



**Republic of Namibia
Ministry of Education**

The Namibian School Feeding Programme Transition Case Study





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Conducted with technical assistance from the World Food Programme



Cover image by Justin Ellis: A cook serving a mid-morning meal at *Moses van der Byl Primary School*, Katutura, Windhoek



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Foreword

This is the first report that analyses the historical transition of the Namibian School Feeding Programme from 1991 when the programme was launched by the World Food Programme through the period when the Government of Namibia took full ownership of the programme in 1996 until now. The report represents the first step in the process of strengthening the evidence base on school feeding in Namibia and is intended to inform on the progressive transfer of responsibilities and the process the school feeding programme has undergone to be what it is today.

The report includes information on significant events that have taken place particularly the policy environment that have facilitated the school feeding programme to be high on the government agenda. It illustrates the history of the programme from inception, analyses the programmes successes using five international quality standards for school feeding and highlights best practices and pitfalls in the implementation of the school feeding programme that Namibia and other countries that are going through a similar transition to utilise to improve their national school feeding programmes.

The information contained in the report was gathered through data collected from various stakeholders in the country and is informed by various reports and studies in the country. This report was prepared with the UN World Food Programme with whom the Ministry of Education has established a partnership for technical assistance to strengthen the management and implementation of the Namibian School Feeding Programme. The Transition Case study is a product of this partnership.

The School Feeding Programme in Namibia has become a priority for the government due to the multiple benefits it has on our children. If implemented, the programme has the potential to relieve hunger for orphans and vulnerable children and improve their nutrition. The Namibian School Feeding Programme is and has always been an important strategy for addressing inequalities in education. It promotes access and expands education opportunities to disadvantaged Namibian children. It is therefore not a coincidence that this programme is embedded in various national policies and strategic plans and has over the past years received strong political support from senior government authorities. His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Namibia himself has called on the programme to be expanded in order to reach more disadvantaged children. I therefore call on all Namibians and partners to support the Ministry of Education in its efforts to ensure that disadvantaged children do not miss out on education.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge with thanks the support from government ministries, civil society, private sector and development partners for their continue support to the School Feeding Programme. The Ministry would also like to thank all those who contributed to the transition study in particular, the Ministry of Education staff from the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) and Inspectors and hostel managers from all regions of Namibia for their valuable contribution to the study and facilitation of the World Food Programme team that carried out this study.



Mr. Alfred Ilukena
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education
September, 2012

TRANSITION ANALYSIS

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Fact Sheet: Namibia School Feeding Programme, 2012

Year Began	1992 ¹
Lead Institution	The Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MOE), coordinated and implemented by the Division of Management Planning, Appraisal and Training within the Directorate of Program and Quality Assurance (PQA).
Objectives	The objectives of the NSFP are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase enrolment; • increase regular attendance; and • improve retention and progression through grades whilst also improving their general health and concentration levels.
Targeting	School feeding is targeted to registered and non-registered grant/non-grant receiving needy OVC in primary schools (Grades 1-7). Qualifying primary schools are geographically focused primarily in arid/semi-arid regions of the country.
Implementation	<p>The NSFP is implemented in line with a centralized approach managed by the Directorate of PQA within the MOE. All bulk food commodities, milling, blending and transport are procured, packaged and out-sourced at national level. The prepared food commodity is delivered by the miller to the contracted transporter's regional warehouse in each of the 13 regions.</p> <p>The day-to-day operations are decentralized, managed and coordinated at regional and school levels. Deliveries of food from regional warehouses to school level are performed by the transporter. Activities are coordinated by the regional hostel officers in the MOE in cooperation with circuit Inspectors, principals/head teachers and local school boards. Food quotas are delivered in full on a per term basis.</p> <p>At school level, the programme is overseen by the School Feeding Committee consisting of the principal, a focal point teacher and parent from within the community. The principal and/or focal point teacher is responsible for monitoring, control, reporting and quality assurance of the programme at school level.</p>
Modality	One cooked mid-morning snack of maize meal protein blend porridge (125 grams) is provided daily at school (200 days/year) to all beneficiaries during each school term. Beyond the staple porridge, content may vary depending on contributions provided by the community, private businesses and parents. For example, food shops on occasion donate off-cuts of meat and vegetables that can vary the taste, texture and nutritional content of the porridge.
Coverage	The total enrolment of all primary schools is 408,804, of which 270,772 children are benefitting from the programme (EMIS 2011). As per the President's Call (MOE, 2008), a programme expansion to 300,000 beneficiaries by 2015 is planned.
Annual budget	The annual budget for the Namibian School Feeding Programme for FY2012/13 is N\$55,000,000 (US\$6,510,000) ² . (Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (MOE))
Source of funding	Funding allocations for the Programme are received from the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to Ministry of Education. School feeding is embedded in an internal budget line with other general services. Funding allocations for the programme typically require frequent negotiations between MOE and MOF throughout the fiscal year.

¹In 1991 WFP distributed surplus military rations as part of a one-year pilot school feeding project in southern Namibia. This project served as the framework for the subsequent four-year Namibia School Feeding Project, established between 1992 and 1996 which also included a one-year "Quick Action Project".

²Based on UN Operational Rate June 1, 2012: N\$8.48=US\$1.00

1 Introduction

Over a twenty year period Namibia has engaged in a school feeding programme with the intention of relieving hunger resulting from drought conditions and equalising educational opportunity for orphans and other vulnerable children. Begun by the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1992 as a time-bound effort, the school feeding programme was transferred to the Namibian government's control in 1996.

World Food Programme established a highly successful school feeding effort that benefited 78,000 children by the end of the four-year programme. With strong community participation, the programme increased school attendance and improved student attention. Early implementation included procurement of food, cooking utensils, storage facilities, cooking shelters, and fuel-efficient stoves. WFP provided training in food preparation, programme delivery, monitoring, and infrastructure development.

Responsibility for funding, managing, and running the school feeding programme was successfully transferred to the government of Namibia at the end of the four-year period. With the exception of a six-month period in 1999 in which WFP returned in response to drought conditions in the northern regions, the government has had full control of and responsibility for the programme.

In partnership with World Bank and the Partnership for Child Development, WFP has undertaken a study of school feeding programmes across multiple countries to evaluate best practices in effecting the transition of the programmes from external to internal control. Namibia was chosen as one of the case studies. This report documents the transition of Namibia's school feeding programme through the following structure:

- Policy frameworks
- Institutional capacity and coordination
- Financial capacity
- Design and implementation
- Community participation

The report identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the transition with respect to the five standards, and informs on the good practices and lessons learned that can be of benefit to other countries.

2 Objectives and rationale for the study

This study seeks to highlight the progressive consolidation of the programme over time and identify the critical factors related to both successes and failures of transferring the school feeding programme from WFP to Namibian government control, with the aim of improving future transitions.

Objectives:

- Trace the history of the programme from inception to the present and analyse key events
- Use historical evidence to analyse the programme's success according to the five identified standards
- Identify best practices that may be utilised by other countries
- Identify pitfalls that may be avoided by other countries

Methodology

Data for this study was gathered through a comprehensive review of available documentation, including government reports, policy documents, proposals, and previous programme evaluations.

Interviews were conducted with thirty informants, including government personnel at the national, regional, and local levels; direct service personnel such as principals and teachers; and staff members from WFP, UNICEF, USAID, UNESCO, and other international agencies, representing expertise in education, nutrition, procurement, and the development and management of school feeding programmes.

Site visits were planned to include schools and local communities however the study coincided with school term closure and consequently only one school visit was possible.

All information sources have been contextualized, set in chronological order, and synthesized to produce this report.

3 Historical perspective of the programme

Namibia's national school feeding programme has been in effect for over twenty years, implemented after Independence and the transition to the new government in 1990. The government had originally engaged the programme with the intention of relieving hunger resulting from drought conditions and equalising educational opportunity for orphans and other vulnerable children.

This section briefly examines the historical aspects of the Namibian School Feeding Programme from its inception to present day according to the following three chapters.

1. A combined approach: The onset and transition (1991–1996)
2. Period of programme refinement and capacity building (1997–2000)
3. Challenges of programme quality against resource deficiencies (2001–2012)

The first chapter highlights the events of WFP's time-bound support over a total of five years, to help establish and transition the school feeding programme to government ownership. After Independence in 1990, government requested WFP's support with school feeding projects to help mitigate the effects of severe drought and malnutrition in the Southern Region of the country. This led to the WFP/government cooperation that would establish the four-year school feeding project from 1993 to 1996 and form the basis for the national programme.

WFP provided the necessary technical support, training, programme delivery, monitoring, and infrastructure development to prepare Ministry of Education (MOE)³ staff for government ownership at the time of handover. With strong community participation, the programme increased school attendance and improved student attention.

At the conclusion of the cooperation in 1996, the school feeding programme was benefiting over 78,000 children in four regions of the country. The programme was successfully transferred to the government of Namibia, by then a middle-income country, to assume full ownership and

³The Ministry of Education has gone through a number of restructures and name changes since Independence but throughout the remainder of this document the Ministry shall be referred to as Ministry of Education (MOE).

responsibility for funding and managing the programme. WFP’s support for school feeding ended as originally agreed and operations were withdrawn in response to WFP’s global efforts to rationalize costs in middle-income countries.

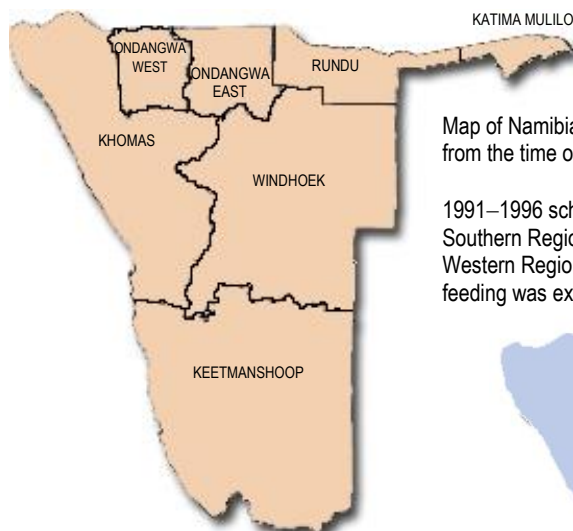
The next chapter outlines a period of programme refinement under government control from 1997 to 2000. The overall transition to government ownership proved seamless and the programme continued to operate well. With the exception of a six-month period in 1999 in which WFP returned in response to drought conditions in the Northern Region, the government had full control of and responsibility for the programme.

Government efforts were geared to building capacity, community support and fine tuning the design and implementation to align with the changing socioeconomic environment. To contain costs and ensure programme quality, adjustments were made to the ration and targeting concentrated on beneficiaries in primary schools.

By year 2000 the programme, an important educational initiative and safety net, continued to receive public support but many of the original key staff who helped establish the programme and manage it during this period, had either left or would soon leave the ministry.

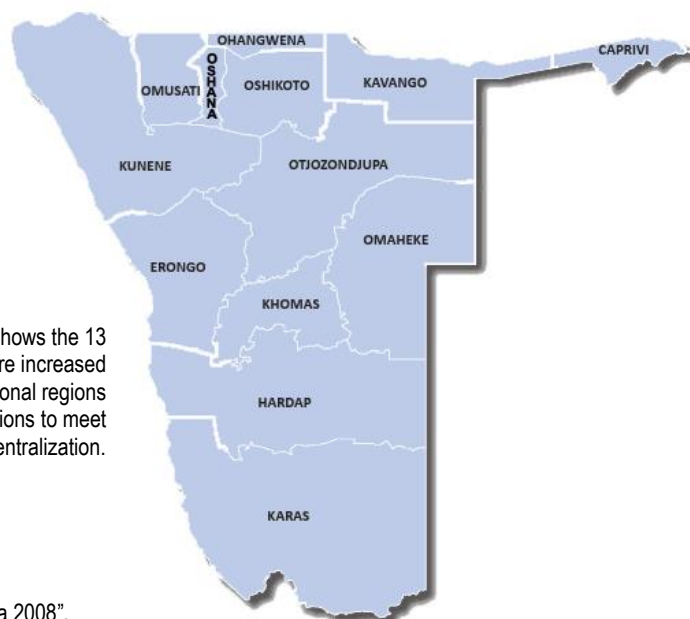
Finally chapter three examines the programme expansion and persistent resource deficiencies challenging the programme up to present day. While the programme continues to expand in line with national priorities, the resources necessary to ensure an effective, quality programme have not grown with it. Funding and human resource capacities throughout the period are inadequate, which reflects the fact that the programme has not been properly institutionalized.

Map of Namibia



Map of Namibia to the left shows the 7 educational regions in place from the time of Independence until 2003.

1991–1996 school feeding support spread progressively beginning in Southern Region (Keetmanshoop), Central Region (Windhoek), Western Region (Komas) and part of Rundu Region. In 1999, school feeding was expanded into the northern regions of the country.



Map of Namibia to the right shows the 13 educational regions today that were increased from 7 regions in 2003. The educational regions now align with the 13 political regions to meet government’s policy of decentralization.

Source: Map taken and adapted from “2nd Millennium Development Goals Report – Namibia 2008”.

3.1 A combined approach: The onset and transition (1991–1996)

Post-Independence marked new beginnings in the country's attempt to reduce extreme socioeconomic disparities. The new government put in place policy and frameworks that would create greater uniformity within an unequal educational system and address the added challenge of recurrent drought, both circumstances which were aided by the four-year school feeding programme and supported by WFP.

In 1991, WFP implemented a one-year school feeding pilot project in the Southern Region distributing surplus military rations which served as a foundation for the subsequent four-year project.

In 1992 a one-year "Quick Action Project" (drought relief) supported by WFP formed the framework for the follow on four-year school feeding project.

In 1993 the WFP/government four-year school feeding project began, which served as the basis for the national programme. WFP supplied dried skim milk, vegetable oil and monetary support. Government implemented the system under WFP guidance, and school feeding was accorded a budget line. Other organizations donated one-off non-food items. Geographical targeting identified remote schools in drought-prone, poor-crop producing regions and second-tier targeting assessed vulnerable needy children as beneficiaries within approved schools.

In 1995 Namibia was classified as a medium-income country, and government's position was regarded as comparatively good financially. This lent support for government's capacity to sustain the programme after handover and further justified WFP's time limited commitment to the four-year project.

In 1996 the successful four-year WFP/government school feeding project concluded. The programme began with 49,000 children in 1993 and gradually reached over 78,000 children in 364 schools in all 4 educational regions at the time.⁴ WFP support ended as was agreed and closed its country operations in response to WFP's global effort to rationalize operations in medium-income countries.

Government, recognizing the significant school feeding benefits such as increased enrolments and community participation, assumed full ownership and management of the programme at the end of 1996 to launch the Namibian School Feeding Programme.

3.2 Period of programme refinement and capacity building (1997–2000)

This period marked a time of adjustment and of fine tuning the programme design and implementation under full government ownership to best align with national goals and the developing socio-economic environment. The programme carried on well under MOE management, garnering continued community support and participation while building additional capacity of newly approved schools and communities.

⁴Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia, 4–5.

At the start of 1997, government was in full command of the NSFP with continued funding support backed by its own budget line and commitment of high level officials. Training, monitoring and reporting systems were in place and implemented under original key school feeding ministry staff.

Adoption of the National Drought Policy and Strategy in 1997 established a National Drought Fund, granting additional budget support to food security initiatives, including the NSFP during times of severe drought beyond the regular programme.

Ration changes were introduced to reduce costs, wastage and better conform to beneficiary needs. Dried skim milk was replaced with a more economical soya protein powder and better suited to the population lactose intolerant. Vegetable oil was added to the soya powder to simplify preparation, and reduce theft and the wastage from damaged containers.

Targeting no longer supported pre-primary vulnerable children due to budget constraints and changes to ministry responsibility (pre-primary now under Ministry of Regional and Local Development). Only needy children in pre-primary schools linked with approved school feeding primary schools continued to benefit from the programme.

In 1999, government requested WFP support in response to a severe drought which effectively expanded the NSFP into the most drought-affected areas in the north of the country. The six month emergency operation assisted 10,000 children under 6 years and 5,000 primary school children.⁵

Around year 2000, most of the original key MOE staff responsible for establishing the NSFP had left the ministry. In some instances positions were not filled for close to a year, which would have later consequences for the programme.⁶

3.3 Challenges to programme quality against resource deficiencies (2001–2012)

The programme during this period continues to expand dramatically but resource deficiencies, both in funding and human capacity are severely stressed and threaten the programme quality and impact. At the same time however, the national goal to provide primary education to all children is gaining ground. School enrolments have increased over the years (89% in 1992 to 97% in 2008)⁷ and children, who otherwise might never receive an education, are now given the opportunity to attend school as a direct result of this programme.

By 2001, the original school feeding team members at central level had either departed or soon would leave the ministry. The departure of these key staff, limited capacity-building initiatives for existing and new employees, and funding shortages in general had begun to reflect adversely on the quality and efficiency of the programme.

In 2003, the seven educational regions were subdivided to align with the thirteen political/administrative regions. While the MOE continues to be responsible overall at central level, the majority of the day-to-day operations are decentralized to regional offices.

⁵Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia, 5.

⁶Informant Interview: Ms A Mukubonda, NSFP Unit staff; Ms E Rourke, Retired, Ministry of Education, May 2012.

⁷Government of Republic of Namibia (2010). Namibia Millennium Development Goals, Third Report, 9.

Vision 2030 was launched in 2004 outlining the nation’s aspirations for long-term development as a knowledge-based society. Education’s role is central to realizing this ambition.

MOE introduced the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) in 2004, a 15-year strategic plan to improve the education and training sector and facilitate achieving the national priorities outlined in Vision 2030.

In 2006, the responsibility for pre-primary education (1-year for 5/6 year olds) returned once again under MOE.

In 2008 the President called for programme expansion by 100,000.⁸ Beneficiaries reached 220,738 but resources to maintain a quality programme remained inadequate.

In 2012, the programme continues to grow with current numbers reaching over 273,823 beneficiaries and a goal to expand to 300,000 learners by 2015.⁹The programme remains a strong national priority, yet the resources essential to support these expansions—including budget allocations and capacity-building efforts—are severely stretched.

Figure 1 below traces the progression and status of the NSFP by quality standard through each of the three periods from programme start until present day and highlights the responsibilities of WFP, government and community as the programme evolved.

Figure 1: Evolution of the School Feeding Programme in Namibia

	Onset & Transition (1991-1996)	Refinement & Capacity Building (1997-2000)	Quality vs Resource Deficiencies (2001-2012)
Policy	Government request under MOE, supports national goals / No policy but in other policies & frameworks	Drought policy supports food security, nutrition programmes, including NSFP	Additional school feeding support in national plans & education policies & frameworks
Institutional Framework	Institutional framework established / Implementation / Oversight & M&E strengthened	Strong start/Government managing well, good oversight, building capacity	Resource capacities stretched, M&E needs strengthening
Funding	WFP funds most of project / School feeding has budget line & funds increase gradually over period	MOE fully funds, except for WFP 6months School feeding 1999 /MOE funds from 2000 onward	Growing funding deficiencies challenges programme quality
Program Design	WFP ration (maize meal, dried skim milk, sugar, salt & vegetable oil) / Education, hunger relief objectives	Ration changes/Coverage grows / Target group changed	Coverage grows significantly / Education intervention/ Target group modified
Community	Widespread training, sensitization/ Community participation institutionalized.	Well monitored by teachers / Community capacity & participation building.	Community support weak / stretched capacities and resources at school level.
KEY =	Responsibility of WFP	Responsibility of Government	Responsibility of Community

⁸Ministry of Education (2012). Namibian School Feeding Programme Case Study Inception Workshop, 24 April 2012. Presentation from Mr C Haikera, MOE. Windhoek.

⁹Ibid. Opening remarks from Under Secretary Mr C Kabajani on behalf of the Permanent Secretary. Windhoek.

4 Details on the historical evolution of the programme

4.1 Evolution of the policy environment

Prior to Independence, the apartheid system segregated groups along racial lines, language, culture, and ethnicity and resource wealth and education were typically a privilege afforded to the whites. Independence brought about sweeping change and set out to unify the country and reduce the extent of these inherited imbalances. Over the years a diversity of policies and frameworks has been put in place aligned with the country's long-term vision.

The following summarizes the main policies and frameworks that have influenced the Namibian School Feeding Programme as one measure to achieve national priorities since the time of Independence.

Period from 1991–1996

Shortly after Independence, government prioritized educational reform recognizing the importance of investing in human capital to advance sustainable economic growth. *The Constitution* (1990) (Article 20) declared basic education a universal right and a free primary education was made compulsory for all Namibians. To meet the enormity of the task, Education was granted the largest share of the national budget between 1991 and 1995 of approximately 20% on an annual basis or about 10% of GDP.¹⁰ Government's priority provided the footing for school feeding as an education intervention.

A generous number of social protection programmes addressing poverty were also in place during this period but demands were high. Administration suffered difficulties coping, challenging the sustainability.¹¹

From 1991 the number of primary learners attending primary school increased on average 2.9% annually to reach a 95% enrolment rate by 1995. The school feeding project during that period was supporting over 78,000 learners, although only 53,600 were considered eligible for assistance.¹² Government was on track to achieving education for all, but a number of factors, including drought and HIV/AIDS were in play that could threaten to stall or even reverse this trend.

In 1993, Government's vision was outlined more clearly in the government policy document *Toward Education for All – A Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training*. This brief explained the strategy for achieving the major priorities of access, equity, quality and democracy. To achieve universal education, expanding access to the education system was crucial. Again prioritizing this goal lent further support for school feeding as a strategy to reach vulnerable children in discounted educational regions of the country.

With the school feeding project underway and no school feeding policy in existence, the MOE with support from WFP produced the internal document - *Namibian School Feeding Programme Manual*

¹⁰Government of Republic of Namibia.(2002). Education for All National Plan of Action 2002–2015.Windhoek, 14.

¹¹Subbarao, K. (1996). Namibia's Social Safety Net: Issues and Options for Reform. Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, The World Bank, iii.

¹²WFP (1995).Progress report on approved projects.Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. WFP/CFA:39/SCP:14, Document 14/4(OMW)Add.1. Released by WFP: 17 March, 5.

and Guidelines in 1993. This document outlined the basic parameters and standard operating procedures for day-to-day implementation and management of the programme. The material serves as the only reference document used by staff with school feeding responsibilities.

In 1995, the *First National Development Plan (NDP1)* (1995–2000) was adopted to strengthen government goals of investing in human resources for poverty reduction and inequality. The improvement of institutional feeding to address issues of food insecurity and nutrition was one specific strategy. The NDP1 thus provided the framework that validated school feeding as an important intervention to help achieve national priorities. It also gave support to the initiative as a social safety net in reducing short-term hunger.

Period from 1997–2000

Despite the on-going school feeding programme, in 1997 a 7% enrolment gap remained for school-age children since Independence. This prompted the Ministry of Education to establish the Inter-sectoral Task Force (ITF) for Educationally Marginalized Children (EMC) to assess and expedite the introduction of actions necessary to reach the most vulnerable.

By 1997, economic growth began to slow to just 1.8% owed to a combination of climate conditions, dropping commodity prices and declining productivity, and social programmes were beginning to feel the pressure.¹³

Widespread drought is a frequent occurrence and 22% of the country is classified as desert, which both threaten food security and nutrition. In 1997, the *National Drought Policy and Strategy* was launched to manage national emergency and long-term drought (and flood), incorporating the school feeding programme as one important initiative to relieve hunger and increase school attendance for vulnerable children. A National Drought Fund was established as budget support for drought relief initiatives, including assistance for scaling up the national school feeding programme during times of drought. This added support was a welcomed reinforcement given growing budget constraints and acknowledges outright school feeding formally as an important intervention.

As a result of the ITF for EMC, the *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalized Children* was issued in 2000 by MOE to accelerate the goal of achieving universal access. The document identifies 13 categories of educationally marginalized children and the array of programmes available to support these children. School feeding is referenced with recommendations to revitalize the programme to reach greater numbers of needy children.¹⁴

Period from 2001–2012

The *Education Act in 2001* defines the educational system in Namibia focussing on access and the importance of addressing educationally marginalized children. It established the Education Development Fund, providing various facilities, bursaries and grants for disadvantaged learners and while school feeding is not directly referenced, it clearly lends support. Meanwhile, the number of school feeding beneficiaries at this time was over 87,000¹⁵ with a net enrolment rate of 89% (EMIS

¹³Africa Recovery (1999). *Stable Economy, Daunting Challenges*. Vol.12, No. 4, P. 18, <http://www.un.org/en/africarenewal/subjindx/124namb1.htm>.

¹⁴UNICEF/MBESC. (2002). *Educationally Marginalized Children in Namibia: An Inventory of Programme Interventions and Data*, 6–7.

¹⁵Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). *WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia*, 9.

2001).¹⁶ This was a 6% drop from 1995 which could be attributed to the impact of HIV/AIDS or the impact of rising infections estimated at 22.5% of the population.¹⁷

In 2002, the *Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action (2002–2015)* was introduced as a result of various regional and international initiatives aimed at reaching educational goals. It reaffirms its commitment to the key educational priorities of access, equity, quality, and democracy under the coordination of MOE. Partnerships are also encouraged which could benefit implementation efforts of school feeding in terms of cost savings and quality. School feeding is only mentioned as a channel to achieve EFA along with the goal to expand the programme to 300,000 learners by 2015.

Meanwhile government responded to the increases in HIV/AIDS with a sense of urgency and required ministries to include an HIV/AIDS component in their programmes. In 2003, MOE put in place the *National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the Education Sector*. The policy addresses the special needs of OVC affected by HIV/AIDS and discusses available assistance, including participation in school feeding schemes to ensure they continue to have access to a free and quality basic education.

In 2004, the Office of the President launched *Vision 2030*, a unifying ambition for long-term development to transform the nation from industrial-based to a knowledge-based society. This policy framework serves to guide the five-year national development plans in providing the course and measures by which the ministries, various authorities and society in general will follow in helping realize this vision.

In 2005, MOE introduced the *Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan (ETSIP) (2005–2020)* a 15-year roadmap designed to accelerate development and improve the education and training sector towards achieving the national priorities of Vision 2030. ETSIP offers funding opportunities (approximately 3% annually) which could improve the quality and implementation of the school feeding programme, especially in areas of capacity building.

The *Education Sector Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children in 2006*, along with the *National Plan of Action for OVC in 2007* were developed to address the rising numbers of OVC. In 2002 approximately 70,000 orphans were identified;¹⁸ this number had increased to about 117,000 in 2007.¹⁹ The Policy outlines measures that will ensure economically vulnerable children have access to quality education, including school feeding as part of the plan of action. The document stipulates the importance of incorporating the school feeding programme into all schools in which at least twenty learners are economically vulnerable, but defers to MOE school feeding guidelines to determine who should qualify.

Following the introduction of Vision 2030, the *third National Development Plan (NDP3) (2008–2013)* was the first plan to interpret the long-term goals to a knowledge-based society. The role of school feeding during this period continues to be directed at access for orphans and other vulnerable children with a particular emphasis on those affected by HIV/AIDS given the high rates of prevalence.

¹⁶Education Management Information System (EMIS) (2001). Namibia.

¹⁷Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (2004). National Report on the Development of Education in Namibia: International Conference on Education, Geneva, 2.

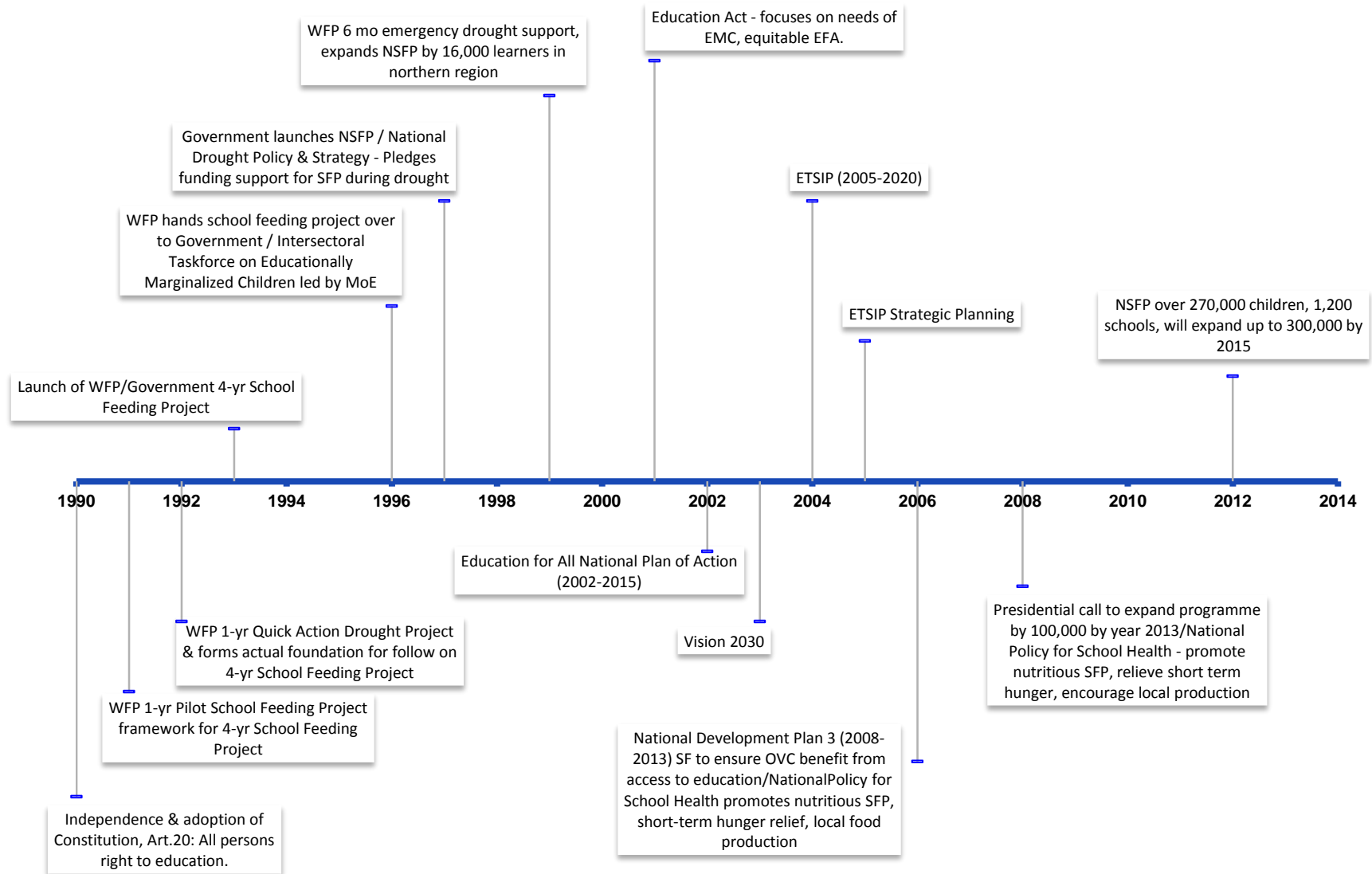
¹⁸Government of Republic of Namibia (2002). Education for All National Plan of Action 2002–2015, Windhoek, 15.

¹⁹Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. (2007). Monitoring and Evaluation for the National Plan of Action 2006-2010 for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Namibia, Vol 2:1.

Finally in 2008, the Ministry of Health and Social Services launched the *Ministry of Health's National Policy for School Health* in reaction to what has been a "fragmented system and rapid changes brought on during the period of Independence". The Policy supports a comprehensive school health programme, including offering food services and managing the nutritional needs of learners. The value of school feeding programmes is highlighted by contributions to learner nutrition, relief of short-term hunger, and opportunities to stimulate home-grown food production. The importance of a multi-sectoral approach in implementing a comprehensive school health programme is underlined by the policy's recommendation that MOE "advocate for the introduction of feeding programs in primary schools with learners from disadvantaged families." The inclusion of school feeding in this policy presents an opportunity for increased collaboration between the two ministries and external partnerships, that if taken on board, will undoubtedly contribute to a more effective and efficient service.

Remarkably, while school feeding is embedded in various legal instruments, to date no school feeding policy exists. The programme has clearly made a contribution and is acknowledged as an important initiative in achieving education for all, but it has not attained the level of prominence it perhaps deserves. This may be the result of inadequate resources coupled with reduced interest or insufficient collaboration amongst various ministries and other partners. International organizations have proved to be less inclined to prioritize school feeding in a middle-income country.

Key Events



4.2 Evolution in the design of the programme

Designing an appropriate and sustainable national school feeding programme requires analysing a country's circumstances and shaping the programme to meet the identified needs. The Namibian programme established shortly after Independence factored in the national priorities to aggressively instigate poverty reduction measures and actions to mitigate the effects of drought.

This section highlights some of the essential components of the Namibian School Feeding Programme and the changes effected as the country evolved over the years.

Objectives of the School Feeding Programme and Beneficiary Target Groups

Period from 1991–1996

The objectives for the one-year Quick Action Project and the four-year School Feeding Project during this period were the same. The long-term objective supported the national goals as an educational intervention while the immediate objectives had a social safety net emphasis.

The two projects tackled the three problems of short-term hunger, poverty in poor private hostels and the lack of parental and community involvement in schools as immediate objectives. With drought a prevalent occurrence and malnutrition rates high due to widespread poverty, food security was a high priority for government. Food aid through such programmes as school feeding contributed both to the issues of access to education and food insecurity (relieving short-term hunger). Also encouraging parental and community involvement in school matters was regarded as an important intervention in the educational reform process. The significance of the school feeding programme was expected to generate support and participation amongst the community.

The long-term objective supported the government's policy of assuring adequate primary education for the entire population and thereby overcome the effects of the former apartheid system.

Immediate objectives and beneficiary targets:

- a. To reduce the present inequality in the access of pre-school and primary day-school children to food and alleviate the widespread short-term hunger resulting from it;
- b. Provide a dietary supplement to children in poor private hostels; and
- c. Raise the level of participation and self-help of parents and communities in the functioning of pre-schools and primary schools.²⁰

These objectives were reflected in the Namibian School Feeding Manual and Guidelines developed in 1993, however they were stated differently:

- a. Provide meals to children who have poor access to food so that there is more equal distribution of food to all Namibian children. (target group is less specific)
- b. Provide better nutrition to children who reside in poor church, community, farm or informal hostels. (this suggests a health intervention with improved nutrition which is different from a dietary supplement; also support for the types of hostel seem to have increased from just private or community)
- c. Improve community involvement in schools.
- d. Develop coping mechanisms for the community to run a suitable programme independently.

²⁰WFP (1992b). Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. CFA:33/SCP:8, Document 8/2-A(ODW)Add.3. Released by WFP: 10 March, 4–5.

Teachers and cooks were also beneficiaries of the programme. Additionally, cooks received an incentive for their labour of 3 dry take-home rations to be shared with their family.

Period from 1997–2000

The NSFP now under full government management, continued throughout this period to operate under the same objectives, except the beneficiary group changed. Ministry of Education was no longer supporting pre-primary children, although attempts were made to unofficially continue but this was unsustainable. The only pre-primary children supported were those attached to approved school feeding primary schools and poor private hostels.

When exactly this change occurred is uncertain but it appeared that it was shortly after the handover. The school feeding manual apparently had not been revised to reflect these changes during this period, at least no indication of such was evident.

Period from 2001–2012

The programme objectives continued as from the prior period, again with the same unrevised school feeding manual up until 2005 when a school feeding study was conducted by Oshipala Trust. Following that report the ministry appears to have revised the objectives on recommendation from the study. In 2006, the new objectives were stated in the school feeding manual as follows:

To provide targeted school feeding programming to registered and non-registered grant / non grant-receiving needy OVC in primary schools in order to contribute towards:

- increased enrolment
- regular attendance
- improved retention and progression through grades
- improved general health and concentration levels

By 2006, children in hostels were also no longer considered a part of the school feeding programme, except for those non-registered community hostels linked with school feeding primary schools. Most hostels are subsidized by other government social programmes, such as the Education Fund.

The children thus targeted in today's programme are only orphans and other vulnerable children in primary schools. The pre-primary children attached to primary schools have also been excluded although in practice pre-primary vulnerable children linked with approved school feeding primary schools continue to be supported. Since 2000 the Ministry of Gender Affairs and Child Welfare (MGACW) has been responsible for pre-primary and early childhood development. Just recently however, MOE has been given the responsibility for pre-primary children, one-year (5-6 year olds) before accessing primary school. The strategy of supporting this group under school feeding is yet to unfold.

Efforts have also been outlined along with the objectives to support other health and nutrition interventions for school-age children, such as improvements in the water and sanitation environment, among others. This statement suggests that school feeding is beginning to be considered as part of a wider more comprehensive set of social programmes and systems that involves a more holistic approach in child care.

Targeting and Selection Criteria

Period from 1991–1996

The programme was designed on three principles: 1. To be run in poor, non-crop producing drought-affected areas; 2. The programme must be a community operated project; 3. The meals must be simple and standardized.

The two tiered system of selecting the beneficiaries involved geographical targeting of schools in drought-prone, non-crop producing areas of the country. Once schools were identified, the actual beneficiaries were determined within the school itself. The issue of stigma is a significant concern and apparently has been a concern for parents and the children, especially when HIV/AIDS related.

The selection criteria applied to assess if a child within approved schools qualified were based on whether:

- a. Both parents were either unemployed or had very low incomes
- b. A female headed the household
- c. No breakfast was eaten before coming to school
- d. Only one or two meals were eaten per day at home
- e. The daily journey to school was 3 km or longer

Period from 1997–2000

The selection criteria to assess beneficiaries within schools underwent a revision but the time period is uncertain. The revision states that only needy children may receive food from the school feeding programme and that teachers and the school feeding committee members are responsible for deciding which children may participate according to the following guidelines:

1. Have unemployed parents
2. Have a single parent with very low income
3. Have both parents earning very low income
4. Are raised by grandparents on a pension only
5. Are orphans
6. Are neglected or abused
7. Are from marginalized communities
8. Walk 5km or more to school
9. Show visible signs of under-nutrition

The following groups were specifically excluded from the programme according to the school feeding manual:

1. All children whose parents have a regular income.
 2. All children whose parents are employed by government, para-statal, private companies, etc.
 3. All teachers.
 4. All employed adults.
 5. All children whose parents own enough cattle, goats or sheep for subsistence and marketing.
 6. All children whose parents produce enough food for subsistence and marketing.
- (Oshipala Trust, 2005)

Period from 2001–2012

Again the school feeding manual does not specify dates for many of the revisions so it is difficult to know when the changes were actually made. It would seem that the same criteria applied from the previous period up until 2006 when the school feeding manual does indicate an actual revision date. Thus in 2006, the criteria again changed as follows:

Children meeting one or more of the following criteria are considered eligible for participation in the school feeding programme:

1. A child that eats less than two meals per day
2. A child that shows signs of malnutrition
3. A child that is frequently absent from school (where absence of food is a suspected contributing factor)
4. A child heading a household and in need of additional care
5. A child registered and receiving government OVC grants less than N\$500
6. Children with a parent or with no parent or with little income (less than N\$500)
7. A needy child infected with HIV/AIDS
8. A child exempted from contributing to the School Development Fund
9. Children with no or torn uniforms that appear to be needy.

Current day's school feeding manual (date of revision unknown) presents as follows:

Only OVC qualify to receive food from the NSFP. It is the community's responsibility to determine participation according to the set criteria.

1. Children that are either orphans or are being raised by a single parent or both parents earning in total less than N\$500 per month
2. Children who are being raised by grandparents who only receive a state pension.
3. Children showing signs of malnutrition and on a regular basis eat less than two meals a day outside school.

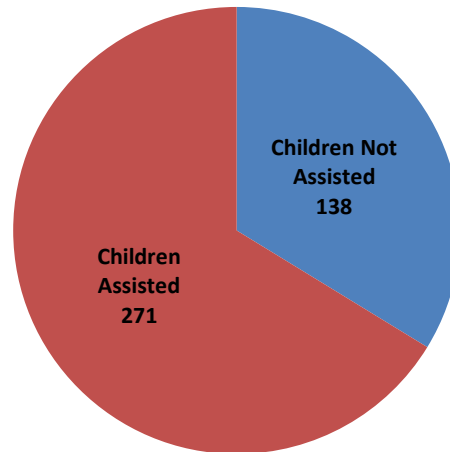
Children who do not qualify as hungry or needy and are not entitled to receive a school meal:

1. All children whose parent/parents have a regular income earning more than N\$500 per month.
2. All children whose parent/parents are employed by the government, para-statal, private companies, etc.
3. All teachers and their children.
4. All employed adults earning more than N\$500 per month
5. All children eating (or can afford to eat) more than two meals outside of school on a daily basis.

Clearly the selection criteria have become more refined over the years, which no doubt reflects the concerns of growing resource and funding difficulties.

The following pie graph shows the number of beneficiaries of the school feeding programme in 2011 and the number of children in primary school not supported.

**Number of Primary School Children Assisted by
the NSFP in Namibia
(Thousand Beneficiaries, 2011)**



Food Basket

Period from 1991–1996

The ration was designed from the start as a simple and standard mid-morning snack, intended as a dietary supplement that could feed large numbers. The maize porridge was considered culturally acceptable and would limit managerial and logistical difficulties. From the beginning of the programme 75% of the commodities were locally procured and only 25% imported.²¹ However, commodities imported but packaged locally are also considered “locally procured”. Also, the import of maize is controlled by the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB), in order to assist local farmers. All supplies of local maize must first be sold prior to opening the borders for import. These considerations have made monitoring of what is regarded as local production versus external production difficult.

The cooked ration provided 200 school days/year and consumed at school during a 30 minute break either at 9.30 am or 10 am. The porridge consisted of maize meal (100 grams), enriched dried skim milk (20 grams), sugar (10 grams), vegetable oil (15 grams) and salt (1.5 grams) with an approximate nutritional value of: energy (600 calories), protein (16 grams) and fat (18 grams). The oil was added at the time of cooking.

The snack was designed to provide 1/3 of a child’s (6-12 years) daily nutrient requirements and was intended as a supplement to the child’s meals at home – not a replacement. The size of the ration during this period was 146.5 grams arrived at in consultation with dietitians/nutritionists and the programme team.

²¹Informant Interview: Ms A Mukubonda, NSFP Unit staff, Ministry of Education, May 2012.

Within the first two years of the four-year programme the maize meal was switched from white to yellow maize in order to contain costs. This change apparently generated no complaints from the beneficiaries and reduced costs by 45%.²²

Period from 1997–2000

During this period, the MOE changed the protein from dried skim milk to soya powder once the WFP commodities had been exhausted. The soya powder was reported as more economical and could be sourced regionally. The commodity also proved more tolerable for a significant portion of the population who are lactose intolerant. Theft of vegetable oil was also an issue at that time as was damage to the containers that caused leakage. To eliminate these problems, the oil was added directly during the blending process. This simplified the logistical process.

The size of the ration was also reduced from 146.5 grams to 125.5 grams after WFP commodities had been expended. Cost may have been a factor driving the reduction but the smaller size may have also more accurately reflected the nutritional requirements of the average beneficiary. The volume of 125 grams when cooked increases to about 500 millilitres, too much for one child to consume. Apparently cooks have learned by experience that children can eat about a cupful, approximately 200 ml at one sitting.

Still, the degree of accuracy in portion size is not exacting as the measuring devices used by school cooks have become less uniform. Many cooks bring their own measuring devices and equipment from home, the sizes of which may vary.

Period from 2001–2012

Today’s ration consists of: a maize blend composed of unsifted yellow or white maize meal (63%), protein blend (25%), sugar (10.8%), and iodised salt (1.2%). The protein blend continues to be soya based and vegetable oil has been eliminated. The fat content required is provided through the soya powder.

Size continues to be 125.5 grams and the blended commodity is packaged in 12.5 kilogram bags serving 100 students. Cost per child per meal today is approximately US\$0.13 (N\$0.98).²³

The following Box explains Namibia’s formal education system for the early years of a child’s education.

BOX2 : Namibia’s Formal Education System

School Category	Grades	Grades Ages	Responsibility
Early Childhood Care and Development	Nursery	0–5 years-old	MGCW
One-Year Pre-Primary	0	5 years-old	MOE
Primary Education			
• Lower Primary	1–4	6–9 years-old	MOE
• Upper Primary	5–7	10–12 years-old	MOE

²²WFP (1995). Progress report on approved projects. Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. WFP/CFA: 39/SCP:14, Document 14/4(OMW)Add.1. Released by WFP: 17 March, 3.

²³Informant Interview: Mr R April, Ministry of Education, May 2012.

4.3 Evolution of the financial capacity of government and funding for the programme

Namibia has been classified as a middle-income country since the mid-90s intimating the country enjoys a good standard of living, but income distribution is exceptionally skewed with a Gini-coefficient of approximately 0.58 (NHIES, 2009/10)²⁴ among a population of 2.1 million people (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Five percent of the population enjoy 70% of the wealth and the remaining population suffer varying degrees of poverty, the majority of who live in remote and drought-prone regions of the country.²⁵ National priorities are targeting efforts to improve inequities of wealth distribution through poverty reduction programmes and by investing in the country's human resources to improve socioeconomic development and the lives of thousands of Namibians.

Period from 1991–1996

The period 1990–1994 was characterised by robust GDP growth of 4.9% but began to slide from 1995–1999 with more modest growth of 3.8%, below the 5% expectations in the NDP1.²⁶

Government put policy and priorities into practice during this period backing education with the largest share of the national budget (average 20%–25%), support which has continued up to present day.²⁷ Primary education was apportioned the greatest share of the education budget ranging from 38% to 51% during the years 1991–1996.

During this phase, government continued to support generous social safety-net programmes inherited from the previous apartheid system and aimed at poverty reduction such as the Child Maintenance Fund, Pension scheme, disability support, etc.

The WFP Quick Action Project in 1992 was well-planned and resources aligned with the requirements of the project. WFP covered 76% of the costs while government's contribution was 24% which supported 31,000 children in pre-schools, primary schools and private hostels in two regions.

Reportedly school feeding had its own budget line from the beginning of this project (though embedded under general services line item 027) which demonstrated government's firm commitment to the programme long-term. This was further confirmed by the concurrent planning of the four-year project and brief on WFP's phase-out strategy planned in both projects.

UNICEF had also committed US\$57,000 along with pledged support from other donors for consultancy services and non-food items such as shelter materials, fuel-saving stoves, etc. The added commitment of donors at that time highlighted the apparent significance the international community placed on this form of social programme.

²⁴National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (2009/10).

²⁵Government of Republic of Namibia (2002). Education for All National Plan of Action 2002–2015, Windhoek, 9.

²⁶Government of Republic of Namibia/European Commission (2002). Namibia-EC Country Strategy Paper and Indicative Programme for the Period 2002–2007, Windhoek, 5.

²⁷Government of Republic of Namibia (2002). Education for All National Plan of Action 2002–2015, Windhoek, 9.

Strategic and creative financing of the project allowed food commodities to be purchased locally by monetizing imported vegetable oil from donor pledges and with the money from the sales, buy the remaining ration foodstuffs. Using this model WFP was also able to subsidize 50% of the ITSH (internal transport, handling, storage) costs while government covered the remaining 50%.

The four-year project from 1993 followed on from the groundwork laid through the Quick Action Project. The project was funded jointly by WFP and government, in addition to support from a number of key donors. WFP's total contribution for the supply of food aid, a monitoring system, 50% ITSH, and technical support was almost 77% of the four-year project cost, while government's contribution was about 23%, covering salaries, direct project expenses, materials, supplies and equipment, 50% ITSH, training, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. Government's funding support for the project increased gradually over the four years. Twenty months into the project, government had met 40% of its total funding obligation. Again government demonstrated its commitment and ability to manage the school feeding resources. Total project WFP/government contributions were approximately US\$6 million.²⁸

Initial non-food items (pots, stoves, shelter supplies and other cooking equipment) were provided by UNICEF (US\$48,000). In 1995 an additional US\$209,000 in external contributions were received from the Canadian High Commission and The Netherlands Government to improve hygiene standards, local skill development, and shelter construction, and to provide cooking equipment and fuel-efficient stoves. UNDP also supported the project and other bilateral donors included Sweden (primary donor for several schools), Germany, USA, and the EEC.²⁹

In 1993/94, the sale of vegetable oil to procure food commodities and subsidize 50% of the ITSH costs did not yield the expected funds and losses were incurred. After WFP negotiated with government, future sales went to open tender. Also WFP switched from white maize to yellow maize and this reduced costs by 45%, which offset the losses from the sale of vegetable oil.

At the time of handover some level of food commodities were still in storage but would be fully exhausted by the programme. The small amount of funds remaining was approved by WFP for use but amount and how the funds were used is unclear, apart from the fact they were expended on the programme and likely non-food items.

At the time of the handover, MOE was able to secure increased budget allocations with support of senior bureaucrats and ministers.³⁰

Period from 1997–2000

Budgets covered commodities and transportation costs but excluded non-food items. Schools were still operating using the original equipment from the time the programme was implemented, although much of which no doubt suffered substantial wear. Communities and parents sometimes replaced or loaned small equipment items such as pots, spoons, etc. as needed.

²⁸WFP (1992b). Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. CFA:33/SCP:8, Document 8/2-A(ODW)Add.3. Released by WFP: 10 March, 1.

²⁹Ibid, 10.

³⁰Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia, 7.

Funding concerns were growing. Expansion of the programme to new schools and beneficiaries were targeted strictly to the most remote areas of the country, both because of budget restrictions and also because they were the most vulnerable in need.

The budget continued to grow for the education sector but school feeding remained essentially at the same level throughout the period from N\$500,000-N\$800,000.

Period from 2001–2012

In 2002, close to 80% of the Education budget went to personnel costs, which raised serious concern over the genuineness of the priority of free and compulsory primary education for all.³¹

MOE undergoes lengthy negotiations each fiscal year to obtain the necessary funding to procure and deliver the rations. From 2005 to 2010, budget allocations ranged from approximately US\$1.4 million to US\$1.5 million, amounts that have varied little from the late 90s. And yet the programme size has almost tripled (Year 1996: 78,000 beneficiaries; Year 2010: 225,000 beneficiaries) while food and transport costs have also risen. Transportation service has reportedly deteriorated, in part perhaps to poor monitoring owed to stretched resources and capacities. MOE has stated that it is not unusual for transporters to drop the food off at the schools with little regard for storage and handling.

In 2007, USAID assisted the MOE by off-setting the costs of transportation, which allowed the ministry to procure more food to feed an additional 27,000 children.³²

From 2008 to 2010, MOE cited extreme budget shortfalls averaging N\$20 million (US\$2.7 million) each year. At the same time the programme was expanding to reach an additional 100,000 vulnerable children. In 2010 the programme received support from the Global Fund of US\$116,000 to reach 5,000 beneficiaries in the Khomas Region. Support was extended by the Global Fund from 2008/09 through 2011/12 with approximately N\$1 million per year. In actuality however the provision was closer to N\$800,000, depending on the remaining available capital each year. Funds were apparently only dispersed for budget year 2008/09 along with a promise for funding support in 2012/13.³³

The programme has also been assisted by the ETSIP which boosted funding by N\$10 million in 2010/11 to reach the programme budget of N\$30 million in response to the President's Call for scaling up beneficiaries by 100,000.³⁴

The apparent problem is that continued support from these funds cannot be guaranteed. "In the past we received assistance from Global Fund and the ETSIP, but every year in January there are no funds left." MOE apparently must then negotiate with Ministry of Finance throughout the year to obtain the essential funds.³⁵

The budget allocation in 2011/12 fiscal year increased to N\$50 million, likely in response to the continued expansion by 100,000 beneficiaries. Even though education continues to receive the greatest share of the national budget, the proportion that school feeding receives is declining

³¹Ministry of Education (2002). Annual Report. Windhoek.

³²USAID (2012). Informant written interview from Ms S Felton, Advisor for OVC, May 2012.

³³Informant Interview: Mr R April, Ministry of Education, July 2012.

³⁴Informant Interview: Ms E Bohn, Ministry of Education, July 2012.

³⁵Ministry of Education (2010). Memo: Budget Provision for Hostel Catering and Namibian School Feeding Programme, 14 October, Windhoek.

despite increased enrolments (apart from the 2011/12 budget). In Fiscal Year 2011/12, the programme received just 0.58% of the Education budget.

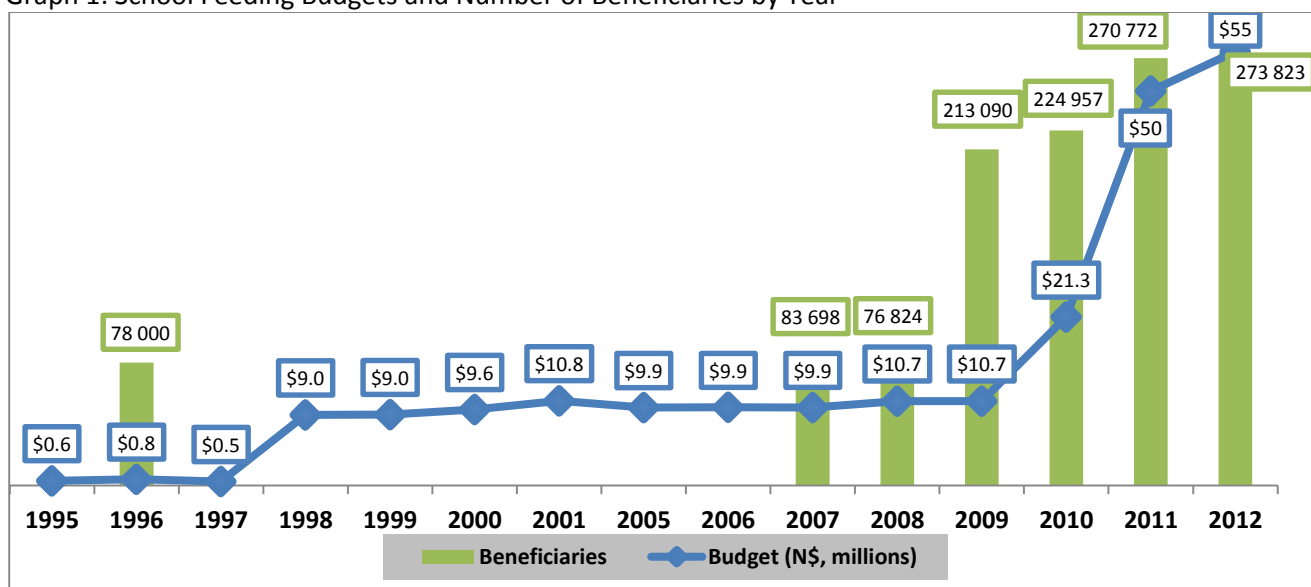
While funds have historically always been earmarked eventually, MOE staff highlight that release of the money is frequently delayed, resulting in late deliveries to schools during the terms. Discussions with ministry staff suggest that a lack of policy and the fact that school feeding does not have its own “vote” with budget line has perhaps minimized its importance. Also opportunities may have been missed to collaborate with other ministries and programmes that could improve implementation and give the programme a higher profile, improve quality and strengthen positive perception.

The current cost of one meal per child is approximately US\$0.13 (N\$0.98) and the projection for 2012/13 is close to US\$0.14/child (N\$1.08),³⁶ a large share of which is attributed to transportation costs. MOE reports that from 2009 to 2013, beneficiary numbers are increasing by 15% with an annual increase of 10% in unit costs per learner per day.³⁷

The severe financial constraints not only impede meeting the costs of food and transport, but also make it impossible to address shortages of crucial non-food items, such as cooking equipment, cooking and storage shelters, water, and basic sanitation supplies and facilities. Non-food items apparently are not normally built into the budget however in fiscal year 2010/11, close to N\$12 million of the N\$60 million budget was submitted by MOE for approval.

MOE reports that donor interest in school feeding is stale, as evidenced by the lack of knowledge about the programme found during recent case study interviews with UN agencies, other international organizations, and other government ministries.³⁸ Donors have also openly acknowledged disinterest in supporting the programme in a middle-income country.

Graph 1: School Feeding Budgets and Number of Beneficiaries by Year



³⁶Informant Interview: Mr R April, May 2012. Windhoek.

³⁷Ministry of Education (2010). Memo: Estimated Beneficiaries of the Namibian School Feeding Programme from 2009 until end Financial Year 2013, 16 October 2009.

³⁸Informant Interviews: Various ministries and organizations, May 2012.

Year	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
NSFP Budget	600,000	800,000	500,000	8,950,000	9,007,281	9,633,681	10,752,781
Beneficiary Nr		78,000*					
Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
NSFP Budget	9,883,980	9,909,000	9,892,000	10,706,160		50,000,000	55,000,000
Beneficiary Nr		83,698	76,824	213,090	224,957	270,772	273,823

Source: Directorate of Finance, MOE, 2012; EMIS, 2012; *Figure obtained from WFP reports and acknowledged by MOE.

The above graph shows the growth of the school feeding programme during the period 2007 to 2012. Note the significant increase in the numbers of beneficiaries supported from 2008 to 2009. This growth likely occurred following the Cabinet's resolve to reach 100,000 children by 2013,³⁹ but the increase may also have been attributed to WFP's OVC programme caseload (2005–2008) that was handed over to government when the programme ended in 2008. WFP recommended the 96,000 children be absorbed into the school feeding programme, which if it were acted on may be reflected in the 2010/11 numbers.

School feeding budgets reported show significant gaps over the years. Figures were only provided for the years FY 1995/96 through 2001/02 and from 2005/06 through 2008/09. Data is missing for FY 1991/92 through 1994/95, 2002/03 through 2004/05 and 2009/10 through 2010/11. MOE only began collecting school feeding beneficiary numbers using EMIS from 2006/07.

4.4 Institutional capacity, coordination and implementation

Government fully implemented the project in conjunction with WFP from the onset and cultivated the skills and proficiency needed to assume full responsibility of the programme on handover. It is the sustained competence in institutional capacity, coordination and implementation that contribute to and underpin robust programmes.

This section reviews the three components as the programme evolved from a WFP supported project to a national programme fully owned and managed by government.

Period from 1991–1996

The one-year school feeding pilot project in 1991 provided the groundwork for the future four-year programme and was successful in feeding 400-500 children in five schools.

The WFP Quick Action Project in 1992 served as the initial phase and formed a solid framework for the subsequent four-year project. This period marked the beginnings of building capacity within the MOE that would develop over a total of five years.

The MOE was in charge of the project overall, with specific responsibilities for targeting and monitoring at central and regional levels, supported by WFP. WFP provided trainings at school and community level and all transportation and logistics were provided by the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN). Government had complete confidence in the CCN, based on prior experience with government and humanitarian organizations. This project created a strong team and spirit that would continue to build over the four-year school feeding project.

³⁹Ministry of Education, (2012). Namibian School Feeding Programme Case Study Inception Workshop, 24 April 2012. Presentation from Mr C Haikera, MOE. Windhoek.

Two tenders for the food commodities were issued during this period: 1. Provision of protein blend (dried skim milk combined with added sugar and salt); and 2. Provision of maize meal and the combining of the protein blend for delivery (by transporter CCN) as a single commodity.

The project served 29,000 beneficiaries in the Central and parts of the Western regions which would carry into the four-year project.

Between 1993 and 1996, the four-year School Feeding Project was implemented based on a tripartite agreement between WFP, MOE, and CCN. The project started in the Southern and Central regions following on from the one-year Quick Action Project in 1992, and gradually into parts of the Western and areas of the Rundu regions.

Box 1: Roles and Responsibilities

WFP	Government	CCN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided technical support on the implementation and assistance in overall project management. • Imported dried skim milk, vegetable oil for the ration and additional vegetable oil for monetization to procure remaining food commodities (maize meal, salt, sugar) and cash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsible for project implementation, providing staff for management of food assistance (19) • Financed administrative costs (staff/CCN), direct project expenses, materials/equipment, internal storage/handling, support costs (training, monitoring, reporting and evaluation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontracted by MOE to provide logistical support (transport, storage, handling) and delivery of food commodities from the mill to CCN warehouses and eventually to schools

WFP’s team consisted of resident WFP officers hand-picked to assist and advise the MOE regarding implementation and overall management of the project. WFP also recruited external experts with experience in logistics and food distribution/management and communicated closely with CCN on issues of handling, storage, transport and distribution of commodities.

The MOE recruited well-qualified senior managers with field experience to implement the operation and the project was managed under the Division of Management Planning, Appraisal and Training within the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA). The Hostel Department under PQA was directly responsible for the project and deemed the logical choice given its experience in food management within hostel boarding facilities. (see Box 1 on the Hostel System, page 25) Some government officials however have questioned the suitability of the programme under MOE, believing school feeding is not a core responsibility of this ministry.

MOE appointed a school feeding coordinator to manage at central level with a unit of two clerical staff. Three regional staff members were allocated regional coordination and support roles. The Ministry had overall responsibility for managing and implementing the project, guiding the targeting and selection of schools and monitoring, with support from WFP. MOE also subcontracted the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) to manage the funds generated by the sale of vegetable oil imported by WFP to procure food commodities.

CCN was sub-contracted by MOE to provide the transportation, logistical support and capacity building through its Food Management Unit (FMU). The FMU had representation countrywide and vast experience supporting food aid under a series of programmes. Several donors had contributed to establishing the Unit and building up the fleet of trucks, including support from WFP.

The project targeted pre-primary (children under 6 years) and primary learners (ages 7–13 years) and learners from poor private hostels. Hostels are boarding facilities constructed for learners who

live distances considered too far to walk to school daily and exist mainly in the sparsely populated areas of the country. The quality varies according to the category.

Box 2: Description of the Hostel System by Classification

Hostel Classification	Description
Government	Generally are in the best condition both in terms of care provided and the facility itself. Government hostels are not part of the school feeding programme. This type of hostel is open to children who are able to afford to pay the fees.
Private	Generally supported by private donors from churches or successful farmers. The quality of these hostels will vary according to the levels of support received. Costs to the learners are minimal, if at all and usually the care and facilities are poor. These hostels are not supported by the school feeding programme.
Private Government Subsidized	These hostels are subsidized by government and therefore do not receive support from the school feeding programme.
Community Government Subsidized	These hostels are not included in the school feeding programme and are supported through government subsidy programmes.
Community or Informal Non-registered	In theory are established and supported entirely by the community but again conditions vary. For the most part they are very poor and are supported by the school feeding programme. These hostels are not registered. The goal is to register these hostels so they are included in government subsidized programmes.

Implementation and Capacity Building

During the first year of the project in 1993, MOE and WFP efforts were focused on enrolling schools and hostels into the programme and ensuring the correct quantity of food was being delivered. Beneficiary numbers and coverage were introduced gradually in phases over the four-year period with year one supporting 49,000 learners in the Southern and Central regions.

By year two, government had improved in its capacity to provide technical support according to WFP. Beneficiary numbers were increased to 65,500 learners and the programme was expanded into the Western and Rundu regions as planned. Gradual expansion allowed the school feeding team to both build capacity and a thorough, quality programme.⁴⁰

The same tender process was applied as outlined in the one-year Quick Action Project however in order to contain costs, WFP negotiated with government in the first or second year of the project to allow the open tender of vegetable oil. The vegetable oil did not yield the expected funds from the sales of the commodity due to NAB control practices. Thus three one-year tenders were now issued:

1. Provision of protein blend
2. Provision of maize meal blend
3. Sale of vegetable oil

The school feeding manual was produced by MOE with WFP support in 1993 outlining the programme operations which was distributed to all schools. Monitoring by the ministry was improving as well with quarterly reports being prepared on schedule and with reasonable accuracy. Regular visits to schools were conducted by central and regional project staff and were also monitored by WFP. Communication lines between all parties were apparently effective. At the same time government's funding contributions were also increasing annually which reflected improved performance in government's management and the technical support provided.

⁴⁰Ministry of Education (2010). Memo: Estimated Beneficiaries of the Namibian School Feeding Programme from 2009 until End Financial Year 2013, 16 October 2009.

By 1994, MOE was working closely with WFP country office to improve the quality of service to schools, to promote the school feeding programme to the most isolated communities and to develop an appropriate monitoring procedure to ensure that the programme was being managed as well as possible.

While monitoring procedures were in place, WFP forewarned that this aspect needed improvement to ensure consistent and routine evaluation of the results and benefits. The ministry required this data routinely to be able to assess and prepare for WFP's phase out at the end of 1996 and help government decide whether to continue with the programme or not.⁴¹ The report did not explain how the improvements to the system would be achieved, which would seem a crucial aspect that could impact the future quality and sustainability of the programme.

In 1995 the responsibility for the pre-primary sector shifted from MOE to Ministry of Local and Regional Government (MLRG).

In 1996 the project drew to a close. The phase-out strategy outlined in the WFP/government Plan of Operation – both in the Quick Action Project and four-year School Feeding Project - was vague. No explicit plan for phasing out WFP assistance was provided other than to suggest that as government gradually succeeded in reducing the current social and economic inequality, the need for external assistance would diminish. In the primary education sector, WFP believed that there was a potential for relatively early transfer of responsibility, particularly in how the feeding in State hostels was being financed. It was thought that savings in this sector would allow the government to gradually assume the costs for the feeding of needy day-school children.⁴² This is unclear but is discussed further by the following WFP report.

The WFP Progress Report 2002 explained that there were 43 private or church-based hostels accommodating 5,886 learners who were part of the school feeding programme and were also being subsidized by government at N\$3.00 per child because parents were too poor to pay hostel fees. These children received one or two meals a day at the hostel and the subsidy allowed better quality food to be bought for the remaining meal. Government was in the process of reviewing the state hostel expenditure because of the heavy burden it placed on MOE, with the plan to use different models of private hostels to solve the problem in future. While still unclear, this is likely where WFP felt savings were possible and where government could assume earlier the costs of the day-school children. Also in the Plan of Operations, "the ration provided by WFP had been kept relatively small, with a view to facilitating eventual take-over by the government".⁴³

According to the WFP School Feeding Phase-out Study (2002), feedback from MOE at the conclusion of the project was mixed. However, in general, the transition from a WFP supported project to a school feeding programme fully managed and funded by government was considered a resounding success, with no noticeable change in the programme operations at any level. The programme was up and operational and running well under government ownership and community support was building and 78,000 learners in four regions were being assisted. Funding was also expanded with support from senior bureaucrats and ministers.

Ministry staff who worked on the programme never questioned the duration of WFP's support. The time-bound effort was always understood from the start. Some in government had even held the

⁴¹Ministry of Education (2010). Memo: Estimated Beneficiaries of the Namibian School Feeding Programme from 2009 until End Financial Year 2013, 16 October 2009.

⁴²Ibid, 6.

⁴³WFP (1992b). Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. CFA:33/SCP:8, Document 8/2-A(ODW)Add.3. Released by WFP: 10 March, 8.

view that it was time for Namibia to ``stand on its own feet``. However, others in MOE appeared to have some doubt in government`s ability to fully take on the programme. A brochure was reportedly prepared by the ministry that profiled the school feeding programme with the thought to use this to attract new donor support. The Planning Ministry responsible for coordinating donor support however made the decision not to distribute the brochure as others in government thought the programme should be self-supporting.⁴⁴ This might have been a signal that the future expansion and quality of the programme would be tested.

While WFP`s technical support was widely acknowledged as high quality, others felt the amount of technical support and capacity building provided by WFP was insufficient. This could suggest that the duration of support overall by WFP was simply not enough, especially given that the country was in the throes of major restructuring and change post-Independence. The ministry faced a mammoth task of educational reform and the four-year combined period of capacity building and transitioning support provided by WFP was possibly too short to ensure the programme was properly institutionalized.

Government`s concern seems to gain further credence by WFP`s own earlier submission that improvement was needed in the ministry`s ability to resolve problems and develop and adapt strategies to meet programme challenges. Public service practices, inherited from the days of pre-independence, meant skills in data collection and the development of procedures and regulations were strong but greater proficiency was needed in creative problem-solving. Improvements in the ability to determine and apply flexible practices, along with a more in-depth understanding of community development principles were needed. The best strategy for expanding the programme to the most isolated, impoverished and marginalized communities that fall outside the limits of the project were noted by WFP to be of a particular concern.⁴⁵ No additional information was available however to explain how this matter was or should have been addressed.

In the end, the four-year period was rendered a major success credited largely to committed budget support; high level government backing; motivated, quality-driven ministry staff; WFP technical assistance and support; community participation; and project impact.⁴⁶

At the end of 1996, over 78,000 children were being supported by the programme.

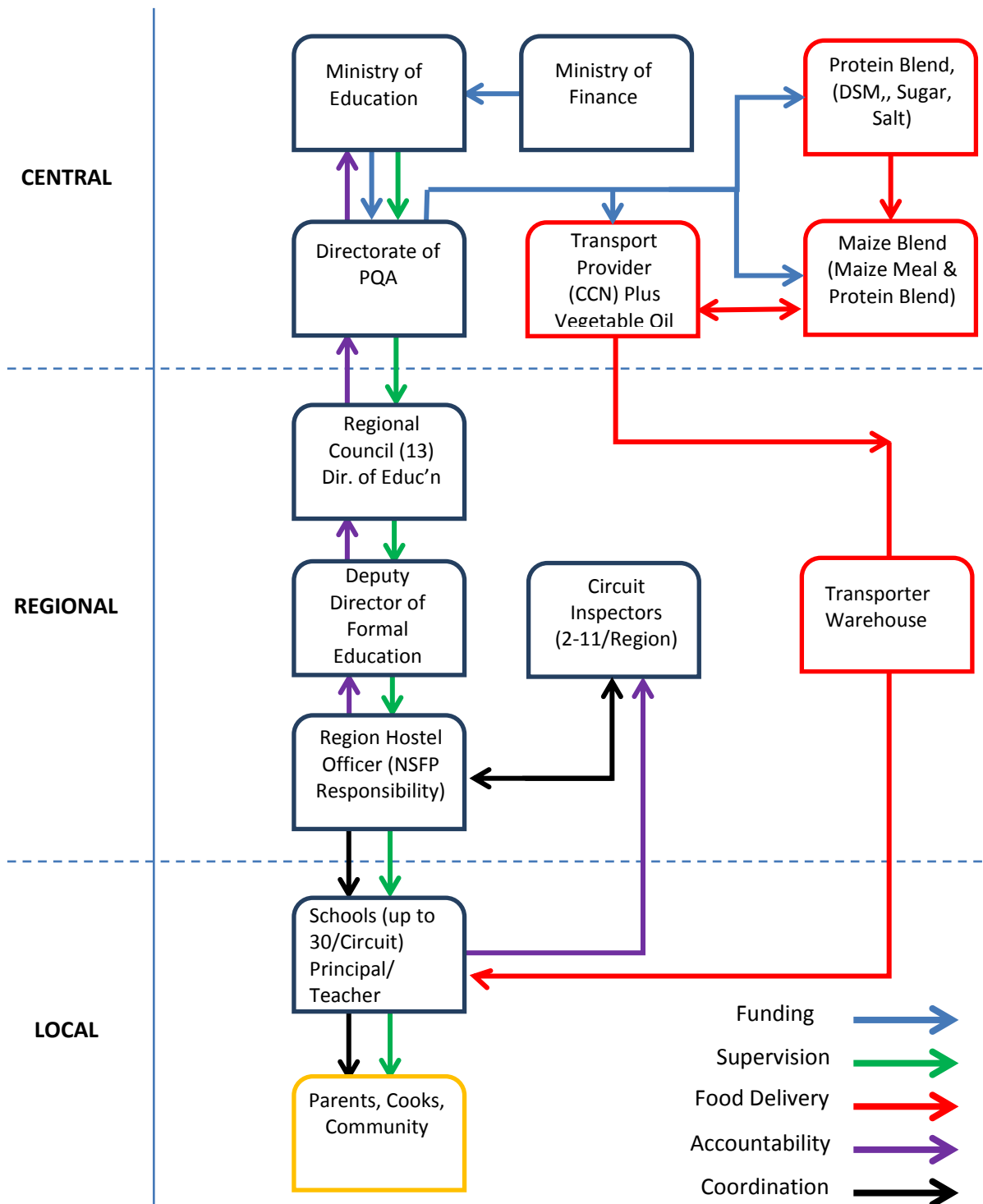
The following figure shows the implementation flow of the school feeding programme from 1992 through 1996. Note that CCN collected the ration ingredients directly from the suppliers and delivered to their warehouses.

⁴⁴Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia, 7.

⁴⁵WFP (1995). Progress report on approved projects. Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. WFP/CFA:39/SCP:14, Document 14/4(OMW)Add.1. Released by WFP: 17 March, 4.

⁴⁶Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study – Namibia, 7–8.

Figure 2. Namibian School Feeding Programme Implementation Diagram (1992-1996)



Period from 1997–2000

The programme continued to function efficiently under the original school feeding team in MOE for the first three to four years. Procurement of food, monitoring, and reporting activities were routinely carried out in a timely and effective manner. Communities apparently were unaware of the transition to government ownership and some individuals believed the programme had even improved during that period. Community capacity continued to grow.⁴⁷

Programme changes were introduced shortly after handover. Alterations were made to the protein blend during this period (soya replacing dried skim milk) and transportation was let to commercial contract. CCN was unable to continue servicing the programme as many employees had left the operation and the infrastructure could no longer support the programme. Thus three commercial contracts underpinned the national school feeding programme: 1. Production of protein blend; 2. Production of maize blend; and 3. Transportation of the commodity throughout the country.

Delays in deliveries of commodities to schools by the transport companies were starting to surface during this period. Information is unclear as to how well the companies were trained on the programme and or whether this was due to a period of adjustment.

Shortly after handover, the beneficiary targets were altered. No longer was MOE supporting pre-primary learners, except for those linked to approved school feeding schools and private hostels. Reasoning for this was not completely understood but was likely an issue of cost and pre-primary education was not a priority for MOE at the time. The school feeding team attempted to continue support unofficially but this was unsustainable. Pre-primary schools eventually closed as government no longer maintained support for this group or the schools continued under private ownership.

In 1999, the country was hit with a severe drought in the north and WFP was called on to support school feeding to vulnerable primary school learners through an emergency operation. MRLG, now responsible for supporting pre-primary learners, lacked experience in implementing the programme. MOE with support from WFP assisted the ministry by conducting training workshops in the drought-affected region to help expedite the feeding. At the conclusion of the six month operation, the supported children were incorporated into the official school feeding programme. The assistance rendered by WFP at this time proved significant as it expanded the programme into the Northern Region.

Around 2000, the last MOE members from the original team had retired or left the ministry. Some key positions at central level were to remain vacant for up to a year.

Period from 2001–2012

Because of the gap between the period key ministry staff left the programme and the new staff were hired, no transfer of knowledge or formal orientation to the programme occurred. And no subsequent training was provided; as a consequence, the new staff were left to interpret how to best implement the programme themselves. This opened up the possibility for programme error and compromised programme quality.

Funding challenges throughout the years have severely impacted the quality of the programme. Meanwhile, government has continued to expand the programme with the goal to reach 300,000 children by 2015.

⁴⁷Informant Interview :Ms E Rourke, School Feeding Coordinator, NSFP Unit (Retired), May 2012.

Over the years, institutional capacity deficits continue to impede programme implementation, quality, and expansion. Few if any training workshops are conducted for staff at the central, regional, or local levels. Much of the knowledge gained has been lost. Regional level has claimed a number of schools are still in need of support, but as a result of insufficient awareness campaigns, many schools are uninformed of the procedures for participating in the programme and thus fail to apply.

Data collection has been inconsistent throughout the years, and only since 2007 have school feeding statistics been collected by EMIS. Figures are still not published in the annual EMIS reports.

In 2010, MOE began awarding the tenders for a three-year period. The three tenders provide:

- a. The protein blend (soya powder, sugar, salt)
- b. The maize meal and the process of combining all ingredients into one 125 kg bag (100 portions)
- c. The transportation of food to the schools

The period has been marked by poor monitoring and reporting at all levels and field visits to schools are infrequent, as funding is not available and the programme receives less attention over the numerous other responsibilities of the inspectors and hostel officers. In 2011 WFP did provide technical guidance to improve basic NSFP monitoring and evaluation tools for use at school and regional levels. The results are yet to be determined.

Support at community level has weakened over the years. Commitments are not being honoured as they once were prior to 2001 due to a number of factors such as the difficult economic times. Now cooks in some instances demand payment and parents choose to spend more time in income-generating activities rather than spending time volunteering support. A lack of availability of fuel wood has also made cooking the meals increasingly difficult. Equipment and shelters are in disrepair and government funding is not sufficient to provide the needed support. The challenge lies now in how to rejuvenate community participation.

Individuals in government have also voiced some criticism towards the programme, which may be due to the deteriorating quality of the NSFP. Some government officials have expressed that this programme was not government's programme, but rather WFP's. Others felt the programme was 'just dumped' on government. At the same time however, the importance of the programme continues to be acknowledged, as evidenced by the number of policies that make reference to school feeding, and the role it has played in providing access to education for all Namibians.

Development Partners/Alliances

Collaboration between the Ministry of Education and other ministries could be improved. Some collaboration has occurred with MOAWF in the recent years, in school garden demonstrations, but few gardens have been developed at schools today.

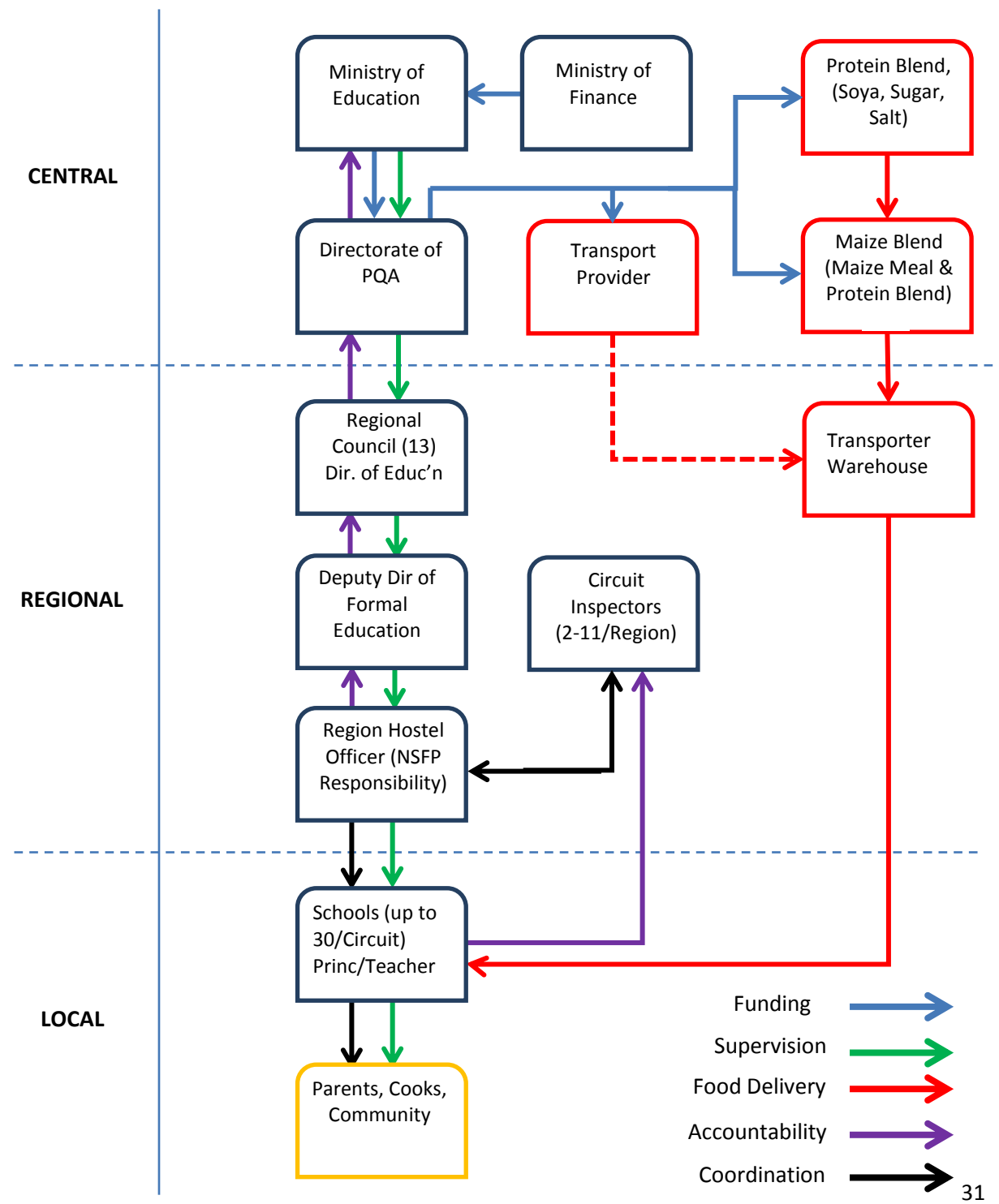
A positive development occurred in 2010 with the launch of the Namibia Alliance for Improved Nutrition (NAFIN), headed by the Prime Minister in response to the alarmingly high rates of malnutrition. NAFIN seeks to make adequate food available, promote food fortification policies, and support local farmers and business by sourcing commodities in-country. Because NAFIN's goals are clearly compatible with the NSFP and the organization's membership includes key ministries, international agencies, and private sector organizations, the possibility for high-level and effective collaboration is there.

A second encouraging event is the National Immunization campaign for measles scheduled in June 2012 by Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS). This drive will be combined with a

deworming effort at schools with support from MOE. Collaborative campaigns and cooperation such as these lend well to future opportunities for containing costs and capitalizing on the strengths and programmes of other ministries in the delivery of school feeding.

The following figure shows the implementation flow of the school feeding programme today, which remains largely the same as the original programme. The primary change is that the maize blend supplier delivers the rations to the transporter’s warehouse and the transporter delivers to the schools.

Figure 3. Namibian School Feeding Programme Implementation Diagram (1997–2012)



4.5 Community participation

Prior to Independence, traditional structures and social norms were firmly established and participation of parents and communities were reportedly passive on issues of education. Expectations from the new government called for greater involvement by communities, including on matters of education.⁴⁸

Introduction of school feeding as a community-based programme demands community ownership and the following illustrates the significance of parental involvement to ensure programme viability over the years and the confronting challenges.

Period from 1992–1996

Success of the programme in the 1990s can be credited largely to the commitment and active involvement of the communities. Initially, parents were sceptical about the programme but in time saw the improvements in their children's attendance and level of concentration as well as the nutritional benefits the children enjoyed from the daily meal. Parents provided the firewood to cook the rations while women volunteered to prepare the food on a daily basis for a small incentive of take-home rations. Enthusiasm was high and chiefs, church officials, and local authorities were well behind the project.

Equally important, however, were the intense sensitization campaigns and training workshops conducted by the MOE/WFP team, which played a crucial role in preparing schools, teachers, parents, and local authorities at regional and local levels. The structured sessions and content prepared all players in the delivery of a successful, quality programme and generated the necessary motivation to take on and commit to the programme.

At the time of handover, reports indicate that for the most part communities were unaware of the transition to full government ownership. Programme implementation continued as usual.

Period from 1997–2000

During the first few years of full management and funding by MOE, the programme continued as before. Parents and communities honoured their commitments and responsibilities and the programme functioned well. However, support varied from region to region. Some families were less motivated to grow their own food, for example, given that their children received free food while at school. Reports indicate that some members of the public felt the programme had actually improved from the time of WFP's handover to government.⁴⁹

Period from 2001–2012

Community support for the programme has weakened over time and parents are no longer honouring their commitments as before. Parents are required to walk greater distances to collect and carry firewood as the environment has become denuded over the years. When wood is unavailable, the cooks themselves are forced to hunt for wood or the food may simply not be prepared. Once satisfied with three daily take-home rations, many cooks now demand payment,

⁴⁸WFP (1992b). Project Namibia 4500: Pre-primary and primary school feeding. CFA:33/SCP:8, Document 8/2-A(ODW)Add.3. Released by WFP: 10 March, 8.

⁴⁹Studdert, L & Roberts, A (2002). WFP School Feeding Phase-Out Study–Namibia, 8.

especially when exposed to area projects that offer work-for-cash incentives. Others have complained that the ration sizes are not sufficient, and hostel officers in the field believe the cooks are selling the rations for cash. Some schools have been forced to pay their cooks from the School Development Fund to maintain the programme; otherwise, children would not be fed. Much of the original cooking equipment has deteriorated and government has not provided replacement funds. Often cooks bring their own pots, measuring cups, and spoons from home. Shelters are in disrepair and during the rains food preparation may not be possible.

Few schools have taken the initiative to start school gardens, perhaps because water is insufficient in these drought-prone areas. Opportunities exist to collaborate with MOAWF to investigate various water collection methods and types of hardy crops that can thrive under dry conditions. To date, MOAWF has conducted school garden demonstrations in some regions but greater structured collaborations are necessary with the ministries and schools to obtain the benefits.

The harsh economic times have no doubt contributed to the decreased motivation and participation. Families may be less inclined to spend their time on volunteering support to the NSFP rather than on income generation or growing their own crops.

The challenge is widespread. Hostel officers and school officials are encouraged to implement creative solutions to earning money for the programme for use as cash payments and purchase of non-food items. For example, some schools have held local fundraising events to support the NSFP. Government officials themselves have expressed concern regarding the sustainability of the programme as it is designed today. With less community support, environmental issues faced with cooking, and greater concerns with malnutrition, alternative rations may also be a consideration.

New communities and beneficiary schools are not being adequately introduced to the programme. With little understanding of the rationale or advantages of school feeding, communities may be less inclined to muster support. Yet few central level or regional level awareness campaigns are underway.

Substandard facilities for cooking, hygiene, and sanitation are also a concern. Children must bring plates from home, which they sometimes share with other children, all eating with their hands. Untrained cooks are cooking the porridge too long, which degrades the nutritional value of the food.⁵⁰

Overall, community support for the NSFP has eroded, a situation that both results from and exacerbates a lack of resources, training, and on-going active support from government.

5 Conclusions

Historical Analysis

The school feeding initiative began with the success of a one-year pilot programme by WFP in 1991 and Quick Action Project in 1992, shortly after Independence which formed the basis for the four-year NSFP supported by WFP from 1993 to 1996. WFP and MOE delivered a technically and logistically sound community-based programme that laid the groundwork for a sustainable national effort. At the completion of the cooperation, over 78,000 children were participating in the

⁵⁰Kobus, V (2005). A study to assess the school feeding overall in Namibia's regions and cost its targeted expansion based on defining efficiency measures. Oshipala Trust: Windhoek, 5.

programme. WFP closed its country programme as part of global efforts to streamline operations and in 1997 government assumed full ownership of the NSFP.

The programme continued to function well for the first few years from 1997 to 2000 building capacity and refining the programme ration and target group. Apart from WFP's drought support in 1999, which expanded the programme into the north, government fully managed and funded the programme.

From 2001 to present day the programme has grown steadily with significant expansions although funding support and resource capacities are increasingly tested. Still, high level commitment remains, and the programme is expected to reach 300,000 children by 2015 with the view to incorporate pre-primary and secondary learners in future. The programme continues to draw vulnerable children to school (greater than 50% of children in primary schools are in the programme) – children who otherwise might not attend or remain in school. The school feeding programme relieves short-term hunger and improves concentration and attendance.

Policy Frameworks

The NSFP continues to be high on government's agenda, and while no school feeding policy exists, the programme is embedded in several policy frameworks put in place throughout the years as a strategy to aid in mitigating the effects of poverty and drought and contributing towards the achievement of Vision 2030. Discussions are underway within MOE to develop a school feeding policy which will formalize the programme and help raise the profile of school feeding.

Institutional Capacity and Coordination

The original four-year project provided a sound basis for a sustainable school feeding programme by gradually implementing the full programme and through well-designed trainings, workshops and awareness campaigns targeting the communities and education staff as well. Implementing the programme in a combined transition phase proved successful in the short-term. Staff were hands on from the outset and responsible with the close oversight and technical support from WFP. The dedicated, quality-driven, motivated team were as equally important to the programme's success as was the growing support by the community. The only significant area of concern expressed by WFP was in the ministry's ability to creatively problem-solve which would require more in-depth understanding of community-based principles. The handover process was uneventful and the programme continued to function well with similar levels of quality for the next few years, even though funding challenges were beginning to surface. At the same time, the inclusion of a more developed and detailed phase out strategy by WFP might have circumvented some of the future capacity-building and resource issues.

By 2001 school feeding began to lose ground in terms of quality. Original key programme staff had left the ministry and vacant positions in some cases were unfilled for a year. The effect of this gap in resource capacity was intensified because as positions were filled, no significant trainings or orientations were provided. Employees were left to interpret the programme themselves which may have affected programme quality.

At the same time, the ministry was decentralizing functions to regional level and daily operations were overseen by the circuit inspectors and regional hostel officers whose core responsibilities were in hostel management. The programme has consequently not received the attention it requires and monitoring and reporting have gone by the wayside. The programme continues to scale up but the quality has suffered.

Funding

Funding the programme has been supported by a budget line since its inception however school feeding is embedded in general services which may contribute to difficulties in obtaining the necessary funding annually. The programme has grown steadily over the years but budget support has not grown with it, even though education has always received the largest share of the national budget. The majority of school feeding budgets are spent on food commodities and transport with little left for training, monitoring and evaluation, and non-food items.

Design and Implementation

The original programme was well designed and implemented throughout the project period with technical support from WFP. The ration was based on a culturally accepted porridge that was popular amongst the children and continues to be so in present day. Coordination and general management translated well to ministry staff for the first few years on handover but once key staff had left the ministry, oversight and general quality began to deteriorate. The timely replacement of staff in key positions and limited provision of capacity building and training of the new hires affected the implementation.

Community Participation

As demonstrated during the 90s, successful, community-based, quality programmes are possible when accompanied by a solid foundation of skill-building, awareness, and understanding the advantages of such programmes. Communities at first were hesitant but once sensitized and the members understood the positive impact and experienced the changes first hand in their children, support for the programme began to grow.

Given the increased economic hardships of recent years, community support has weakened. Parents are less inclined to gather the wood to cook the food as areas become more and more denuded. Families are placing less emphasis on the programme because of economic hardships, or a lack of programme understanding over time. Greater incentives seem necessary to attract cooks, especially in areas where cash-for-work programmes are in play.

6 Appendices

6.1 Acronyms

CCN	Council of Churches of Namibia
DSM	Dried skim milk
EEC	European Economic Community
EFA	Education for All
EMC	Educationally Marginalized Children
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
FMU	Food Management Unit
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ITF	Inter-Sectoral Task Force
ITSH	Internal Transport, Storage and Handling
km	kilometres
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture
MGECW	Ministry of Gender Affairs and Child Welfare
ml	millilitres
MLRG	Ministry of Local and Regional Government
MOAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
NAB	Namibia Agronomic Board
NAFIN	Namibian Alliance for Improved Nutrition
NDP	National Development Plan
NSFP	Namibian School Feeding Programme
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
PQA	Program and Quality Assurance
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

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6.3 List of people interviewed

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Institution</u>
Angula, Rt Hon Nahas	Prime Minister	Office of the Prime Minister
April, Mr Rod	Inspector of Education	Ministry of Education
Barbieri, Ms Cecilia	Education Programme Specialist	UNESCO
Bay, Dr Admir P M	Representative	FAO
Bennett, Ms Norah	Acting School Feeding Coordinator (Retired)	Ministry of Education
Beyleveld, Mr Gerhard	Director of Finance	Ministry of Education
Bitonde, Ms Jennifer	Officer in Charge	WFP Namibia
Bohn, Ms Edda	Director of PQA	Ministry of Education
Botha, Ms Alida	Procurement (Retired)	Ministry of Education
Courtney-Haag, Ms Karan	Nutritionist (AVI)	UNICEF
Coutts, Mr Douglas	Operations Officer (Former)	WFP Namibia
Enssle, Mr Gerhard	Chief Inspector	Ministry of Education
Ellis, Mr Justin	Manager & Consultant	Turning Points Consultancy CC
Felton, Ms Silke	Advisor for OVC	USAID
France, Ms Frida	Accountant, Budget Section	Ministry of Education
Fritz, Mr	Head Teacher	Ministry of Education
Haikera, Mr Conrad	Chief Control Officer NSFP Unit	Ministry of Education
Heyman, Mrs Esme	NSFP Support (Original Programme)	Ministry of Education
Jagger, Mr	Principal	Ministry of Education
Kabajani, Mr Charles	Under-Secretary: FE	Ministry of Education
Mburu-de Wagt, Dr Anne	Nutrition Advisor/Director	Global Nutrition Solutions CC
Mukubonda, Ms Agnes	Senior Clerk, NSFP Unit	Ministry of Education
Nangula, Ms Valery	Senior Accountant	Ministry of Education
Noabes, Ms	School Health	Ministry of Health & Social Services
Rourke, Ms Elsabe	School Feeding Coordinator (Retired)	Ministry of Education
Schulthes, Mr Jens	Mission Leader NSFP Design Phase	WFP (Retired)
Shikongo, Mr Sem	EMIS Officer	Ministry of Education
Tjonzongoro, Mr Monty	Regional Hostels Officer	Ministry of Education
Van der Ross, Mr Nolan	Education Officer	UNICEF
Van Wyk, Ms Marjorie	Nutritionist	Ministry of Health & Social Services