



Lesotho School Meals Coalition Commitments 2023

The Kingdom of Lesotho's government strongly supports school meal programmes as a policy tool for driving and strengthening human capital, social and economic progress, and sustainable food systems. We are confident that this programme is a systemic solution to child hunger and poverty; that it promotes child nutrition, learning, long-term well-being, and health equity; that it builds food systems and local economies; and that it promotes gender equality by keeping girls in school. We feel that school meal programmes are about much more than just food. They help to enhance and diversify children's diets, teach children how to eat healthier, and support national and local markets and food systems by using locally farmed food whenever possible, thereby increasing opportunities for smallholder farmers, local transportation providers, and cooks, many of whom are women. At a time when world leaders must address multiple issues simultaneously, such as education, food, and climate change, school meals should be positioned as a central, cross-cutting solution that will contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.


Lesotho, as a proud member of the School Meals Coalition, declares the following commitments to the Coalition's goals:

- 1) Enforce policy provisions requiring the procurement of 80% of food commodities from local smallholder farmers, as well as ecologically friendly farming methods, food safety, nutrition, and health issues.
- 2) Create and enact school feeding legislation to protect the current school feeding budget.
- 3) Increase school feeding budget by at least 50% in fiscal year 2024/2025 and annual inflationary increase to cater for:
 - a) Increase in cost per meal from M3.54 (US\$0.19) to a recommended M8.00 (US\$0.43) within the next three years.
 - b) School Feeding Unit operation costs to cater for monitoring and research; capacity strengthening of personnel, small holder farmers support for increased productivity and supply; inter-institutional and multi-sectoral coordination.

- 4) Form a high-level school feeding steering committee chaired by the Principal Secretary of Education and Training and comprised of Principal Secretaries or senior officers from the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Development, Local Government, Trade, Cabinet (Food & Nutrition Coordination Office), and development partners.
- 5) Strengthening the Ministry of Education and Training's current school feeding coordination section to lead on strategic and coordination issues for the national school food program.
- 6) Encourage commercial sector and community participation in school feeding programs to encourage local food production, food fortification, and food processing.
- 7) Share experiences, best practices, and evidence with different nations in the Coalition through South-South Triangular Cooperation on the implementation of the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme in Lesotho.
- 8) Conduct a value for money case study for the Lesotho school feeding program during the fiscal year 2024/2025.

Commitments Endorsed by The Minister of Education and Training

Honourable Professor Ntoi Rapapa

Signature:  Date: 9/8/2023

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