feeding Programme;
* prepare consolidated proposals for school meal structure and composition in their respective district for consideration at central level;
* verify the reports prepared at school level and consolidate them into district reports;
* assist the secretariat in an assessment of the existing infrastructure for school meals (kitchens, store rooms, water and hygiene installations) and potentially required investments;
* advise the secretariat on developments in the district that are relevant to the management and implementation of the National School Feeding Programme, including information on food security and nutrition, agriculture and poverty, business and trade, etc.
* provide hands-on support through complementary activities at school and community level, including the implementation of deworming campaigns, agricultural extension to farmers, processors and farmers’ and processors’ associations interested in participating in the food value chains relevant for the National School Feeding Programme; monitoring of the nutritional status of children at school; nutrition, health and hygiene awareness and skills training at school and in communities; etc. and
* participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme.

Schools are under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Training and the District Education Officer. They provide a localised government service, but play a central and specific role with respect to school feeding, where meals are being provided. **Schools** will

* establish school meal committees consisting of an adequate number of members of the school board and including at least the head teacher, a designated teacher for school feeding, and a male and a female representative of the parents of pupils at school. The tasks of school meal committees are proposed in more detail in Annex 3.
* ensure the safe keeping and reliable use of food for school meals after reception;
* keep proper monthly food accounts, including opening stock, food receptions, daily use or loss of food, and ending stock;
* supervise the preparation and distribution of school meals, including hand-washing; and
* prepare monthly reports on the number of school meals provided each day, to be certified by the school meal committee and transferred to the district education officer.

# Complementary contributions

The National School Feeding Programme will require complementary contributions from a number of non-government actors, including local communities, the private sector, civil society, and development partners including the UN and bilateral partners.

**Local communities** are expected to

* embrace and support the National School Feeding Programme as an important tool and safety net for their children and themselves;
* participate in school meal committees;
* support their children and make sure that they participate in school and complementary activities;
* respond positively to requests by school meal committees to assist (free of charge) with short, *ad hoc* support e.g. the repair and maintenance of school meal infrastructure;
* undertake efforts to produce food in sufficient quantity and adequate quality that can be sold to national management agents for use in the National School Feeding Programme – either by themselves or through farmers’ and processors’ associations;
* participate in activities and programmes aiming at strengthened local capacities to produce, store, handle and process food destined for use in the National School Feeding Programme;
* participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme;

**Private sector actors** are here understood as Lesotho private companies as well as farmers’ and processors’ associations. These private sector actors are expected to

* inform their members or suppliers of the market opportunities provided by the National School Feeding Programme;
* identify with their members or suppliers the potential of participating in the food value chains relevant for the National School Feeding Programme, and identify potential requirements and preconditions for doing so successfully;
* make investments and provide support to their members or suppliers that enable the successful participation of local and national farmers and processors in the food market constituted by the National School Feeding Programme;
* undertake efforts to include poor rural households in the activities aiming at supplying food to the National School Feeding Programme;
* provide food in sufficient quantity and adequate quality to cover an increasing share of the food required by the National School Feeding Programme;
* consider if they are interested in acting as national management agent, and if so, participate in the capacity strengthening programme and tendering process;
* cooperate with national management agents to provide all other services required for implementing the National School Feeding Programme;

**Civil society organisations** are expected to

* inform their target groups (communities, households, parents, etc.) of the importance of schooling and of healthy nutrition;
* inform their target groups (farmers and processors, or their associations) of the market opportunities provided by the National School Feeding Programme, and the requirements for them to benefit from these;
* provide support, each within their mandates and programmes, to their target groups with respect to nutritional awareness and skills, education, and local farming, storage, handling, processing and marketing of food;
* support, where relevant, local farmers’ or processors’ association with respect to internal management, organisation and marketing, including the potential benefits and prerequisites of forward contracts;
* support the preparatory work for the determination of school meals by informing and discussing with communities about the new model for school feeding, nutrition and cost requirements, as well as local opportunities in providing food to the National School Feeding Programme;
* consider if they are interested in acting as national management agent, and if so, participate in the capacity strengthening programme and tendering process;
* participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme;

**UN agencies** are expected to provide support to the National School Feeding Programme within their mandates and respective comparative advantages. In particular

**The World Food Programme (WFP)** is expected to

* implement the National School Feeding Programme until it is properly handed over as described in the section on transitional arrangements (target date: end 2017); this includes switching to the new model of school feeding in Lesotho upon approval of the present policy by carrying out pilot projects on local purchases of relevant food, including fresh food, in different areas;
* provide technical assistance for the elaboration of the School Feeding Implementation Guidelines
* provide technical assistance for the capacity gap analysis, and for the development and implementation of a capacity strengthening programme for national management agents and other actors important for the efficient, effective and transparent implementation of the National School Feeding Programme;
* provide technical assistance with respect to value chain support, including e.g. food logistics, reduction of post-harvest losses, quality assurance, management and accountability, etc.);

The **United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)** is expected to

* provide technical expertise and advice with respect to the potential of increased production of relevant food in different localities, considering climatic conditions and requirements for various plants, including traditional African and Lesotho crops, or other crops with good nutritional properties that may be well-equipped for the agricultural conditions in Lesotho;
* provide technical expertise and advice to agricultural offices, stations and extension officers with respect to appropriate farming techniques and technologies;

**The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF**) is expected to

* support initiatives with respect to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) at primary schools;
* assist with complementary material such as schooling tools, educational material on nutrition, child rights, etc.
* promote the quality of education with tools and other means;
* support the monitoring of nutrition indicators at school;

**The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)** is expected to

* promote the quality of education with tools and other means;
* provide technical expertise with respect to the monitoring of education related indicators

Other UN organisations may be called – as may become relevant – to promote conducive conditions for a successful implementation of the National School Feeding Programme through the Resident Coordinator’s Office.

**Bilateral development partners** are expected, within their programmes and agreements with the Government, to provide technical assistance and funding with respect to

* school and school feeding infrastructure;
* fuel efficient stoves
* water harvesting and soil preservation tools and techniques
* drought resistant, nutritional crops
* community food storage
* food handling and processing, including infrastructure, tools and technology
* management of farmers’ and processors’ associations, including food aggregation, quality assurance, marketing and forward contracting.

# Resource Mobilisation

The National School Feeding Programme will be sustained from the national budget. As national resources are scarce, the reliability of school meals being provided will depend to a significant extent on the cost-efficiency of programme implementation and the agreed upon maximum costs per child per school day.

The National School Feeding Programme will benefit considerably from additional, complementary resources aiming at increasing the educational outcomes of schooling, increasing the nutritional value of the school meals to be provided, at reducing sickness and malnutrition among school children, at strengthening the capacity of local farmers to provide quality food at competitive prices, and reducing the potential negative environmental impacts of school feeding through excessive use of fire wood.

Such complementary activities may require additional resources. These may be mobilised partially by Government itself, e.g. by using funds in the area of health aimed at improving the nutrition of children for providing micro-nutrient sprinkles to be used in school feeding; using funds in the area of agriculture to enhance the local production of nutritionally valuable crops that are well-adapted to local climatic and agricultural conditions; etc. The ministries participating in the Advisory Board will explore areas and activities where they can use their own funds for complementary activities to the National School Feeding Programme as an efficient and effective means to pursue their own objectives and strategies.

Other complementary activities will have to be financed with help of complementary funding from Government’s partners, including the private sector, civil society, bilateral donor partners, or the UN. The National School Feeding Programme can produce, if well-run, multiple benefits in the areas of education, nutrition, agriculture, community development and poverty reduction. This increases the chances that such additional partners are interested in providing technical and financial assistance to complementary activities falling within their own mandates, areas of expertise, and strategies. Government will be proactive to communicate with relevant partners about these potential benefits and the possibilities of cooperation. The relevant ministries will coordinate their efforts in this respect through the Advisory Board. The secretariat will provide assistance with respect to up-to-date information material, including presentations and briefing kits, as required.

Communities are expected to make some contributions, mainly with respect to providing labour for school feeding infrastructure establishment, repair and maintenance. Government seeks to strengthen the interest and readiness of communities in providing such support by involving communities in the design of school meals, and in the monitoring of the programme, enhancing their ownership, and not least steadily increasing communities’ direct, economic benefits derived from the programme.

In order to secure a reliable planning horizon and avoid any disruptions, Government will seek to establish a rolling, multi-year funding framework for the National School Feeding Programme, that would ideally also integrate any complementary contributions (as they become available and predictable) into one, results-oriented programme.

# Monitoring, Evaluation and Reviews

The secretariat of the NSFP will be the overall responsible to ensure reliable and timely monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The separation of the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation on one hand, and for implementation of the programme on the other, constitutes an important feature of the National School Feeding Programme aiming at securing full transparency and reliability of reports.

Programme implementation will be monitored and evaluated on the basis of the following results framework.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Result** | **Indicator\*** | **Data source** |
| **Development Objective:\*\***  Ensure that school feeding contributes to the goals of the National Strategic Development Plan and the Vision 2020 of a healthy, well-developed human resource basis | * Increased rates of completed secondary and further education and vocational training * Reduced mortality and morbidity among the population | * Education statistics * Health statistics |
| **Specific Objective Education:**  Increased and equitable access and adherence to and performance in school of Lesotho primary school learners | * Gross and Net Enrolment Rates * Share of learners with an attendance of at least 80 percent of classes * Pass rates * Average mark at final exams | * Educational statistics |
| **Specific Objective Health and Nutrition:**  Reduced chronic and acute malnutrition, including reduced protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies | * Share of school children that are stunted * Share of school children that are wasted * Share of school children that show protein-energy malnutrition * Share of school children with iron deficiency * Share of school children with iodine deficiency | * Nutritional surveys at primary schools |
| **Specific Objective Social Development:**  Increased levels of food and nutrition security | * Share of households that are food insecure (Food Consumption Score or Household Dietary Diversity Score) * Share of school children that are food insecure (Food Consumption Score or Individual Dietary Diversity Score) | * Household Food Security Assessments * Nutritional surveys at primary schools |
| **Specific Objective Agriculture:**  Increased national food production and processing | * Quantity of food produced and processed nationally * Share of national requirements that can be supplied by nationally produced and processed food | * Agricultural statistics |
| **Specific Objective Trade and Industry:**  Enhanced and strengthened food value chains in Lesotho | * Number of commercially marketed food products * Share of processed food marketed * Reduced post-harvest losses * Share of inspected food found of adequate quality * Number of people employed (formally or informally) in national food value chains * Income derived from national food value chains | * Trade statistics * Agricultural statistics * Statistics of food inspections |
| **Specific Objective Poverty reduction:**  Reduced number of households that depend on public or other external assistance | * Number of households that depend on public or other external assistance | * Registry and statistics of Ministry for Social Development |
| **Outputs 1:**  School meals are provided on every school day | * Percent of enrolled children that have received school meals on at least 95 percent of school days * Quantity of food provided through school meals (planned and actual) * Share of food provided through school meals that was produced and processed locally (planned and actual) * Costs of the programme (planned and actual) | * Regular reports from schools * Reports and accounts of national management agents * Approved budget, * Proposals and accounts of national management agents |
| **Outputs 2:**  Complementary contributions | * Number of children regularly dewormed * People reached with nutritional campaigns * WASH-outputs * School feeding infrastructure | * Regular reports of the secretariat |

\*All indicators, where applicable, will be monitored and reported disaggregated by gender.

\*\* Expected to be achieved after several generations of primary education

Specific baselines and targets for each indicator, as well as a detailed monitoring plan (indicating responsibility for and frequency of data collection, etc.), will be included in the School Feeding Implementation Guidelines. An outline of these guidelines is provided in Annex 4. The detailed monitoring plan will explain how sectoral statistics and reports will be shared with the secretariat for inclusion into consolidated, comprehensive reports on the National School Feeding Programme.

The advisory board will review the programme every three to four years. Such reviews will consider

* the experience made by the programme as documented by monitoring and evaluation reports,
* potential new legislation and emerging relevant policies and strategies,and
* the progress made with respect to further decentralisation.

Based on these considerations, the advisory board will discuss and recommend if any aspect of the programme should be adjusted, be it with respect to its coordination and management structure, the composition of school meals, required additional capacity strengthening, additional complementary activities, or any other aspect.

# Transitional Arrangements

The preparation of the present policy as well as setting up the required structures and ensuring the national capacity for programme implementation takes time. During this period, it is important to ensure the continuity of school feeding in Lesotho’s primary schools. For this reason, the Government through the Ministry of Education and Training has entered into an agreement with the World Food Programme, contracting the latter to implement school feeding until the end of 2017. In addition, WFP will also carry out a pilot project on local purchases, and provide technical support with respect to policy formulation and the strengthening of national capacities.

Once the new Lesotho Model of School Feeding described above is approved, WFP will assess and strengthen its own required capacity for switching to this model, to carry out this pilot project and to carry out a programme of strengthening national capacities. On this basis, WFP will start switching towards the NSFP model, hand in hand with carrying out pilot projects on local purchases. This will create a specific local basis of experience on which the later capacity strengthening programme can draw.

Based on the principles of this policy, discussions at school and district level, and the experience made through pilot projects, detailed Implementation Guidelines will be prepared. These guidelines will establish the exact processes and quality standards of the programme, and they will later become part of the contracts between Government and NMAs. The guidelines will go hand in hand with the detailed description of the tasks expected from NMAs.

Relevant national entities will be called to express their interest in being considered as National Management Agents. Potential candidates will be pre-selected by the Minister’s Office based on recommendations by the secretariat and discussions of the Advisory Board, and on the basis of a number of minimum capacity requirements for such candidates, which will be established on beforehand.

WFP will carry out a capacity gap assessment, comparing the capacity requirements determined by the guidelines with the actual capacities of pre-selected candidates and other actors (in particular the Secretariat) that will participate in the implementation of the programme.

A capacity strengthening plan will be elaborated aiming to bridge any identified capacity gaps, so that all candidates and other actors have the full capacity required to implement the programme without further external assistance.

Once the capacity plan is approved by the Minister’s Office, the pre-selected candidates and other actors will be asked to enter into a contract with Government, which establishes responsibilities and contributions to be made by each part during and after the capacity-strengthening programme.

The capacity strengthening programme may include investments in infrastructure, up-front training, and on-the-job training, followed by a phase of coaching and mentoring. It is foreseen that after an initial phase of capacity strengthening, candidate NMAs will gradually start implementing the programme, applying national procurement rules, still under the overall responsibility of WFP. The latter will gradually decrease its own involvement in programme implementation, and increase its role in oversight and quality assurance. As of the beginning of 2018, the programme is foreseen to be exclusively implemented by NMAs under the supervision of the Secretariat, the Advisory Board and the Minister’s Office.

# Implementation schedule

The different steps described in the above section are summarised in the calendar below. Minor variations may occur, but the entire transition towards the fully nationally implemented Lesotho National School Feeding Programme is set to be finalised by the end of 2017.



Elaborating the NSFP Implementation Guide, identifying NMAs and preparing a comprehensive capacity strengthening programme will form the centre of attention in 2015:



# Annex 1 – Methodology used for preparing the policy

The elaboration of the present policy was part of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and Training and the World Food Programme. However, the process of preparing the policy involved a wide range of stakeholders.

The policy preparation was supported by a team of one international and four national facilitators, the latter contracted from the National University of Lesotho. The Regional Bureau of the World Food Programme in Johannesburg provided technical support with respect to global research and best practices for school feeding.

The facilitators carried out a series of consultations in Lesotho:

* Bilateral consultations with stakeholders at national level (5 – 12 August 2014), focussing on Ministries (Education, Health, Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives, Social Development, Finance) and other actors (Food and Nutrition Coordination Office, Food Management Unit, the Lesotho National Farmers’ Union, the Lesotho Council of NGOs).
* District consultation workshops (25 August – Mid-September) for South, North and Central district clusters, with the participation of district authorities and district level representatives of central government, community leaders, representatives of farmers’ union, as well as teachers and parents from primary schools.

Based on the guidance provided by these consultations, a first draft policy document was prepared, to which Lesotho stakeholders provided written comments.

The revised draft policy, incorporating these comments, was then presented to and validated by a national validation workshop in Maseru on 18 November 2014.

A complete list of institutions represented and persons who participated in these consultations is provided below.

**Bilateral Consultations**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Function** | **Institution** |
| Ms. Keratile Thabana, , | Principal Secretary | Ministry of Education and Training |
| Ms. ‘Mapaseka Kolotsane | Acting Deputy Principal Secretary | Ministry of Education and Training |
| Mr. Ratsiu Majara | Chief Education Officer, Secondary Education (a.i. superviser for school feeding) | Ministry of Education and Training |
| Ms. Lineo Ramabale Smith | Senior Economic Planner | Ministry of Education and Training |
| Ms. Matseliso Morahanye | Coordinator, School Feeding | Ministry of Education and Training |
| Mr. Makopela | Director of Planning Unit | Ministry of Finance |
| Mr. Malfetsane Malasa | Director of Planning | Ministry of Social Development |
| Mr. Metabile | Chief Economic Planner | Ministry of Social Development |
| Ms. Thithidi Diaho | Nutritionist, Department of Family Health | Ministry of Health |
| Ms. Malati Maghana | Manager, Division of Integrated Management of Childhood Illness | Ministry of Health |
| Ms. ‘Mamojalefa Letsapo | Assistant Marketing Officer, Department of Marketing | Ministry of Trade, Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives |
| Mr. Neo Mamode | Department of Standards and Quality Assurance | Ministry of Trade, Industry, Marketing and Cooperatives |
| Mr. Pheko Mashoai | Department of Agricultural Planning | Ministry of Agriculture |
| Ms. Mpho Lifalokane | Head of Office | Food and Nutrition Coordination Office |
| Mr. Silas L. Mosuhli | Director | Food Management Unit |
| Mr. John L. Kopeli | Deputy Director | Food Management Unit |
| Mr. Anthony A. Cekwane | Projects Officer | Food Management Unit |
| Mr. Bahlakoana Tsoeu | Transport Officer | Food Management Unit |
| Mr. Sebenomoea Ramainoane | Chief, farmer and radio broadcaster | Private farmer |
| Ms. Mary Njoroge | Country Director | World Food Programme |
| Mr. Arduino Mangoni | Deputy Country Director | World Food Programme |
| Mr. Napo Ntlou | Head of Programme | World Food Programme |
| Mr. Mokitinyane Nthimo | Assistant FAO Representative, Programme | Food and Agricultural Organisation |
| Ms. Lineo Mathule | Health and Nutrition Department | UNICEF |
| Ms. Lati | Education Department | UNICEF |
| Ms. Moho | Social Policy Department | UNICEF |

**District consultations South Cluster** (Qacha’s Nek, Quthing, Mohale’s Hoek and Mafeteng)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Institution** | **District** |
| 1. Mamalebanye M. Lerotholi | MOET | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Mpolokeng Pita | MOET | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Maleeto Naha | MOET | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Makeletso Mekhoa | MOET | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mamatete Leuta | MOET | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mamorakane Rafeeea | FNCO | Mafeteng |
| 1. Maneo Motanya | FNCO | Quthing |
| 1. Mamolibeli Rankopane | PALT | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. John Mohlabi | LTTU | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Mathealira Posholi | MOET | Mafeteng |
| 1. Kopano Sets'abi | DA | Mafeteng |
| 1. J.L. Hlapi | FARMING | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mamorena Makaka | MOET | Quthing |
| 1. Maretselisitsoe Makoa | MOET | Quthing |
| 1. Majoro Masilo | BOARD | Quthing |
| 1. Matoka Ramoroke | BOARD | Quthing |
| 1. Ts'abo Lephoi | MARKETING | Mafeteng |
| 1. Mohai Moleko | FARMING | Quthing |
| 1. Justice Fosa | BOARD | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Maqalika Khothatso | Board | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Makoae 'Masekake | MOET | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mapoloko Patsi | Board | Mafeteng |
| 1. Matumisang Lethoko | MOET | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Sepinase Komata | DHMT | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Manyeoe Tsoho | FNCO | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Calextina Makhethe | MOET | Mafeteng |
| 1. Simeone Shoaphane | LAT | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Maipato Ratsebe | MOET | Mafeteng |
| 1. Mamokoatsi Ratselane | MOET | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Maboitumelo Majara | MOET | Mafeteng |
| 1. Maphakamile Xilgwana | MAFS | Mafeteng |
| 1. Malioka Hlalele | Board | Mafeteng |
| 1. Malets'olo Mosola | PALT | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Marethabile Mosola | AGRIC | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Ariet Mabina | MOET | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Mateboho Shale | BOARD | Mafeteng |
| 1. Mants'ebo Mpanya | LAT | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mamakhobalo Maluke | PALT | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Limpho Shai | Marketing | Quthing |
| 1. Mapoloko Patsi | Board | Mafeteng |
| 1. Maqalika Khothatso | Board | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mafafa Maqutsoa |  | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Matebello Khoakhoa | MOET | Quthing |
| 1. Nobongile Mtjathe |  | Mafeteng |
| 1. Mateboho Mats'aba | MOET | Quthing |
| 1. Kose Sebolelo | BOARD | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Majobo Rangoajane | MOET | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Matsebiso Moeketsi | BOARD | Mohale's hoek |
| 1. Elliot Matumane | LENAFU | Qacha's nek |
| 1. Mahlakajoe Mehatlane | LENAFU | Mohale's hoek |

**District consultations North Cluster** (Leribe, Botha-Bothe, and Mokhotlong)

|  |  |  |
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| **Name** | **Institution** | **District** |
| 1. Libuseng Nthontho | PALT | Leribe |
| 1. Florence Lehula | Principal | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Matsepang Lenanya | School Board | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Ntane Mpai | Principal | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Matsutsu Tieho | School Board | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Ts'eliso Ntlhoki | PALT | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Ts'epo Seeiso | Urban council | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Mamoupo Sakoane | SSRFU | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Mankalimeng Letata | Food Manager | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Tseisa Moipone | Food Manager | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mats'eliso Palime | Principal | Leribe |
| 1. Masetjekola Khobotlo | School Board | Leribe |
| 1. Makopela Selebalo | Principal | Leribe |
| 1. Manapo Rasehlabo | Principal | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mathabang Liphapang | Principal | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Malebeoana Moholisa | Principal | Leribe |
| 1. Matheko Motiela | School Board | Leribe |
| 1. Mantoetsi Letsie | PALT | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Mamohato Tsita | Principal | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Lebohang leotla | School Board | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Mabohlokoa Adam | Councillor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Liengoane Shakhane | FNCO | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Paulina Lekeba | MOAFS (DNO) | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Malekhanya Marole | Councillor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Manyefolo Lepolesa | Councillor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Moshe Leoma | Councilor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Ketsetso Lekhanya | MTICM | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Ts'eliso Lints'a | Councilor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Katiso Dlamini | Councilor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Nchakha Makoae | D.O.A | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Malara Khants'i | MOET | Leribe |
| 1. mankone Malapane | MOET | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Mamatlama Matete | MOET | Mokhotlong |
| 1. Matieli Maphalla | Councilor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mokena Thoala | LAT | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Adelina Mosuoe | Principal | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Moeti Ntsoana | PALT | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Justina Ntlamelle | School Board | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mangaka Letete | Agriculture (Nutrition) | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Maphomolo Tsekoa | FMU | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mashoeshoe Mohasi | MOET | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Marabele Makhi | MOET | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Maneo Tsupane | Councillor | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Maliapeng Nkoko | School Board | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Mamohlakoana Mathealira | LENAFU | Botha-Bothe |
| 1. Limaktso Leteketoa | FNCO | Leribe |
| 1. Mabusetsa Makau | D.O.A | Leribe |

**District consultations Central Cluster** (Maseru, Berea, Thaba-Tseka**)**

|  |  |  |
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| **Name** | **Institution** | **District** |
| 1. Mamphafane Mats'ela | Education |  |
| 1. Matseko B. Ntilane | Education |  |
| 1. Maletsatsi Lesia | FNCO | Berea |
| 1. Mamopa Likotsi | FNCO | Maseru |
| 1. Ts'ongoane Mpota | Health |  |
| 1. Maneo Phaila | Education |  |
| 1. Ts'oauoa Mphafane | Education |  |
| 1. Makhosi Machake |  |  |
| 1. Tsiu Mphanya | Agriculture | Berea |
| 1. Chabeli Monyake | WFP | Maseru |
| 1. Makhauta Mokhethi | WFP | maseru |
| 1. Lineo Sehloho | WFP | Maseru |
| 1. Thithidi Diaho | Health | Maseru |
| 1. Mathabo Mohobela | Education | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Nthabiseng Machepha | Health | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Mamots'eare Maepa | MOAFS | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Mamoiketsi Lerata | MOET | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. John Marake | Education | Maseru |
| 1. Mamats'eliso Moopisa | L.T.T.U | Berea |
| 1. Malikopo Malataliana | Local Government | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Mpho Ntelane | Local Government | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Teboho Ts'ooana | Trade | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Mamoqebelo Leeto | Education | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Leluma Masupha | Berea District Council | Berea |
| 1. Lelobane Leseea | Education | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Nthako Rasupu | Education | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Ramaketse Leisa | Education | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Matolatha J. Kola | L.A.T | Berea |
| 1. Ellen Putsoane | L.A.T | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Fako Molefe | Food Processor | Maseru |
| 1. Mosele Makhalane | Education | Berea |
| 1. Mamoneuoa Souru | Education | Berea |
| 1. Mathabo Tseka | Pulane L.E.C Primary | Berea |
| 1. Sara Maseli | Mahlong Primary | Thaba-Tseka |
| 1. Mamakhabane Mahlelebe | MOET | Berea |
| 1. Mamoeketsi Letsie | MOET | Berea |
| 1. Thetso Kome | BEDIFU | Berea |
| 1. Napo Ntlou | WFP | Maseru |
| 1. Sekonyela Sepepane | MTICM | Berea |
| 1. Neo Mamooe | Standards- Trade | Berea |
| 1. Jubilee Ntoana | MOET | Maseru |
| 1. Mamojalefa Letsapo | Department of Marketing | Maseru |
| 1. Nthabiseng Mantutle-Kheete | MOAFS | Berea |
| 1. Tebello Mpalani | Education | Maseru |
| 1. Mats'epang Shata | MOET | Maseru |
| 1. Lepekola Rakhe | MOET | Maseru |
| 1. Sekhotseng Adam-Molapo | MOET | Leribe |

**National Validation Workshop**

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| **Name** | **Function** | **Institution** |
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# Annex 2 – Summary of relevant national policies and strategies

The **Lesotho Vision 2020**, adopted in 2004, formulates the vision statement that“*By the year 2020 Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and well-developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong; its environment well managed and its technology well established.”*

One of the challenges identified by the Vision 2020 for Lesotho is to increase agricultural productivity to sustain food security in the country. The specific strategies proposed to achieve a strong economy and a prosperous nation include the strengthening and promotion of small, micro and medium sized enterprises (SMMEs), and an improvement of food security and the overcoming of hunger through a number of measures in the agricultural sector

The **National Strategic Development Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17** (NSDP) aims among others at creating high, shared, and employment Generating Growth. One important area for this is agriculture and the rural economy. While the contribution of agriculture to GDP has declined from about 20 percent thirty years ago to about 8 percent in 2012, it holds significant potential for increasing employment and rural incomes. However, agriculture is hardly diversified, with the main crops produced being maize, sorghum and wheat, which occupy about 60, 20 and 10 percent of the agricultural land respectively.

The strategic objectives and actions foreseen by the NSDP include the promotion of sustainable commercialisation and diversification in agriculture. This includes facilitating improved access to finance, the promotion of increased contract farming and block farming, and of an increased production of high value crops, including horticulture and livestock products. In addition, the NSDP proposes increased value-addition and market integration, including support to small-medium scale agro-processing, distribution and marketing at community level, agri-business development, and the facilitation of commercialization and diversification.

With respect to improving household food security, the NSDP foresees the promotion of community gardens, including orchard development and diversification, as well as the provision of training for food preservation, storage, processing and preparation at community level. In order to reduce market risks, it proposes that private sector explore future markets to manage price volatility. Government and other actors should increase access to services and markets, and establish linkages between agriculture and other sectors, including small-scale manufacturing.

Consistent with, and serving the national goals laid out in the Vision 2020, the **Agricultural Sector Strategy of 2003** identifies six overarching goals to be achieved in the sector, i.e. (1) food security, (2) poverty reduction, (3) sustainable environmental management and conservation, (4) improved efficiency (adopt a productivity culture), (5) improved income distribution, and (6) an increased share of agriculture in GDP.

In order to achieve these goals the strategy foresees the promotion of, among others, sustainable land use, diversified agricultural production, improved access to inputs, reduced output instability, improved household food security through more efficient subsistence agricultural practices, the reduced impact of HIV/AIDS, and activities creating labour and employment. Key objectives within the sector thus include an increased diversification and a more stable output of farms, including an increased production of fruits and vegetables; increased skills of smallholder farmers’ households; and not least increased farming along commercial principles.

The **Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17** (MTICMSP) seeks to promote the economic development of Lesotho characterized by growth, innovation, enabling environment for trade, investment, business and industrial development for private sector led job creation and poverty reduction. Important functions of the ministry in this respect include Private Sector Support Programmes aiming to facilitate enterprise growth and development; and the assurance of quality and standards in trade in Lesotho.

*The National School Feeding Programme can support these priorities by providing a larger and steadily increasing, stable market for diverse local food products, in particular fresh foods. The increased domestic demand created by a more home-grown school feeding programme can mean a decisive complement to support measures aimed at increasing supply of food products, either with respect to greater and more efficient production, or to strengthened post-harvest food value chains including aggregation, quality storage, processing and marketing. Increased contract farming and medium-term contracts with a view to supply school meal commodities can enhance farmers’ and SMME’s access to credit, and allow commercial investments into increased quantity, quality and reliability of food supply, while securing predictable, stable prices.*

With specific respect to **education**, Article 28 of the **Constitution of the Kingdom of Lesotho** (2009) stipulates that Lesotho shall endeavour to make education available to all and shall adopt policies aimed at securing that

1. education is directed to the full development of the human personality and sense of dignity and strengthening the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
2. primary education is compulsory and available to all;

The **Education Act of 2010** establishes free and compulsory education at primary level; aligns education laws with decentralisation of services; and makes provisions for education for all in accordance with the provisions of section 28 of the Constitution of 1993 (art. 3). Furthermore, the act establishes the obligation of the minister, Principal Secretary, Teaching Service Commission, proprietors of schools, teachers and school boards to promote the education of the people of Lesotho, and in particular…(to) ensure that the learner is free from any form of discrimination in accessing education and is availed all educational opportunities provided (art. 4, 4c). At the same time, the act makes primary education compulsory, establishing the duty of parents to enrol their children as of their ago of six years (art. 6).

The **Education Sector Strategic Plan** (2005 – 2015) formulates the vision that *Basotho shall be a functionally literate society with well-grounded moral and ethical values; adequate social, scientific and technical knowledge and skills by the 2020*.

Specific sector objectives include the improved access, efficiency and equity of education and training at all levels; and the improved quality of education and training (…).

*School feeding can provide strong support to these provisions and objectives: if meals are provided at school, parents can better live up to their legal obligation to send their children to school. This means that school meals directly promote enrolment of children (also those that are vulnerable or otherwise excluded) in primary schools, and their daily attendance in classes. Furthermore, by relieving short-term hunger, school meals help primary school learners to concentrate, participate in classes in a meaningful way, and to learn.*

With a view to **Health and Social Protection**, the NSDP recalls that malnutrition has stagnated over the past years, with 39.2 percent of children are stunted (short relative to their age),[[14]](#footnote-14) 3.8 percent being wasted (inadequate weight relative to height) and 13.2 percent being underweight. (low weight for age). The measures proposed by the NSDP include among others improved community health and nutrition programmes, growth monitoring and promotion, as well as nutrition education.

The **(draft) Lesotho National Nutrition Policy of 2011** (LNNP) foresees Government to promote increased nutrition security by (1) strengthening nutrition awareness among the general population on the value of diet diversification with particular attention to locally produced foods; (2) accelerating the implementation and scaling up of programmes and projects that improve availability, accessibility and utilization of a variety of foods, and (3) by supporting initiatives aimed at developing food-based approaches for overcoming micronutrient malnutrition.

In addition, the NNP foresees Government among others to review and strengthen institutional feeding initiatives in schools, ECCD and prisons, and to support private sector led food-based initiatives to increase the availability of nutritious foods as complementary to long term food diversification initiatives.

*The National School Feeding Programme can support these initiatives by ensuring that children attending school receive healthy and diverse meals on every school day. In addition, schools can provide a channel for the communication with children and communities of the importance of a healthy and diverse diet. Not least, by constituting a dependable market for diverse, local food products, the NSFP can provide a decisive incentive to farmers and private sector processors to diversify and increase their production and supply of such food, with additional positive spin-off benefits for households’ own consumption and dietary habits.*

The purpose of **National Disaster Risk Reduction** policy is to provide a framework for effective planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction in Lesotho. In the context of Lesotho’s disaster profile, the policy addresses the triple challenge of climate change, environmental degradation and disaster risk, and provides guidelines for integration of disaster risk reduction into all development and social sectors. The policy goal is to promote sustainable development and sound environment management in order to build the resilience of the nation and communities to disasters. With respect to risk reduction and development, the policy states that Government shall develop and strengthen social safety nets.

The **National Policy on Social Development 2014/2015–2024/2025** (NPSD) builds on the analysis that improving the quality of life in Lesotho is largely dependent on preventing and reducing poverty. Many households in Lesotho depend on insecure livelihoods, exposing them in turn to income insecurity and food insecurity. Subsistence agriculture is presently an insecure livelihood. The poorest households in the Rural Lowland and Rural Foothill regions produce only 25 percent of their food, and the proportion is even lower in the Rural Mountain region.[[15]](#footnote-15) Against this background, the strengthening of livelihoods becomes an important social policy objective in Lesotho, forming a social investment which enhances the capacity of the poor to support themselves, and thus helps to address the problems of deprivation and poverty in the long term. The NPSD thus deems it essential to put the strengthening of livelihoods at the top of the social development agenda in Lesotho.

With this overall inclination in mind, that NPSD foresees Government to develop and implement a comprehensive social protection system which includes, but is not limited to, social insurance, social assistance/social safety nets, universal benefits, basic social services, labour market policies and livelihood support. This includes, among others, enhancing the capacity of households to manage social risks; supporting employment creation efforts; promoting entrepreneurship among poor and marginalised groups; supporting particularly poor and marginalised groups, to develop adequate and secure livelihoods; ensuring food security, particularly among the poor; and providing income security for the vulnerable.

The overall objective of the National Social Protection Strategy of (NSPS) 2014 is to provide support to those that are unable to construct a viable livelihood; to protect the assets and improve the resilience of poor and vulnerable households; and to increase the productive capacity and asset base of those households. It aims (1) to operationalise an integrated set of core social protection programmes aimed at reducing vulnerabilities throughout the life‐course; (2) to establish coherent and progressive social protection synergies by ensuring strong positive linkages with other Ministries and key stakeholders; and (3) to integrate and harmonise operational systems for the effective implementation of social protection programmes. The NSPS raises the question if attendance and performance in school are best promoted by direct cash transfers to poor households, or through school feeding, and proposes to review the impacts of a Conditional Cash Transfer pilot on educational and nutritional Outcomes, and to review with MOET the costs and benefits of alternative models of school feeding.

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*School feeding is the largest social safety net presently in place in Lesotho, covering 61% of all persons covered by all core social protection programmes.[[16]](#footnote-16)With an ever-increasing share of diverse food procured from among the farmers and communities around schools, school feeding can in addition provide new and growing livelihood opportunities to poor rural households. By stimulating local food production on a commercially viable basis, school feeding can also contribute to increasing rural households’ food and income security.*

*The new national model of school feeding aims at providing reliable school meals at lower cost and with reduced administrative burden. It is not meant as an alternative to direct cash transfers to poor families, but as a necessary complement to ensure that educational outcomes are achieved. As the same model will apply for ECCDs, this model will also lead to enhanced positive nutritional outcomes at an early age.*

# Annex 3 – Proposed roles of NSFP actors

The proposals for specific tasks of NSFP actors will be reviewed and potentially revised during the elaboration of the Implementation Guidelines.

**The Minister’s Office**

Specific tasks of the Minister’s Office include the following:

* Approve the process and criteria for the selection of National Management Agents
* Approve the draft capacity development programme;
* Approve the school feeding menu(s) to be served
* Approve annual targets for the share of each commodity to be used in each menu to be procured from local farmers and other national sources;
* Decide on the maximum amount per day per learner in each district that national management agents can spend;
* Decide which overhead or other benefits a national management agent should be allowed;
* Decide on the proposal by the secretariat on the NMA(s) to be contracted for which area of the country;
* Enforce ethical and governance issues, including potential conflicts of interest, compliance with established procedures etc. on the basis of investigations and reports prepared by the secretariat;
* Approve the draft monitoring and evaluation plan;
* Make overall decisions with respect to NMA contracts – including invoking certain penalties foreseen in the contract, revoking contracts, paying out bonuses, etc.
* Commission regular reviews, evaluations and audits of the programme, review their results and decide on follow-up measures;
* Direct the secretariat in any matters of supervision, monitoring, and reporting on the NSFP, and ensure that the secretariat has the capacity to fulfil its mandate in an efficient and effective manner.

**The Advisory Board**

Specific tasks of the Advisory Board include the following:

* Review the draft process and criteria prepared by the secretariat for the selection of National Management Agents, discuss potential changes required, and recommend one agreed-upon document for the approval by the Minster’s Office
* Review, discuss and make recommendations with respect to the draft capacity development programme;
* Review, discuss and make recommendations with respect to the school feeding menu(s) to be served (see process description and criteria above);
* Discuss and recommend annual targets for the share of each commodity to be used in each menu to be procured from local farmers and other national sources;
* Review, discuss and recommend the maximum amount per day per learner in each district that national management agents can spend;
* Discuss and recommend which overhead or other benefits a national management agent should be allowed;
* Discuss and recommend on the proposal by the secretariat on the NMA(s) to be contracted for which area of the country;
* Discuss and make recommendations with respect to ethical and governance issues, including potential conflicts of interest, compliance with established procedures etc. on the basis of investigations and reports prepared by the secretariat;
* Review and make recommendations concerning the draft monitoring and evaluation plan;
* Review regular monitoring reports on the implementation of the programme and the execution of the contracts with national management agents, and make recommendations on overall decisions – including invoking certain penalties foreseen in the contract, revoking contracts, paying out bonuses, etc.
* Discuss and advise on the Terms of Reference for regular reviews, evaluations and audits of the programme, discuss their results and recommend follow-up measures;
* Ensure that all partners include their support to school feeding in their future strategies and specific action plans and budgets;
* Request the secretariat to carry out any preparatory and follow-up action of board sessions.
* Additional tasks may become relevant in the course of programme implementation and will be taken up by the board, based on a proposal by the secretariat and consensus among its members.

**The NSFP Secretariat**

Specific tasks of the secretariat include the following:

* Commission the preparation of, discuss, review and approve the detailed Implementation Guidelines of the National School Feeding Programme;
* Commission the preparation of and approve the draft Terms of Reference for National Management Agents, including payment schedules;Prepare a draft document describing the process and the criteria for the selection of National Management Agents;
* Review the expressions of interests received from candidates for National Management Agents, and make a proposal to the Management Board which of these agents should be included in the capacity development programme;
* Carry out a process corresponding to national procurement rules for the identification of national management agents, and make concrete, movtivated proposals to the Management Board.
* Prepare draft Terms of Reference for national management agents;
* Cooperate with the World Food Programme on the preparation of a capacity building programme (see also below: transitional arrangements);
* Oversee the implementation of the capacity building programme;
* Serve as communication focal point for the managing agent(s), maintaining day-to-day communication;
* Decide on minor issues that do not require a decision by the Management Board – limits to be determined by the Management Board;
* Oversee the activities of NMAs and other actors involved in the implementation of the programme with respect to ethical and governance issues, including potential conflicts of interest, compliance with established procedures etc., and carry out – if warranted - investigations and prepare reports for discussion and decision by the Managing Board;
* Prepare a draft plan for monitoring and evaluation;
* Supervise monitoring activities, ensuring that data are collected by the various actors as foreseen in the approved monitoring plan, with respect to completeness, timeliness, accuracy/reliability;
* Prepare regular, up-do-date, analytic, concise and informative quarterly monitoring reports in time for the quarterly sessions of the Management Board;
* Prepare recommendations for action following up on the findings of monitoring reports, for the discussion and decision by the Management Board;
* Prepare and follow up on all sessions of the Management Board; invite to regular and ad hoc meetings, prepare and disseminate records;

**National Management Agents**

Specific tasks of National Management Agents will be described in the concrete Terms of Reference to be approved by the Management Board. As an orientation, and without pre-empting this decision, specific tasks of national agents will include:

* Close cooperation with school feeding committees at school level;
* Close communication with the Secretariat on all issues concerning the implementation of the programme;
* Identification of suitable suppliers of the required food commodities: local farmers, farmers’ associations, whole-traders, larger national, regional or international sources;
* Entering into contracts with the most adequate suppliers according to criteria of quality, cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness (to be specified in the guidelines that will become part of national Management Agents’ contracts) and following the targets for local procurement set by the Management Board;
* Identifying the most suitable arrangements for local transport, storage and handling of food commodities, and entering into contracts with the relevant sub-contractors;
* Preparation of procurement and delivery plans for the different commodities included in the school meals menus;
* Implementation of procurement and delivery plans in cooperation with suppliers and sub-contractors;
* Hiring and payment of cooks from the communities;
* Identification of potential bottlenecks and proposals to the secretariat how these could be overcome – to be decided by the secretariat (if minor) or the Management Board;
* Preparation of monthly reports per school on food delivered, food used, food lost, and the number of pupils provided with school meals on each school day – for the review and approval by the school feeding committee at each school;
* Preparation of monthly reports on commodities purchased (quantity and price), per commodity, per source;
* Maintenance and monthly transmission to the Secretariat of detailed and accurate accounts on all funds used for food procurement, storage, handling, transport and preparation / distribution to learners, and the agree-upon management fee; these reports will form part of the monitoring schedule for the programme, and form the basis – once approved by the Management Board - for the settling of accounts between Government and the National Management Agents.
* Contribution to the monitoring of the programme, as will be laid out in the monitoring plan.

**School Feeding Committees**

Specific tasks of School Feeding Committees include:

* Cooperating with the national agent on the detailed planning of food provisions, deliveries and preparation, i.e. help determine carry over food, requirements for the next delivery period, concrete days for reception, etc.;
* Ensuring the proper conditions of the school’s food store; where conditions do not correspond to the requirements of safe and quality food storage, prepare a report and a proposal for the district education officer;
* Assisting the national management agent in identifying – if required – people who can be recruited for unloading food upon delivery and bringing it into the food store at school;
* Verifying and endorsing the number of pupils enrolled at school;
* Receive food and verifying its quantity and quality, to be certified for the national management agent;
* Reviewing and approving the reports of national agents on the number of school meals provided;
* Discussing any complaints by learners, teachers, or parents with respect to school meals;
* Discussing the suitability of the school meals – and, where relevant, proposing viable and affordable alternatives;
* Discussing suggestions by local farmers and own ideas with respect to potential complementary activities supporting the local food value chains;
* Discussing and proposing any other complementary activities at school or community level, e.g. with respect to health, nutrition, social development, etc.
* Mobilising the community to assist with potential support activities;
* Mobilising communities to arrange for transport in hard-to-reach areas;
* Assisting in the monitoring of the school feeding programme as foreseen in the monitoring plan to be approved by the Management Board, e.g. by verifying food delivered, used, lost and carried over as reported by the dedicated teacher; follow up on issues of food shortages or quality by discussing potential issues and request the head teacher to communicate with NMA and secretariat; meet and discuss with visiting programme monitors, etc.

# Annex 4 – Proposed outline of the NSFP Implementation Guidelines

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| **Section** | **Description of foreseen content** |
| 1. **Introduction – the Lesotho Model of School Feeding** | This section will provide a short introduction to the new Lesotho model of school feeding, and how this will be different from the earlier models |
| 1. **Vision, goal and objectives of the NSFP** | This section will remind users of the goal and objective statements of the school feeding policy |
| 1. **The NSFP actors** | The coordination and management of the NSFP will be explained. The agreed upon tasks of each actor will be specified here (see draft in Annex 3) |
| 1. **The selection of National Management Agents** | Process and criteria for NMA selection, corresponding to national procurement rules, will be specified here. |
| 1. **Composition of school meals** | This section will contain the decisions taken with respect to the food basket and menus decided; the time of feeding; the question if (potentially where) an arrival snack will be served, etc. Where the Management Board has decided that food baskets, menues, times of feeding or numbers of meals may differ for specific areas, this will be specified here. |
| 1. **Promotion of local purchases** | This section will specify how the procurement of locally produced and processed food will be promoted. This can include price differences with specific ceilings; subsidies to be channelled to target vulnerable households e.g. from the Ministry of Agriculture; rewards (or penalties) for NMAs for attaining set targets for local procurement (or not); etc. |
| 1. **The school meals committee** | This section will lay down the composition of school meal committees, how members are identified, how committees will work, etc. |
| 1. **Implementation of the NSFP** | This section will specify in more detail the processes involved in NSFP implementation that are summarised in section 7.3 of the policy. |
| 1. **Managing food at school** | This section will describe how food has to be stored at school, including illustrations for good warehouse practice. Furthermore, it will specify how the dedicated teacher at each school will receive and release food, and record any use or losses of food. |
| 1. **Standards for food storage and preparation** | This section will provide a standard design of a good, healthy and hygienic school kitchen. Furthermore, it will specify the qualifications, selection and tasks of cooks; as well as standards and routines for hygiene and food safety. |
| 1. **Monitoring and evaluation** | This section will include a complete Results Framework for the NSFP, including baseline information; furthermore, it will provide a flow chart and assign specific monitoring tasks to different actors; and it will provide tools for the collection of relevant data. Not least, it will specify the specific issues to be examined in more detail in regular external evaluations |

1. Monday: 150g papa, 100 g moroho; Tuesday: ¼ loaf of bread, 200ml of bean soup; Wednesday: 150g papa, 100 g moroho, 1 egg; Thursday: 150g samp, 150 g beans; Friday: 150g papa, 250 ml milk; [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Haag, P., de Meulders, F. and Kharma, D.: Mid-term Evaluation of WFP Lesotho Development Project 10582.0 “Support Access to Primary Education”, 2009; Motseng Logistics Services: “The development of a framework for implementation of an outsourced, revised and sustainable School Feeding Programme for the Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho”, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Motseng Logistics Services op.cit.: The WFP model costs M 2.75 per child per day, compared to MOET’s model, which costs M 3.54, i.e. 28.72% more. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. CADDP (2009) Framework for African food security, <http://www.nepad-caadp.net/pdf/CAADP%20FAFS%20BroCHUrE%20indd.pdf>.) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. CFS (2012) Final report, 39th session,

   <http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/CFS_sessions/39th_Session/39emerg/MF027_CFS_39_FInAL_rEPorT_compiled_E.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Bundy, D et al (2009) Rethinking School Feeding, Washington DC: World Bank; WFP, World Bank & PCD (2013) State of School Feeding Worldwide 2013, Rome: WFP; <http://saber.worldbank.org/index.cfm>; [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Home Grown School Feeding - Time for Donors to Deepen Engagement, Partnership for Child Development, July 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Under forward contract farming, a purchaser guarantees farmers to buy a quantity of products at a certain price. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Calculations based on WFP’s tool for the calculation of the nutrient value of different rations, NutVal 3.0 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The ration used by WFP provided about 40 percent of kilocalories, 44 percent of protein, 37 percent of fat, and 70, 120, 58 and 64 percent of Vitamin A, B1, B2 and B3 respectively (for primary schools). (By contrast, the WFP ration was below minimum requirements for iodine and Vitamin C). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Motseng Logistics Services, op.cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Such as WFP’s NutVal or the ‘menu planner’ of the Partnership for Child Development. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Describing food groups rather than specific food items for greater flexibility [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. A prevalence of 30-39 percent is ”serious” according to the classification of the World Health Organization, and a prevalence of 40 percent or higher is classified as critical. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. World Bank, 2008, p. 20. Lesotho – Sharing Growth by Reducing Inequality and Vulnerability: Choices for Change – A Poverty, Gender and Social Assessment Report no. 46297-LS. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. NSPS, table 1, page 7 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)