



**Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
People's Republic of Bangladesh**

School Meals Coalition (SMC): National Commitment of Bangladesh

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the father of the nation, the dreamer of independent Bangladesh, had the dream of creating a developed, prosperous and talented nation. With the aim of fulfilling that dream, we are working to make competent and qualified citizens under the leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the competent daughter of the father of the nation. For this, the Government of Bangladesh has a strong political commitment to invest in the future of Bangladeshi children, their education and well-being. So, providing free meals to all students is a long-term goal of the vision 2041 for building a SMART Bangladesh according to the National School Meal Policy. The Government of Bangladesh expresses its strong commitment for supporting school meal programmes as a policy lever to drive and strengthen human capital, social and economic growth and sustainable food systems in the country.

With an annual investment of US\$ 75million, Bangladesh implemented school feeding programme for over a decade from 2010 to 2022 reaching 3 million school children in 104 sub districts.

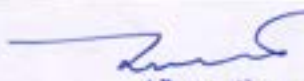
Evidence from studies done in Bangladesh shows that in addition to increasing school enrolment and retention, school feeding helps to address both immediate hunger and nutritional needs of children. It also lays the foundation for developing long term human capital which would in turn contribute to the Bangladesh 2041 vision of SMART citizens and SMART Bangladesh.

We strongly believe that better health is associated for better education of children. We are convinced that this programme is a systemic solution that helps combat child hunger and poverty; supports child nutrition, learning, long-term well-being and health equity; strengthens food systems and local economies; and promotes gender equality by keeping children in school. Therefore, it is expected that through this school feeding program administration & attendance of children will be increased and dropout rate will be decreased in schools.

We also believe school meals programmes are about much more than food in school. They help to improve and diversify children's diets, teach children how to eat better and support national and local markets and food systems by using locally grown food where possible, improving opportunities for smallholder farmers and local catering businesses, many led by women.

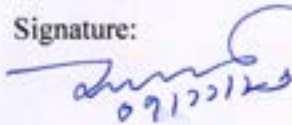
As we join the School Meals Coalition (SMC), we are delighted to announce the following school meals commitments to our Bangladesh citizenry and to the SMC goals.

	Commitment	Category	Target	Deadline
1	Increase the annual budgetary allocation for school meals in the next 3 years.	Financing	BDT 5,000 Crore (USD 454million) ¹ allocated for school meals programme for November 2023- October 2026	Starting November 2023


07/11/23

	Commitment	Category	Target	Deadline
2	Increase the coverage of the national school meals programme from 104 sub-districts to 150 sub-districts within the next 3 years	Programme design and coverage	At least 150 sub-districts covered reaching 3.5 million schoolchildren	Starting November 2023
3.	Leverage school meal programmes to achieve nutrition outcomes through the provision of diversified commodities.	Programme design and coverage	Food basket for school feeding revised from fortified biscuits only to include fruits, egg, bun (bread) and milk.	Starting December 2023
4.	Integration of school meals into the broader primary education sectoral plan for programme sustainability	Policy / Financing	School meals inclusion in the fifth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP5) which will start from July 2025	July 2025

Signature:



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Minister of State,
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Date
