



The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Ministry of Education



THE NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING STRATEGY

2021 - 2025

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Foreword by H.E The Minister of Education

In the Name of Allah, The All Merciful, The Ever Merciful
Foreword by H.E. Minister of Education

for the School Feeding Strategy

Balanced nutrition has many positive effects on the healthy growth and the physical, mental, psychological, and social development of students. It is an essential enabler of their motivation to learn, prospect and explore, which is the basis for their comprehensive progression. Consequently, the outcome will lead to the development of healthy individuals, that represent the core of a society, characterized by the ability to participate in the economic and social progress; and also efficiently reduce the problems of poverty, unemployment and the spread of diseases among members of society.

The preparation of the school feeding strategy is among the priorities of the Ministry and its interest in supporting students. The need for this strategy resulted from the positive effects that we have observed during the implementation of the school feeding project. Mainly represented by the improvement of health and nutritional status of students and the reduction of absenteeism and dropout among them.

This strategy represents a roadmap for the next five years, with the aim to secure healthy meals for public school students based on nutritional scientific standards.

All things considered, we doubtlessly appreciate the partnership that links the Ministry with the World Food Programme, the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation for the implementation of the school feeding project in collaboration with other concerned parties (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Agriculture, National Aid Fund, and the Royal Health Awareness Society) and the joint agreement that education, health and the access to nutritious food is everyone's responsibility, as they are essential factors for the development of a prosperous nation, whose future generations are armed with knowledge and awareness, and enjoy good health.

Minister of Education,
H.E. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Abu Qudais

Chapter 1

Introduction

Historical Background on School Health and Nutrition

- School feeding is one of the most effective global interventions with strong and durable impact evidence on equity and inclusion in education¹. It is also one of the most common safety nets providing vulnerable families and children in need² with daily support, resilience and contributing to protect people against poverty and social exclusion³. School feeding is increasingly recognized as a major investment in both human capital and local economies that rely on the healthy and well-educated humans. Over the years, through improving health and nutrition; school feeding can enhance children's educational performance and cognition⁴. It also goes far beyond the plate of food, producing high returns in education and gender equality, social protection, local economies and agriculture.
- School feeding efforts started in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the mid-seventies addressing food insecurity of vulnerable citizens to increase school attendance and enrolment in literacy centres in remote areas in Jordan. Administered by the Ministry of Education, school feeding provided well-balanced nutritional meals to primary level students (5-12 years old) at public schools, students at literacy centres, women-trainees at Princess Basma Centres (formerly affiliated to Queen Alia Fund) and their children in the same areas. This project was implemented in cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP) between 1975 and 1996.
- A new phase of the project started in 1999 when the Ministry of Education collaborated with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in implementing the school feeding project in underprivileged areas. This phase lasted until the second semester of the scholastic year 2004/2005 with the objective of enhancing schoolchildren's health and nutrition based on various studies conducted by the Ministry of Health. This project included activities that helped the students and their families to adopt healthy eating habits and lifestyles. Between 2003 to 2005, with the support of King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAFFD) all public-school students received multivitamins. In the scholastic year 2005/2006, and following royal directives, the scope of the project was expanded to cover a larger base of beneficiaries throughout the Kingdom. This was achieved with the strategic and technical support of the Jordanian Armed Forces.
- In 2013, as a result of the pressing repercussions of the economic crisis and the Syrian refugee crisis, WFP cooperated with the Government of Jordan to elevate school feeding activities. WFP extended its technical and financial support required to develop and sustain the project. With this partnership, the number of beneficiaries increased from 170,000 to 350,000 students and the meal was diversified and fortified with the provision of 80 g date-filled biscuit distributed to each student on a daily basis.
- Since the scholastic year of 2014/2015 until 2020, WFP has been implementing the Healthy Kitchen pilot project to test new feeding models as part of the ongoing national project. Through productive kitchens set up at Community Based Organizations (CBOs), hundreds of women and men have been employed to prepare school meals under the Healthy Kitchen Project. As of the scholastic year 2019/2020, with the help of the National Aid Fund (NAF) for one year and under the complementary support programme, new areas were covered by the school feeding project.

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1. Mundy, K. and Proulx, K. 2019. Making Evaluation Work for the Achievement of SDG 4 Target 5: Equality and Inclusion in Education. UNESCO, NORAD, World Bank Group, UNICEF.
 2. Bundy, D.A.P., Burbano, C., Grosh, M., Gelli, A., Jukes, M. and Drake, L. 2009. Re-thinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector. Directions in Human Development. Washington, DC, World Bank Group.
 3. "Update of Safety Nets Policy: The Role of Food Assistance in Social Protection" (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-A).
 4. State of School Feeding Worldwide 2013. World Food Programme. 2013.

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- School feeding is recognized as a key component in the National Education Strategy (2018 - 2022) leading to a safer and stimulating school environment. The National School Feeding Strategy comes to reinforce and enable the existing school feeding efforts and enhance its targeting and inclusion to maximize its impact on the educational, nutritional and socio-economic outcomes. The National School Feeding Programme will be expanded to enrich its impact at school and community levels, through more effective targeting and outreach that will be ensured based on scientific data throughout 2021-2025 and beyond.

Why A School Feeding Strategy

The National School Feeding Strategy will support the Government in improving the wellbeing and health of the new generations. There is a great interest and continuous investments in developing the fields of education, health and children's rights especially the right to grow, quality of education, health and adequate nutrition to become independent, healthy, educated, and productive individuals in the society.

The Government's responsibility of creating better future opportunities for people is challenged by the growing population in Jordan and the increasing limitations that are put on the country's resources and its economy. By developing the National School Feeding Strategy, the Ministry of Education contributes to achieving the national priority interest in the wellbeing of citizens in the short and long terms. Official documents including the Human Development Strategy (2016 - 2025), the National Education Strategy (2018 - 2022), the National School Health Strategy (2018 - 2022), Education During Emergency Plan (2020 - 2023) and the National Social Protection Strategy (2019 - 2025) have all underlined the importance of strengthening school feeding as the main anchorage for school children health and wellbeing as well as the benefits it will provide for the whole society.

The National School Feeding Strategy will strengthen social safety nets that provide educational, health, and economic benefits for schoolchildren in the most vulnerable areas. It will also improve the opportunities and the environment provided by the Ministry of Education for its students in schools. Investing in both the "learning" and the "learner", schools can contribute greatly to:

- i. Improving the nutritional status of schoolchildren in a way that ensures their proper growth and addresses health inequalities between students.
- ii. Ensuring improved educational outcomes in which food balance may play a role.
- iii. Developing the students' knowledge and skills that are necessary to make healthy food choices throughout their lives and their families'.

School-based interventions are key to tackling poverty and social vulnerabilities. On regular days, the school feeding project provides one meal every day during one hundred assigned feeding day of the scholastic year. Therefore, the School Feeding Programme covers about 11 percent (39.6 JOD) of a child's meals throughout the year. This amount may not seem to constitute a large share of the monthly household income.

However, it is considered a significant contribution for the families, particularly to those with more than one child benefiting from the school meals. It offsets the financial costs of children's schooling and supports household income. Subsequently; school feeding strengthens the safety net for children and creates local job opportunities by developing linkages between school meals and local agricultural production. Hence, school feeding will be yielding high returns on investment from both human and economic perspectives.

- A school environment that is safe and stimulating supports students' ability to learn and helps them grow mentally, socially and physically⁵. The school environment should encourage schoolchildren

5. The National Education Strategy 2018-2022. Ministry of Education 2018

to develop their collective experiences, prepare them for practical life and make an informed life-changing transformation to become healthy and productive members of society⁶. It is evidenced that school health and nutrition programmes, which build a more equal and inclusive school environment, positively reflects on schoolchildren's physical, social, and emotional wellbeing⁷ including healthier body, active participation, energetic and pleasant mood. They also positively impact school children's cognitive abilities⁸. Diet quality and micronutrient intake effects the memory of schoolchildren⁹. The breakfast meal supports schoolchildren to work faster, make fewer mistakes in math problems and perform better on vocabulary tests (compared to those who eat a partial breakfast or none). Additionally, the breakfast meal improves concentration, alertness, comprehension and learning of school children ¹⁰.

Establishing a national strategic plan with measurable goals and action mechanisms that links the government's capabilities and coordinates its efforts will increase the benefits of the school feeding activities for the community as well as the individuals. These benefits include improving the quality of the service provided, enhancing poverty-targeting of beneficiary schools in cooperation with the relevant institutions, raising awareness of healthy nutrition, and utilizing non-governmental and community-based services (within specific qualification conditions) to create sustainable socio-economic opportunities in the school communities (employment and supply chain). This Strategy will serve as a guideline for joint and coordinated efforts among different government and non-government agencies. It reaffirms the Government of Jordan's commitment and determination to address the source of inequality and the attainment of quality education for all children and improved health and livelihood for all citizens.

Situation Analysis

• Population Growth and Its Impact on Health Services

Jordan's demographic projections (2020 - 2025) indicate that the population will increase from approximately 10.7 million in 2020 to 12.9 million by 2030 and 19 million by 2050 if the current trends continue¹¹. This high increase will be accompanied by a substantial increase in the number of older people who would require social care and health support. Currently, Jordan's annual expenditures on health services is around JOD 236 per person, accumulating a total of JOD 2.2 billion for the country on annual basis (representing 8.5 percent of the GDP). Despite the progress Jordan has achieved in the health field, challenges could be provoked. With this expected growth in both population and health care cost, the Government is taking all measures to ensure providing improved health services and that its social and health services are adequately planned and will be responsive to society's needs.

• Nutritional and Health Status of School Children in Jordan

- The health status of children in Jordan has substantially improved over the past ten years in many aspects, yet still more efforts are needed. Indicative data show that the prevalence of

6. The National School Health Strategy 2018 - 2022. Ministry of Health 2018

7. The National Education Strategy 2018-2022. Ministry of Education 2018

8. The effects of breakfast on behavior and academic performance in children and adolescents. Katie Adolphus, * Clare L. Lawton, and Louise Dye. 2013 Aug <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3737458/>

9. Wesnes KA, Pincock C, Richardson D, Helm G, Hails S. Breakfast reduces declines in attention and memory over the morning in schoolchildren. *Appetite*. 2003 Dec.

10. Breakfast and the Brain: How Eating Breakfast Impacts School Performance. June 12, 2019. [Healthy-Food-Choices-In-Schools](https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/breakfast-and-the-brain-how-eating-breakfast-impacts-school-performance)<https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/breakfast-and-the-brain-how-eating-breakfast-impacts-school-performance>

11. The Higher Population Council, Demographic Dividend Policy Document for 2017.

undernourishment among the total population in Jordan has increased to 12.2 percent in (2016-2018), representing about 1.2 million people, compared to 6.6 percent in (2004-2006)¹². The prevalence of obesity among adults (18 years and older) increased to 33.4 percent in 2016 compared to 30.3 percent in 2012. The current rate for overweight adults is 78 percent¹³, of which 36.2 percent¹⁴ were obese in 2019. Moreover, anaemia among women of reproductive age (15–49) reached 34.7 percent in 2016 compared to 30.8 percent in 2012 and 3 percent of Jordanian women are excessively thin. The prevalence of overweight among children (under the age of 5) is 4.7 percent (2005-2016)¹⁵ while children’s wasting reached 2.4 percent in 2016¹⁶. In addition, 2 percent of children born in Jordan suffer from favism which lessens the chance of many to consume the necessary protein, folate, and iron and other nutrients available in beans (a Jordanian staple food). Furthermore, around 45 percent of Jordanians suffer from diabetes in their old age¹⁷. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, the Royal Health Awareness Society and the World Food Programme showed that only 51.3 percent of the served public schoolchildren eat breakfast before coming to school, 54 percent of them do not eat a full healthy daily meal that consists of protein, vegetables, and fruits (31 percent short of eating a vegetable, 94 percent short of eating a fruit), and 42 percent of children consume only two meals on regular days. Moreover, 7.9 percent of the responding families declared the unavailability of food to prepare breakfast for children¹⁸. These issues pose a threat to the general health of children and require finding solutions through Government programmes and policies.

• School Health and Nutrition for a Better School-Environment

- The development of the school environment is highly emphasized in the Ministry of Education’s National Education Strategy 2018-2022¹⁹. This includes working continuously to create and instil healthy lifestyles among children and adolescents. One of the three main components addressing the school environment in this Strategy stresses the importance of the inclusion of health and nutrition efficiencies in curricular and extracurricular school activities.

The Ministry of Education works together with several governmental and non-governmental expert organizations to help develop capacities and participate in health and nutrition education at the school level. Together, they coordinate implementing the quality standards of health and nutrition education to reap the best possible results. These efforts mean to instil appropriate behaviours among children early in life and they include:

- Providing students with daily healthy school meals that include fruit and vegetables.
- Increasing awareness of healthy food among students and their parents through class activities, in-school curriculum and home activities.
- Educating students about the production and preparation of healthy and nutritious meals.
- Promoting children’s nutritional dietary diversity; encourage the consumption of it; highlight the added value of their participation in improving their own diet and supporting the nutritional school environment.

12. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Safeguarding Against Economic Slowdowns and Downturns. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2019. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>

13. The National Center for Diabetes Endocrinology and Genetics 2020.

14. Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017 - 2018.

15. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Safeguarding Against Economic Slowdowns and Downturns. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2019. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>

16. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Safeguarding Against Economic Slowdowns and Downturns. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2019. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>

17. The National Center for Diabetes Endocrinology and Genetics 2020.

18. Assessment of the effect of the schools’ suspension and stop receiving the healthy meal during COVID-19 pandemic on the students’ nutritional habitsparents survey. RHAS/WFP. 2020.

19. The National Education Strategy 2018-2022. Ministry of Education. 2018.

In addition to the provision of healthy meals and spreading the awareness on health and nutrition, the proper management of school canteens, according to health rules, is crucial in supporting and maintaining healthy food options and instilling healthy food habits among the school community (children, families, and teachers). The Ministry of Health sets and enforces health standards for school meals and snacks (making nutritious food and snacks available in school canteens; restricting the sale of meals and snacks rich in fat and sugar and engaging the school community in planning and implementing all aspects of school feeding and in identifying school and children’s needs)²⁰. All of these efforts will create a conducive school environment that supports and upholds health and nutrition.

• Socioeconomic Drivers of Schoolchildren Nutrition

- The Global Food Security Index²¹, which assesses ‘affordability, availability, and quality of food’ in the world ranks Jordan among the countries with the highest presence and quality of food safety net programmes (100/100) and with the proportion of the population under the global poverty line (99.4/100). As an endorsement of Jordan’s commitment to improving its food security and nutrition status. Nevertheless, the low gross domestic product per capita is an obstacle among economically vulnerable families to access high-quality food.

The economic shock of COVID-19 has exacerbated existing weaknesses in the economy and the unemployment rates. Jordan’s economic growth slowed down in 2020 by 3.6 percent which is expected to elevate the unemployment rate to 25 percent (the current unemployment rate is 23 percent). This situation will cast a shadow on children in Jordan and will highly affect them, especially as 20 percent of the population live in poverty conditions. This, in turn, will pose a threat to the standards of living and the healthy and nutritional lifestyles of the citizens.

- Presenting it in numbers, a medium-size Jordanian family (5-6 members) that earns the median wage of JOD 450²² spends 80 percent of it (JOD 360) on food every month (see table 1); an average of JOD 2 per person per day. Families strive to provide their children with three meals per day.

Table 1: Average of Annual Household Expenditure on Commodities by Size of Household (JOD)²³

Commodities	Household Size			
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8
Food	2,542.2	3,682.2	4,351.8	4,815.2
Education	79.0	430.7	804.9	770.4
Health	595.7	592.4	435.5	361.8
Total (JOD/Year)	3,216.9	4,705.3	5,592.2	5,947.4

- Jordan national survey implemented in 2020 showed that 28 percent of household’s children went to bed hungry during the Covid-19 lockdown. However, this percentage has decreased to 15 percent with the Government’s decision to reopen main sectors in the country. ²⁴ Accordingly, joint efforts are required to develop social protection mechanisms for children, including school feeding to contribute to prevent the most vulnerable groups from the severe consequences of Covid-19.

20. Healthy Schools Initiative, RHAS

21. <https://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/Country/Details#Jordan>

22. Social Security Corporation’s annual report 2017. Cited in ‘The Economics of Minimum Wage in Jordan: Observations from the Global Experience’. Position Paper. 2018.

23. Department of Statistics. Household Expenditures and Income Survey 2017.

24. 24 Socio-Economic Assessment of Children and Youth in the time of COVID-19 – Jordan. UNICEF. 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/3041/file/Socio%20Economic%20Assessment>.

Policy Framework

School feeding is the fundamental enabling factor for education, health and food security. It is directly declared in the main international human rights conventions to which Jordan is committed. The Jordanian Constitution guarantees that the Government will ensure the right of education and equal opportunities for all Jordanians without discrimination. This is also emphasized in significant national strategies and sectorial plans. Relevant important strategies making strong references to school feeding are the National Human Resources Development Strategy (2016 - 2025), whose implementation intersects the work of different government agencies, the National Education Strategy (2018 - 2022), the National School Health Strategy (2018 - 2022), and the National Social Protection Strategy (2019 - 2025). Importance of enhancing the school feeding was also emphasized in the Education During Emergency Plan (2020 - 2023).

The National Education Strategy outlines the importance of increasing equity of educational outcomes and providing quality education opportunities for all students. To achieve equity and quality of educational services, the education sector strategies focus on improving learning quality and providing equitable school environment through increasing the number of schools, improving the health level of students and enhancing the institutional capacities. The Ministry of Education has adopted the National Educational Strategy to implement the prioritized programmes in the coming years, in which school feeding is considered a top priority. This National School Feeding Strategy strives to streamline and create a framework through which the Ministry of Education engages with various stakeholders to create a school environment that encourages children's learning and development. The education strategic plan included indicators to measure the inclusion of all students in school feeding programmes particularly in the areas of poverty and development specific needs.

The Ministry of Health considers improving the overall nutritional status of children in Jordan as a fundamental national policy. Mitigating student's health issues and increasing the effectiveness of their learning are two main goals in the National School Health Strategy 2018-2022 which is connected to the continuity of school feeding programme (school feeding pillar). It also stresses the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach through focusing on raising teacher's and caregivers' awareness and supervision on school canteens.

School feeding is also considered as a significant component in the social protection systems. The National Social Protection Strategy (2019 - 2025) highlights school feeding and stresses its importance by providing examples from other countries proving the importance of having a nutritious breakfast for children and its effects on their attendance in schools. The strategy also emphasizes the need to improve the programme quality as it possesses a great potential as an effective safety net.

The National Human Resources Development Strategy 2016-2025, reaffirms the Government's efforts to provide children, students and learners' the "opportunity to realize their full potential as happy, healthy, empowered and active citizens who have a passion in life-long learning and follow their own aspirations - academically, economically, and socially". Therefore, a robust school feeding programme with the same motives is required to achieve the objectives of this strategy.

The 2030 Agenda, through its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), calls for zero hunger and malnutrition through SDG 2 and inclusive, equitable quality of education and lifelong learning opportunities for all through SDG4. SDGs 1 (no poverty), 3 (healthy lives and wellbeing for all ages), 5 (gender equality) and 6 (clean water) have direct implications on school meals and nutrition. The SDGs are fundamental in human rights and are the best investment in a country's human capital. These goals are directly linked to the core of human rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms this right and states that every child should be fully equipped to live in dignity and equality. The convention

stresses the responsibility of the countries to provide education equitably and to continuously develop children's mental and physical capabilities.

Based on all the above mentioned, the Jordanian Government implements the school feeding programme as an investment in the future of children to improve their health, education, enhance their social protection and productivity, within clear goals and specific sectors responsibilities.

Chapter 2

Pillars and Priority Areas

Purpose, Vision, and Mission Statements

To position school feeding on the national agenda and provide a shared vision among the different concerned entities for future joint actions towards building a healthy generation capable of taking healthy food choices throughout their lives and creating a healthy-food culture; while anchoring the social and economic benefits for the whole community.

Purpose of the Strategy

The Ministry of Education is keen to promote the current school feeding scheme to become a national programme characterized by impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability that contributes to achieving national human resources development priorities on the short, medium, and long terms.

The School Feeding Strategy will complement other national strategies and set the basis for greater coherence and integration in the Government's actions. The Government works to improve the health of school-aged children and the communities' livelihood by coordinating the services and activities to be carried out by the public sector agencies, private sector investors, non-profit organizations, and international cooperation partners. The Strategy will act as a strategic framework that can inform the work of the various entities to identify the objectives and services that can address schoolchildren's health and nutritional needs early in their lives.

Vision of the Strategy

All schoolchildren in Jordan are physically and mentally healthy individuals and have a stimulating and positive school environment.

To recognize the correlation between good nutrition and children's healthy growth, both physically and mentally, the Ministry of Education endeavours to build a stimulant school environment that promotes healthy food and nutritional eating habits which satisfies the daily dietary needs for schoolchildren in their middle childhood and adolescent years. Schools are responsible to contribute towards the improvement of the nutritional status of children in a manner that enforces health equality and develops their knowledge and skills that are necessary to make healthy lifelong food choices.

Mission of the Strategy

To provide coordinated, proactive, and preventive health and nutrition services and activities which improve schoolchildren's equitable learning readiness and ensure their proper physical and mental growth and development, to achieve the national human resources development goals.

A school-community approach to improve schoolchildren's health and to support them having an equitable learning involves addressing numerous issues that impact the child's nutrition and food choices. The Ministry of Education with its partners strengthen the social safety nets for schoolchildren by providing nutritional school meals, healthy food offerings in the school canteens, providing learning opportunities about nutrition and healthy eating habits as well as relevant food production basics. Engaging parents to transform their dietary habits and focusing on the socio-economic benefits of making healthy and nutritional food affordable and available to everyone are critical factors for the success of the school feeding efforts.

Moreover, the Government underlines the following guiding principles to achieve a successful and effective outcome of the National School Feeding Strategy:

- Promote the development of a healthy lifestyle with high nutritional quality food for students.
- Ensure shared responsibility and community participation, particularly parents and the school-surrounding community and businesses.
- Maximize economic and livelihood opportunities at the local level by opting for procurement from local food producers, service deliverers, and local smallholder farmers.
- Strengthen multi-sector cooperation and develop strategic and operational partnerships to increase efficiency and effectiveness of school feeding efforts.
- Build evidence for school feeding impact.
- Plan and implement the National School Feeding Programme in the method that addresses the basic nutrition needs of all targeted school children and promotes gender equality.

Strategic Pillars

The National School Feeding Strategy is shaped by three strategic pillars and outcomes, which provide focus and direction for the action of the school feeding stakeholders in the next five years (2021 -2025) as indicated in the following table. These outcomes are relevant for government and non-government actors in designing and implementing high-quality, sustainable, and relevant school feeding interventions and activities that are based on effective, efficient and sustainable good practices. They are driven by the need to take a coherent programmatic approach to improve service provision, systems, and operations. The programmatic approach will support the development of further evidence and the developmental objectives of an effective National School Feeding Programme and, ultimately, the desired change in the lives of schoolchildren, their families, and the community. Three pillars have been identified based on the need to address the structural challenges (see chapter 4):

Internal and External Environment Analysis) in sustaining, expanding and upgrading the current school feeding efforts. Pillar 1 looks at the necessity to enhance the national school feeding programme and expanding its objectives. Pillar 2 ensures that the Ministry of Education and its partners have the

institutional and human resources prerequisites to run the National School Feeding Strategy. Lastly, Pillar 3 takes a stake in complementary nutrition and health support efforts that contributes to the achievement of intended targets with school children and the community.

• Pillar 1: Reviewing and Enhancing the Current National School Feeding Programme

Strategic Objective 1

To strengthen the effectiveness of the National School Feeding Programme to achieve its goals of building a healthy generation by improving schoolchildren's nutrition and the community's livelihood.

Reaping the benefits of school feeding requires assurances of its effectiveness. Strategic Pillar 1 will focus on enhancing the quality of the National School Feeding Programme and its ability to achieve the objectives, updating schools targeting mechanism, promoting the stability of the National School Feeding Programme, and strengthening its technical and strategic partnerships. This pillar is an essential precursor to the Strategy implementation as it will revisit and develop the current school feeding project to increase its impact. Three guiding components were developed to pave the way for this pillar:

• Component 1.1: Improve the effectiveness of the National School Feeding Programme to better achieve its objectives

An informed decision on targeting, implementation modalities, and local engagement solutions enable Governments to choose the best options for planning, budgeting for certain targeting and implementing models that enable community contribution for the National School Feeding Programme.

• Sub-Objective 1.1.1: Developing the design of the National School Feeding Programme to maximize the impact of school meals on schoolchildren and their communities

The current School Feeding effort has received unstructured attention on data management and analysis to adequately inform its impact and develop its scope. The Ministry of Education and its partners (the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the National Aid Fund, and the Ministry of Agriculture) will jointly set the base for sound evidence design of the new National School Feeding Programme. They will analyse the available data to develop indicators that consider the different dimensions of school feeding (nutritional, educational, behavioural, socio-economic) to help set future dialogue on the National School Feeding Programme's developmental goals and scale-up potential.

The Ministry of Education will continue the current school feeding activities by following the existing models until the new models are tested and phased in with the outlook of achieving the nutrition, education, and socio-economic benefits with strong community participation and ownership in addition to the partnership with the private sector. (See Annex three, suggested school feeding models for testing and expansion according to the primary studies).

The Ministry of Education will test the models in specific areas within a representative time frame. It will study the viability of introducing mechanisms to procure food locally where feasible and will assess their impact following the Strategy's guiding principles and the new Programme goals. During the implementation of the Strategy, the new models will be included with the Programme's expansion plan and within the internal instructions of the Ministry of Education and other relevant authorities.

• Sub-Objective 1.1.2: Enhance targeting for the National School Feeding Programme

Currently, the school feeding programme is targeting schoolchildren in poverty-pockets and areas of development specific needs based on health and socio-economic studies conducted ten years ago. The lack of recent national micronutrient deficiency and food security studies on children in school-age (6-12 years old) and up-to-date poverty data hinders present-day expansion and outreach to all vulnerable children.

Improving the health of children requires strengthening geographical targeting interventions that are based on evidence. There is also a need to revisit targeting by linking it to the new developmental goals (needsbased) and a cost-effective design in order to benefit the intended beneficiaries to the maximum. The National School Feeding Programme will adapt a new and flexible targeting mechanism consistent with the new goals of the National School Feeding Programme, considering the logistical and technical limitations, and based on the indicators that will be identified. The new targeting mechanisms will consider student learning outcomes (through the Ministry of Education's - Education Management Systems), the poverty rate (Household Expenditures and Income Survey of the Department of Statistics), food insecurity rate (Ministry of Agriculture Annual Mapping), poor nutrition (Ministry of Health Database), unemployment rate (Ministry of Labour), in addition to other socio-economic and development indicators. The Ministry of Education will test the targeting mechanism through pilot models in order to incorporate in the expansion plan at the governorate levels.

- **Sub-Objective 1.1.3: Optimize effective and efficient performance of the school feeding programme through evidence-based decision making**

Processes and outputs are monitored and inspected by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance. With the development of the National School Feeding Programme and expansion of schoolchildren targeting and outreach, a new system to monitor performance, outputs, and development in school feeding programming will be required. The new system will continue to monitor the Programme in terms of performance and outputs and will develop relevant reporting tools compliant with standard public requirements. It will also develop reference frameworks for food quality control mechanism, as well as a system for complaints and feedback from students, parents, school administration, and teachers.

Component 1.2: Promote the sustainability and stability of the National School Feeding Programme

The development of a regulatory (legal and financial) and communications framework at the Ministry of Education to administer school health and nutrition interventions will promote the National School Feeding Programme's sustainability and stability. The Programme has been impacted by a number of budgetary cuts since it started in 1999. Moreover, there are currently no legal provisions to support its continuity. The Programme has not, as well, benefited from any structured communication and advocacy support which will be developed throughout the Strategy for the new Programme.

- **Sub-Objective 1.2.1: Developing and streamlining regulatory and financial framework for effective stewardship**

The Ministry of Education has created a School Feeding Fund (to be activated with the institutionalization of its legal and financial regulatory frameworks in accordance with the public legal and financial frameworks) in order to expand the National School Feeding Programme and ensure its stability and sustainability. The Programme will benefit from a flexible financing system that relies on diversified, non-traditional, and sustainable financing sources. The Ministry of Education will also review and develop the legal framework for the Programme in view of the political will to develop and expand school feeding.

- **Sub-Objective 1.2.2: Increase public awareness on the impact of the National School Feeding Programme on students, parents, and the community partners.**

The National School Feeding Programme has received little promotion throughout its operations. External communication shortcomings have affected the Programme's stakeholder engagement and eventually its development and expansion. The Ministry of Education with its partners will create an adequate communication and advocacy plan to be the driver for effective institutional coordination and implementation of the school feeding. To do so, they will initiate a stakeholder dialogue on the nexus of school feeding, human resources development, social protection, and food security which

will expand the Programme's scope. It will also develop a system of communication and advocacy to enhance opportunities for sustainable financing and public awareness to Programme outcomes. A well-structured communication and advocacy plan will not only raise awareness about the Programme but will also magnify school efforts value and support fundraising efforts.

- **Component 1.3: Strengthen technical and strategic partnerships**

Effective coordination and execution of school feeding requires strong multi-sectoral governance and institutional engagement, given the close participation of the education, health, agriculture, and social protection sectors. A multi-sectorial Government and community coordination platform with specific responsibilities will be put in place within the relevant sectors of the Government.

- **Sub-Objective 1.3.1: Enabling collaboration among various programme stakeholders (institutional and community partners)**

With the desired redesign and expansion of the National School Feeding Programme, it is necessary to develop the current framework of collaboration across the different sectors to build stronger partnerships and sectorial coordination that supports achieving the Programme's objectives. Hence, the Ministry of Education will review the Steering Committee for School Feeding membership, assess the needs of the technical and strategic partnerships after specifying clear decision making and technical support roles and responsibilities and enhance the role of local communities through the parents' committees at schools to decentralize the local activities.

- **Pillar 2: Developing Institutional Capacities Related to the National School Feeding Strategy**

Strategic Objective 2

To enhance institutional capacities relevant to implementing the National School Feeding Programme.

Institutional capacity strengthening is important to achieve the National School Feeding Programme's accountability and sustainability. Strategic Pillar 2 will invest in responsible human resources' learning and development to better implement, supervise, and monitor the programme, in addition it will develop the programmatic operational systems and procedures to respond to the programme's needs. It will additionally review the organizational structures of the local Government to serve the Strategy's objectives and sustain its efforts.

- **Component 2.1: Strengthen Government's human resources capacity to implement the National School Feeding Strategy**

A new programme operation will require strengthening human resources capacity to improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the new Strategy's implementation over the long term. The interministerial school feeding teams will be enabled through training and regulatory frameworks. To better lead the coordination and oversight of the Strategy's implementation, the teams will develop systems, regulatory and operational guidance, collaborate with relevant stakeholders, and provide policy and implementation recommendations. Moreover, they will take the responsibility of organizing communication, advocacy, and resource mobilization.

- **Sub-Objective 2.1.1: Improving the capacity of human resources for the effective implementation of the Strategy**

The National Education Strategy calls for building the capacities of all its employees in the various sectors to raise their efficiency. To achieve this, and in coordination with personnel who are responsible for implementing the National School Feeding Strategy, the concerned Ministries will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the existing human resources capacity to identify skill opportunities

and gaps to achieve the objectives of the Strategy. The comprehensive assessment will inform the trainings and develop programmes which will enhance human resources capacity of relevant technical and strategic partners implementing the Strategy.

- **Component 2.2: Develop organizational structures and institutional systems for Government establishments concerned with implementing the strategy**

To better serve the implementation of the National School Feeding Strategy, standardized institutional systems will be created. The Ministry of Education will institutionalize operations, procedures, and systems to build sustainable capacity.

- **Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improving organizational structures and institutional systems to ensure good governance stability of the National School Feeding Programme**

The current school feeding programme has been operating with strong, yet fragmented institutional systems. The Strategy offers a transformation of the current activities and will require development and adherence to new management systems. To this end, the Ministry of Education will develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that are related to school feeding and a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system to cover all stages of the Strategy activities. It will strengthen the utilization of the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) through better integration of relevant M&E requirements of the National School Feeding Programme. It will align the SOPs of school canteens to support the nutritional and health objectives of the Strategy and accordingly evaluate the organizational position of the School Health and Nutrition Unit, proposing alternatives to organizational structures as required.

- **Pillar 3: Promoting Synergy with Complementary Child Health and Nutrition Programmes**

Strategic Objective 3

To promote multi-sectorial coordination to attain better complementary support, and to encourage innovative community-level programmes to achieve the priorities of the National School Feeding Strategy and its action plans.

Coordination and cooperation among complementary support programmes of health and nutrition is one of the success factors for achieving the school feeding outcomes. Strategic Pillar 3 will focus on enhancing coordination and consultation mechanisms between the different partners, implementing programmes to achieve required outcomes and creating innovative solutions to schoolchildren nutrition and health.

- **Component 3.1: Enhance coordination between nutrition and health service providers to provide comprehensive services for school children**

The Ministries of Education and Health will unify efforts made in the field of school health and nutrition, as well as supporting good local practices and effective solutions that fall into the objectives of the National School Feeding Programme and supporting its progress.

- **Sub-Objective 3.1.1 Delivering comprehensive nutrition and health services for optimal benefit for schoolchildren**

The involvement of different sectors in the school feeding efforts will definitely maximize its impact. The strategy emphasizes the importance of cooperation between partners involved in the fields of nutrition and health, especially the competent authorities, students, parents and the local community. The Ministry of Education, along with its partners will consolidate different efforts, interventions and initiatives to identify opportunities for improving cooperation and coordination. Accordingly, the role of educational development councils will be linking different interventions at the district (directorate) level

with the local development units to ensure flow and update of information and build the subsequent development plan and national sectorial strategy indicators. The Ministry will also support innovative school activities that spread the culture of proper nutrition and healthy living among families and communities in general. The Ministry will work to establish a system for transferring students to health and social services, in cooperation with external programmes and services, to facilitate children's access to services in a systematic manner when needed.

Chapter 3

Stakeholders

The institutional framework of the National School Feeding Strategy shapes the scope and efficacy of the Strategy's interventions and activities. The Government recognizes that the successful achievement of the school feeding outcomes will require multi-sectorial planning and institutional collaboration with Government agencies and strong intervention with clear, shared, and specific responsibilities by a broad sector of stakeholders.

The National School Feeding Strategy is led and coordinated by the Ministry of Education, with invaluable support of Steering Committee members consisting the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Social Development, the National Aid Fund and the Royal Health Awareness Society. For achieving a successful strategy, the contribution of and synergies between key government, nongovernment and international actors in health, planning, social protection, and agriculture sectors are crucial. This institutional framework reflects the maximum efficient tasks division and complementarities between the different entities.

Government Partners

• The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education administers Jordan's School Feeding Project, under the Ministry's Department of General Education, the School Health and Nutrition Unit. The Project receives support from multiple institutions and is monitored and reported on by the Ministry of Education's coordinators at the school directorate level and the Jordanian Armed Forces. The School Health and Nutrition Unit's task is to facilitate school activities that raise the level of nutritional and health awareness among students, their families, and the teachers. It also promotes positive healthy eating habits through relevant educational activities and campaigns in schools supported by the Ministry of Health, the Dentists Associations, and other complementary health and nutrition programmes and the Royal Health Awareness Society. The School Feeding Project Office also follows up with the implementation of the school feeding in all public schools and coordinates with all parties engaged which additionally includes the periodical medical examination of schoolchildren, the National Vaccination Programme, and the National Accreditation Programme for Healthy Schools.

As part of the pioneering role adopted by the Ministry of Education in implementing the National School Feeding Strategy and coordinating all its activities and actions, it will extend its support to the National School Feeding Strategy through involvement of several directorates within the Ministry to engage other stakeholders. The Ministry of Education will ensure coordination and complementarity between the National Education Strategy and the National School Feeding Strategy. It will also perform a proactive role in fundraising and improving communication and advocacy. Overall, the Ministry of Education will take a lead role in the coordination of Strategy activities.

• The Ministry of Health

The engagement of the Ministry of Health in school feeding efforts stems from its core mission to provide preventive health services and performing the organizational and supervisory role to citizens' health and safety services in partnership with the concerned entities. The Ministry of Health sits at the Steering Committee of School Feeding and administers the School Health Strategy (2018 - 2023) through its School Health Directorate. The School Health Directorate implements the School Health and

Nutrition Strategy in all its components: the medical and the educational activities.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health promotes school health services to children in public and private schools through the following:

1. Contributing to the design and administration of policies related to school feeding such as school meals, health and nutrition education for students, teachers, and parents.
2. Conducting comprehensive periodic screening of children, including oral and dental screening.
3. Raising school-health awareness, extending social and mental counselling and health and environmental screening to educational institutions and nurseries in all sectors.
4. Monitoring the safety and quality of food under the National School Feeding Strategy, monitoring the health indicators related to the nutritional value of food.
5. In cooperation with Jordan Food and Drug Administration, ensuring that school canteens adhere to health requirements and that food-preparation locations are licensed, in addition to producing relevant health surveys and studies.
6. Collecting and updating data on micronutrient deficiency among school children through the Nutrition Department at the Ministry of Health.
7. Developing and publishing printed educational material related to nutrition, attempting to change unhealthy eating behaviours and habits among students and their families.

• The Ministry of Social Development

The Ministry of Social Development works to develop and upgrade the quality of social services to protect all vulnerable members of society from poverty and to alleviate their living conditions. The Ministry of Social Development is the custodian of the National Social Protection Strategy (2019 - 2025) which responds to three focus action areas: Decent work and social security; Social assistance; and Social services.

The second pillar focuses on the Government's provision of targeted social assistance to economically vulnerable Jordanians, allowing them to maintain a basic level of consumption. School Feeding is listed as one of the effective safety nets under the social assistance pillar. The Ministry of Social Development promotes cooperation and coordination between Government agencies concerned with social protection.

Throughout this Strategy, the Ministry of Social Development will be the key actor in:

1. Consolidating the new National School Feeding Programme in the Social Protection Strategy and in the Ministry's action plans.
2. Engaging local communities, through Community Based Organizations CBOs, in school meals supply.
3. Working with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to improve their efficiency through developing and operating productive kitchens and local private recycling initiatives for school-meals waste.
4. Integrating socio-economic dimensions in the targeting and selection of the workers for the Programme.
5. Functional monitoring and oversight of implementation and improvement of the school feeding interventions cost-effectiveness.

• The National Aid Fund

The National Aid Fund works towards reducing poverty at both national and local levels and achieving economic and social stability for Jordanian families in need. The Fund provides direct and recurrent financial assistance to families to improve their standards of living, assists them to build their capacities to work and provide their families with the basic needs in a sustainable manner.

The Fund, with its large network all over the country, supports large number of people in need of assistance through regular cash support and administers the nationwide poverty indicators and database. Considering its massive caseload consisting regular social assistance programmes beneficiaries, the National Aid Fund will play a fundamental role in solidifying the socio-economic impact of the school feeding efforts through its recurrent cash assistance schemes including Takaful and unconditional programmes. It has also contributed financially to the school feeding project to increase the number of schoolchildren benefiting from school meals and to reach wider to their beneficiary groups. The fund will contribute to:

1. Assistance in setting priorities in targeting schools through the Fund's comprehensive databases of poverty indicators and the National Unified Registry.
2. Support in targeting the families that could benefit from the work opportunities in school feeding.

• The Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture promotes the agricultural value chains. It administers farmers' market access, farmer and public education on food cultivation and manufacturing, and the provision of support to farmers' livelihoods. The Ministry of Agriculture has a number of annual activities promoting healthy food in schools, such as the Olive Harvest Week (in which schoolchildren participate in olive harvesting and are introduced to olive oil preparation). The Ministry of Agriculture will contribute to the new National School Feeding Programme by:

1. Connecting its current Strategy activities that relate to improving rural families' living conditions and developing rural industries and products to the areas where school feeding has been identified.
2. Identifying agriculture and food supply chains and networks and assist in linking smallholder farmers with agricultural retailers (cooperatives) to the localized school feeding operations.
3. Continue providing training to smallholder farmers to build their capacity and techniques according to the action plans of the Ministry's strategy 2020-2025. The strategy also includes providing support for the creation and development of cooperatives and community-based associations, access to credit, facilities, technologies and seeds, and support production planning, marketing and access to markets, particularly the agricultural ingredients of food served in schools.
4. Holding awareness sessions on proper food production and home farming for students and their families.
5. Participating in food quality tests.

• The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has a central strategic role in setting plans for the medium and long terms, comprehensive development programmes, and development of various, economic, social, humanitarian, and cultural projects, representing the Government's plans. These are conducted in a participatory manner with all concerned parties integrating elements related to several national policies and strategies that support achieving the SDGs.

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation coordinates the distribution of available funds, in cooperation with donors and international financing institutions, to various development programmes and projects, following national, geographical and sectorial priorities. The Ministry also initiated new financial and technical cooperation partnerships with new partners to support the development projects in Jordan and to support development projects under the General Budget Law.

The Ministry also contributes to achieving sustainable productivity through the development of local communities according to the targeting mechanism that is based on available data and statistics to reach low-income population, to enable community participation through socio-economic programmes that build capacities and create the appropriate local environment. This is conducted through partnerships with civil society institutions capable of achieving development goals and improving the livelihoods of citizens within the foundations and standards that are based on productivity and sustainability in the process.

Overall, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation will play a crucial role for the National School Feeding Strategy in terms of fundraising, financial resource management, inter-ministerial coordination, as well as ensuring linkages with development actors including the private sector and CBOs.

• The Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance is one of the main partners in the implementation of the School Feeding programme. The Ministry of Finance, through the General Budget Department, monitors the financial allocations

necessary for the implementation of the school feeding programme in coordination with the Ministry of Education and within the available financial ceilings. In addition, the Ministry offers the Government tenders related to the programme through the Procurement Department and based on the provisions of the Government Procurement System No. 28 of 2019.

• The Jordanian Armed Forces

The Jordanian Armed Forces, through its development arm, has been the key strategic partner of the Ministry of Education. It has contributed to the current school feeding, including the production of the fortified biscuit and the transportation to schools across the country. The Jordanian Armed Forces has played a crucial role in administering school feeding by monitoring and delivering food items in a timely manner, ensuring adequate quantities of meals are distributed to each school.

Non-Governmental Partners

Engagement of non-state partners is very essential to achieve the goals of the School Feeding Strategy. The non-state partners represent a wide range of actors supporting the National School Feeding Programme.

These include non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, community cooperatives, parents committee groups, the private sector and academia and research institutions. The non-state partners shall support improving school feeding efforts, the impact of students' health and nutrition education, the functional oversight and implementation of school feeding activities, and co-financing to achieve costeffectiveness of the school feeding activities. Moreover, their engagement shall result in the expansion of children-at-school age nutrition and health initiatives and activities at the grassroots level as well as resilience and livelihoods of the targeted communities.

Non-government organizations shall provide a voice for the rights and interests of vulnerable groups in the community, including children, women, elderly and people with disabilities. They also support the agricultural sector by providing credit and building smallholder farmers' skills in their profession and assisting in the establishment of cooperatives, farmer-based organizations, and related activities. One of the non-governmental partners in school feeding is the Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS). It steers the support, with the World Food Programme, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Health, to provide school meals at community-based organizations. The participation of RHAS has proved to be effective in increasing the socio-economic impact at the community level. The Royal Health Awareness Society plays another crucial role in providing complementary support to schoolchildren, promoting a healthy lifestyle by raising health awareness and enhancing a school environment conducive to safe and healthy behaviours.

Other important networks are the private sector, community cooperatives, women organizations, and parents committee groups, which hold the potential for serving schoolchildren and provide employment through food procurement, production, and transportation. School Feeding and Nutrition committees shall be established in targeted schools to warrant the continuity and national ownership of the approach. Members of these committees shall consist of parents, lead teachers, early childhood development actors, community leaders, and representatives of students' councils. They will account for identifying, unpacking, and sharing good practice examples along the school feeding value chains and the related incentives and accountability frameworks needed to build the evidence to scale-up the activities.

Moreover, academia and research institutions shall undertake research and evaluation on school feeding and nutrition, including food and crop quality improvement and standards, supply chain analysis, and providing evidence for establishing the guidelines on diversification of school meal menus based on smallholder production.

International Partners

The National School Feeding Strategy requires robust collaboration with specialized institutions including relevant international partners. The role of international partners is essential in policy development, learning component through wealth of global experience they possess which can potentially positively inform the school feeding programme, providing technical support through research and advice as well as additional outreach funding. The World Food Programme is a specialized international partner organization which is working closely with the Ministry of Education to technically upgrade and co-finance school feeding project.

Being the strategic partner of the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders of the school feeding programme, WFP has been assisting the Government of Jordan to develop a school feeding programme that is nutritious and locally-sourced, hence, being sustainable and scalable. WFP will continue to provide the technical and strategic support in implementing the activities of the National School Feeding Strategy and will leverage its diverse and extensive know-how and experience in school feeding to support the Ministry of Education and other key stakeholders. The Strategy will also utilize technical capacity and specific know-how of all relevant international organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and seek complementarities of their relevant interventions, programmes and initiatives with other stakeholders.

Chapter 4

Internal and External Environment Analysis and Contingency Planning

The National School Feeding Strategy was designed in consultation with government and non-government stakeholders, relying on past experiences, capacities, and infrastructure to achieve the desired sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiency of all efforts. Analysing the internal strengths and opportunities has contributed to the layout of the strategic advantages that fosters the progression of the Strategy. These strategic advantages are exemplified in the Strategy by clearly defining the goals of the National School Feeding Strategy (2021 - 2025) and developing the guiding principles for school feeding models that take into account the balance between the vision and the goals and complementing with the other national strategies. Hence, it recognizes and capitalizes the strengths and opportunities offered by the existing programme experiences. Throughout the implementation of the Strategy, some external risks are expected (potential weaknesses and threats). All stakeholders should be aware of these risks and propose mitigating actions (improvements and attention points).

Table 2: Internal and External Environment Analysis of the National School Feeding Strategy (2021 – 2025)

Strengths	Opportunities
Internal Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive national strategies to school feeding. • Good governmental decentralized systems. • Inter-ministerial agreements and cooperation with supportive entities. • Qualified human resources of participating ministries in the specialized fields of the Strategy. • Digitized tracking systems in place at the Ministry of Education. • Existence of National Unified Registry System, as well as large national coverage and local networks of National Aid Fund. • Presence of the Educational Development Council in each directorate with available support services units. • New school meal production and multi-stakeholder engagement in terms of distribution at the community level, thus strengthening their ownership and collaboration. • Well-balanced food snacks which are consistent with the daily food requirements of school-age children. • The uniformity of student meals prevents social differentiation among learners. • Complementary role of school canteens in terms of regulations of the healthy offering for school feeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong political commitment to implement school feeding as clearly emphasized in key national strategies including but not limited to the National Human Resource Development (2016–2025), National Education Strategy (2018–2022), National School Health Strategy (2018–2022), Education During Emergency Plan (2020–2023) and the National Social Protection Strategy (2019–2025). • Three policy frameworks ensuring Jordan’s commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, namely: The Higher National Steering Committee for Sustainable Development, The Jordan 2025: Vision and Strategy, the Executive Development Plan. • Comprehensive social protection strategy is in place. • There are strong potential partners at the administration and operational levels. • Existence of a sound administrative and regulatory organization system at the Government level supports the development of school feeding regulatory framework. • With multi-stakeholder engagement there are possibilities to share experiences and resources between relevant Ministries and stakeholders. • The Public Private Partnership Law and coordination office within the cabinet which supports funding provision for large national projects.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food procurement services from the community which boost the household income of community members. • Easy access to nutritional and healthy products in all communities in Jordan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of field directorate teams of the Ministry of Education. • Provision of local support services (supply chain) across Jordan. • Presence of supportive school feeding programmes, interventions and activities at the community level. • Presence of directorates of health with adequate and trained staff to support the programme.
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Improvements (of weaknesses)	Attention Points (of threats)
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External Environment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of improved data management among partners to enhance evidence-based school feeding, including food quality indicators for the poor. • Finding an efficient monitoring and evaluation model to measure and analyse impact and track implementation. • Development of a financing model that considers multiple sources. • Increasing coordination, collaboration and information sharing to expanding the base of partners and stakeholders (Government, international institutions, community organizations, and the private sector). • Expanding relevant human resources needs of the school feeding management office. • Ensuring a sustainable model which capitalizes on local capacities • Increase health measures and awareness at the school level. • Improve school storage of school meals and storage management capability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing unemployment and poverty rates in Jordan which requires emergency expansion of school feeding. • Limited budgetary allocation and high costs of meals. • Sustainability of the current school feeding implementation remains a challenge. • Schools not operating due to pandemic or another crisis. • Lack of a proper coordination structure in the relevant areas of nutrition and health interventions. • Schools and parents not being able to ensure food quality purchased by schoolchildren at school canteens and outside the school borders. • Risk of supplier's monopoly.
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Management of Weaknesses and Risks

The lack of the availability of the updated data about school children's health and nutrition requires intervention by all partners in order to strengthen planning and design the best school feeding programme possible. This component is an integral part of the National School Feeding Strategy and its Action Plan.

The existing operational systems are not able to address the desired development in the National School Feeding Programme. Hence, the Ministry of Education and its partners will be reviewing and strengthening the operating systems, building the technical capacity of personnel engaged in the National School Feeding Programme and the institutional capacity of the participating Government agencies. It will also ensure ongoing capacity development and networking building of the strategy resource development and management.

Additionally, the risk of inadequate financial resources to enable the school meals improvement and outreach expansion might be of concern. 2020 has witnessed a large flow of students from the private

to the public schools due to the weakening of the financial situation of families, caused by the economic impact of COVID-19. This increase in poverty and unemployment rates requires an urgent and sufficient adjustment and development of shock responsive nature of the programme, as well as sustainable funding resources.

The Government's partners contributing to the National School Feeding Strategy will study and review the strategic risks in the planning and implementation of the Strategy and they will prepare a risk-management plan based on the Strategic Planning Manual for Governmental Departments.

Chapter 5

Financial Resources

The estimated fund needed to implement the National School Feeding Strategy (including the direct costs of the National School Feeding Programme and the costs related to complementary activities) is JOD 20,618,000. Available resources are estimated at JOD 11,073,500 sourced mainly through the Ministry of Education and the World Food Programme ²⁵. The estimated funding shortage is JOD 9,495,050 as described in the Action Plan under Annex 2.

The Government of Jordan is committed to supporting the Strategy's implementation and exploring possible sustainable financing strategies. The Government values the efforts of both internal and external contributions to fund and achieve the Strategy's objectives, through financial support, in-kind food support, sustainable agriculture production, and community participation. The Ministry of Education has established a School Feeding Fund and it is in the process of institutionalization and activation. The Ministry of Education cooperates with socially responsible private sector organizations, such as banks, food suppliers and manufacturers, and telecom companies, in addition to donations offered by various organizations and individuals. The Ministry of Education will develop a mobile application for this purpose and will partner with multiple national and international organizations' projects providing food support.

25. The World Food Programme's contribution is contingent to approved budget allocations under the country's strategy plan.

Chapter 6

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The assessment of the National School Feeding Strategy will depend on the systematic monitoring and evaluation of progress towards: a) the achievement of its outcomes and targets, b) informed effective and efficient corrective measures based on concrete evidence, c) enabled decision making process to guide investments and resource allocations. The monitoring and evaluation scheme will provide the required information to key stakeholders, including line Ministries, schools, civil society organizations, development partners, and community members to constantly fine tune and improve the programme.

The monitoring and evaluation scheme will be aligned with the existing institutional frameworks and linked to the Strategy's logical framework. These indicators shall strengthen the effective and efficient implementation of the Strategy and ensure transparency in implementation and commitment from the partners. The set indicators will allow for periodic progress reporting, regular feedback, and assessment throughout the implementation process and the impact evaluation at the end of each year (Please see the Logical Framework in Annex I).

The National Education Strategy has determined three principle indicators for the School Feeding Project (2018 - 2023) which will be guiding the Strategy's logical framework. These include,

1. the number of schoolchildren reached with school feeding in kindergarten and primary levels,
2. the diversity of meals provided,
3. the number of operating healthy kitchens.

Table 3: School Feeding Project Results Framework- Ministry of Education's National Education Strategy (2018 - 2023)

Component: Safe and Stimulating School Environment			
Sub-component	Activity	Target base (1/1/2018)	Target End (30/12/2013)
Increase in the number of schools participating in the school feeding to include all poverty-pockets areas within the directorates of the Ministry of Education	Diversify the schoolchildren meal (change the flavour of biscuits) and add a fruit	451,000 schoolchildren in 34 directorates and 2278 schools	755,000 schoolchildren throughout all directorates and schools
	Increase the number of directorates benefiting from the healthy kitchens	11 productive kitchens	13 productive kitchens

The above indicators included in the National Education Strategy will be supplemented by other indicators that meet the Strategy's new goals and objectives (Please see Annex 1: Logical Framework).

The Ministry of Education will follow up and evaluate the National School Feeding Strategy through the Strategic Planning Directorate, the Follow-up and Evaluation Section. The achievement of the indicators will be monitored through a database and regular monitoring and evaluation reports will be prepared.

Annexes

Annex I

Logical Framework

Result	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Disaggregation	Baseline Values (2020)	Targets					Verification Authority
					2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Outcome 1.1.1: Enhanced design of the National School Feeding Program to maximize the impact of school meals on schoolchildren and their communities ¹	% of improvement in the health indicators ¹ among targeted school children ²	Every 3 years	Boys/Girls (TBD)	NA	TBD (baseline)	0% ³	5%	10%	20%	MoH
	Number of job opportunities created at the local level ⁴	Every year	Women/ Men	120/30	120/30	144/36	168/42	168/42	768/192	MoE
	% of increase of academic achievement for targeted students	Every school year	Boys/Girls (TBD)	NA	NA ⁵	5%	10%	15%	20%	MoE
Output 1: Continuation of the existing school feeding models	Number of school students of grade (KG-G6) benefiting from the new piloted models	Every school year	Boys/Girls (TBD)	451,000	451,000	507,500	567,000	627,000	687,000	MoE
Output 2: Piloting new school feeding models	Number of students (KG-G6) from the new piloted models	Every school year	Boys/Girls	0	0	1,250/1,250	2,500/2,500	2,500/2,500	55,000/55,000	MoE
Outcome 3: Strengthening of local value chains	Number of local businesses/enterprises benefiting from the new school feeding programme	Every year	Governorates (TBD)	2	2	25	50	50	1,100	MoE
Outcome 1.1.2: Enhanced targeting for the National School Feeding Program	% of targeted students under the new targeting modality ⁵	Every year	NA	NA	NA	NA	0%	60%	80%	MoE

- Expressed by the improved percentage of hemoglobin and serum ferritin.
- Students attending public schools in the primary grades 1-6 and KG.
- To be verified against global standards by MoH.
- Including direct and indirect job opportunities – 50% additional indirect opportunities.
- Expressed by increase in percentage of school children within the targeted age group in poverty/malnutrition pockets benefiting from the school feeding programme.

Result	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Disaggregation	Baseline Values (2020)	Targets					Verification Authority
					2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Output 1: Development of new targeting options	Number of new targeting options developed	Once	NA	NA	NA	3	3	3	3	MoE
Outcome 1.1.3: Enhanced performance of the school feeding program through evidence-based decision making	Number of newly developed M&E, quality assurance and accountability enhancement systems	Every year	NA	0	0	3	3	3	3	MoE
Output 1: Improved monitoring and evaluation system	% of targeted schools utilizing improved reporting and monitoring	Every year	Directorates	NA	0	30%	50%	60%	80%	MoE
Output 2: Improved complaints and feedback systems	% of targeted schools benefiting from effective complaints and feedback systems	Every year	Directorates	NA	0	30%	50%	60%	80%	MoE
Outcome 1.2.1: Developed and Streamlined regulatory and financial framework for effective stewardship	Number of policies and/or regulations introduced to improve the regulatory framework of the National School Feeding Programme	Twice	NA	NA	NA	1	1	-	-	MoE
Output 1: Stable and sufficient funding tied to identified needs	Number of diversified funding sources, financially contributing to the programme	Every year	NA	2	2	2	4	5	6	MoF MoPIC MoE
	Aggregated % of increase in financial allocations for the programme	Every year	Government/Private Sector/International Partners	NA	NA	5%	10%	20%	50%	MoF MoPIC MoE
Output 2: Establishment of an enabling legal framework to support sustainability and stability of the programme	Number of policies and regulations reviewed and amended	Once	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	-	-	MoE

Result	Key Performance Indicator	Frequency	Disaggregation	Baseline Values (2020)	Targets					Verification Authority
					2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Outcome 2.2.1: Improved organizational structures and institutional systems to ensure good governance and stability of the National School Feeding Programme ²⁰	Number of systems and structures enhanced ²¹	Every year	NA	NA	3	3	3	3	3	MoE
Outputs 1: Systems and structures successfully reviewed towards improvement of organizational structure	Number of systems and structures reviewed ²²	Every year	NA	NA	3	3	3	3	3	MoE
Outcome 3.1.1: Enhanced coordination between nutrition and health service providers to provide comprehensive services for school children	Number of nutrition and health policy dialogue and coordination initiatives implemented under school feeding programme	Every year	Governorates (Directorates of Education)	0	1 ²³	13 ²⁴	13	13	13	MoE
Output 1: Establishment of coordination mechanisms and platforms for health and nutrition service providers	Number of coordination working group formed for relevant nutrition and health nutrition and health interventions	Every year	Governorates (Directorates of Education)	0	1 ²⁵	35 ²⁶	39	42	42	MoE

20. Baseline for relevant KPIs will be set based on the assessment to be done in 2022

21. Including, but not limited to M&E, reporting, org structures.

22. Same as above.

23. Health and nutrition coordination steering committee at the national level

24. Health and nutrition coordination working groups at the governorates' level.

25. Health and nutrition coordination steering committee at the national level

26. Health and nutrition coordination working groups at the governorates' level.

Annex II

Action Plan

Strategic Plan	Component	Activities	Implementation Period		Estimated Cost (JOD)	Available Fund	Available Fund Re-source	Funding Shortage	Organization responsible for implementation	Partners
			Start	End						
		Continue existing school feeding models until new models is implemented	9/2021	12/2025	34,000,000	23,000,000	MoE WFP	11,000,000	MoE	WFP
		Develop performance indicators and baselines based on the objectives of the Education Strategic Plan to evaluate the National School Feeding Programme and the achievement of its various goals (processes, outputs, and results).	6/2021	9/2021	10,000	10,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP	WFP MoSD MoPIC CSOs
Pillar 1: Reviewing and developing the current National School Feeding Programme	Component 1.1: Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme to achieve the new desired objectives	Design new effective, efficient, and sustainable models to achieve maximum nutrition, education and social benefits.	9/2021	2/2022	10,000	10,000	WFP	0	WFP	MoE MoSD MoA MoH
		Conduct workshops of training on new models for school feeding officials at MoE	1/2022	2/2022	4,000	4,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP RHAS	
		Test school feeding models in specific areas.	2/2022	9/2023	375,000	150,000	MoE WFP	225,000	MoE WFP	Execution Partners

Strategic Plan	Component	Activities	Implementation Period		Estimated Cost (JOD)	Available Fund	Available Fund Resource	Funding Shortage	Organization responsible for implementation	Partners
			Start	End						
		Conduct a study to evaluate the impact of new school feeding models based on the objectives of the programme (efficiency and effectiveness)	3/2023	9/2023	8,000	8,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP	MoSD MOP MoA MoH
		Develop a new and flexible targeting mechanism consistent with the goals of the National School Feeding Programme, considering the logistical and technical limitations, and based on the indicators that have been identified.	9/2022	1/2023 ²⁷	3,000	3,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP MoP	MoSD DoS
		Develop the school feeding expansion plan aligned with the new models and link it to the relevant sectoral strategies at the national level.	9/2024	3/2025	0	0	-	0	MoE	MoE Ministerial Committee for the National School-Feeding Strategy
		Develop an effective M&E and reporting system	2/2022	9/2022	2,500	2,500	WFP	0	MoE WFP	MoH RHAS
		Develop a system for feedback and complaints from students, parents, school administration and teachers	2/2022	9/2022	3,000	3,000	WFP	0	WFP MoE	RHAS
		Review and develop the legal framework to better institutionalize the programme	1/2022	12/2022	0	0	-	0	MOE	

27. Based on availability of poverty and malnutrition data. New targeting to be applied to the second phase of pilots.

Strategic Plan	Component	Activities	Implementation Period		Estimated Cost (JOD)	Available Fund	Available Fund Resource	Funding Shortage	Organization responsible for implementation	Partners
			Start	End						
Component 1.2: Promote the sustainability and stability of the National School Feeding Programme	Develop and institutionalize a flexible financial system that relies on diversified, non traditional, and sustainable financing sources and adheres to the public finance regulatory framework.	Develop and launch a communication and advocacy plan to enhance opportunities for sustainable financing and public awareness and link them to programme outcomes	6/2022	2/2023	10,000	10,000	WFP	0	MoE MoF WFP	MoPIC RHAS
			6/2022	12/2025	120,000	0	-	120,000	MoE WFP Private Sector Media	RHAS
			9/2021	2022/3	2,000	2,000	WFP	0	MoE	School Feeding Steering Committee
Component 1.3: Strengthen technical and strategic partnerships	Establish specialized sub-committees to implement the activities of the National School Feeding Strategy (Central level: Technical committee; Directorate level: Supervisory Committee; School level: Receiving and Distribution Committee).	Develop the technical and strategic partnership matrix to achieve the programme's objectives and identify priorities in partnership needs.	3/2021	6/2022	-	-	-	-	MoE WFP	School Feeding Higher Committee
			9/2021	3/2022	0	0	-	0	MoE WFP	RHAS
Pillar 2: Developing institutional capacities related to school feeding strategy	Component 2.1: Strengthen Government's human resources capacity to implement the National School Feeding Strategy	Conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify opportunities and gaps related to human resources required to achieve the objectives of the strategy.	3/2022	12/2025	100,000	20,000	WFP	80,000	MoE WFP	Concerned Ministries
			9/2021	3/2022	0	0	-	0	MoE WFP	RHAS

Strategic Plan	Component	Activities	Implementation Period		Estimated Cost (JOD)	Available Fund	Available Fund Resource	Funding Shortage	Organization responsible for implementation	Partners
			Start	End						
	Component 2.2: Develop compatible institutional systems and organizational structures with the local Government context that serve the objectives of the Strategy	Review and develop standard operational procedures related to school feeding.	12/2021	2/2022	2,000	2,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP	Concerned Ministries Royal Health Awareness Society
		Review and evaluate the position of the School Health and Nutrition Unit in the organizational structure of MoE; and revisit the roles and responsibilities of the Unit's staff to enhance its structure and improve its ability to implement the programme.	1/2021	2/2022	0	0	-	0	MoE	WFP
		Strengthen the use of the management information system (EMIS) and the integration to other databases of relevant institutions.	6/2022	12/2022	5,000	5,000	WFP	0	MoE WFP	Queen Rania Center
Pillar 3: Promote integration and cooperation between the various programmes concerned with child health and nutrition	Component 3.1: Enhance multi-sectoral cooperation and provide schools with better complementary support.	Undertake a mapping and evaluation exercise for all relevant nutrition and health initiatives	2/2022	6/2022	0	0	-	0	MoE WFP	
		Establish coordination working groups among relevant programmes and initiatives and link them to local development units	9/2022	3/2023	0	0	-	0	MoE WFP	School Feeding Higher Committee
		Implement innovative activities in collaboration with Government partners to create healthy and nutritional culture at school and home.	1/2023	12/2023	25,000	0	-	25,000	MoE WFP	RHAS Private Sector Local Communities

Annex III

National School Feeding Strategy Potential Models

Model Name	Description	Advantages	Challenges
Hybrid Model	<p>A model that provides school feeding to targeted students in the form of a healthy snack composed of biscuit and fresh snack. Meals are to be prepared, packed, and distributed at CBOs.</p> <p>Meal ingredients shall be supplied and delivered to the CBOs through local suppliers including small-holder farmers identified through mapping and targeting in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture. Assigned personnel (targeted from the areas of poverty and development specific needs, giving priority to the parents of targeted students) will prepare the snacks in a designated area (Healthy Kitchen) inside the CBO. Snacks are to be distributed in the classrooms within the designated time and through agreed methodology.²⁸</p> <p>These snacks will be prepared on a daily basis, whereas transportation will be arranged by the CBO to deliver the snacks to the schools every morning. The production, distribution monitoring as well as the reporting will be carried out by</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritious and diverse meals • Lowest cost amongst all potential models below • Easy to prepare • Easy to scale up • Provides job opportunities for local communities, especially for women • Supports local economy, especially small-holder farmers 	Relatively higher cost (compared to the current biscuit model)
CBOs Model	<p>A model that provides school feeding to targeted students in the form of a healthy balanced snack (i.e. sandwich).</p> <p>Meal ingredients shall be supplied and delivered to the CBOs through local suppliers including small-holder farmers identified through mapping and targeting in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture. Assigned workers (targeted from the areas of poverty and development specific needs, giving priority to the parents of targeted students) will prepare the meals in a designated area (Productive Kitchen) inside CBO. Meals will be distributed in the classrooms within the designated time and through agreed methodology²⁹.</p> <p>Once the meals are prepared every morning, transportation will be arranged by the CBO to deliver the meals to the schools.</p> <p>The production, distribution monitoring as well as the reporting will be carried out by a 3rd party NGO, with possible technical support by WFP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritionally viable option, especially if the wheat flour is fortified. • Provides job opportunities for local communities, especially for women. • Scalable model. • Supports local economy, especially small-holder farmers. • Promotes healthy eating habits in comparison to date bars or HPBs. • Lower maintenance costs than current healthy kitchens model • Can be introduced through existing CBOs 	Relatively higher cost (Compared to current Biscuit model)

28. 28 During the last 15 minutes of the third class session with the condition that the students can eat their meals inside the classroom or in the designated food area if available, with the supervision of the teacher, who is responsible for ensuring hygiene and safety of the meal consumption.
29. During the last 15 minutes of the third class session with the condition that the students can eat their meals inside the classroom or in the designated food area if available, with the supervision of the teacher, who is responsible for ensuring hygiene and safety of the meal consumption.

Model Name	Description	Advantages	Challenges
Private Sector Model	<p>A model that provides school feeding to targeted students in the form of pre-packed ready to eat healthy balanced meals potentially consisting of multiple ingredients, provided through a transparent annual food supply tender.</p> <p>These meals shall be prepared, packed and delivered by the awarded suppliers, where, these suppliers will be asked to establish logistic hubs at governorates level in order to avail job opportunities for workers in areas of poverty and development specific needs with possible food supplies from the local markets and small holder farmers.</p> <p>Once these meals are delivered to the schools, school management will be responsible to receive, distribute within the designated time and through agreed methodology³⁰ and report on the meals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritious meals • Very low operational involvement • High Quality Control • Job opportunities for the local community • Community Support • Easy to scale up 	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Relatively high cost (Compared to current Dates Bar model)</p> <p>Possible monopoly</p> <p>Difficulties with linking small holder farmers</p>
School Meals Model	<p>A model that provides school feeding to targeted students in the form of a healthy balanced meal (i.e. sandwich). Meals will be prepared, packed and distributed at school.</p> <p>Meal ingredients shall be supplied and delivered to the schools through local suppliers including small-holder farmers identified through mapping and targeting in close coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture. Within this model, parents of students, who are selected from the areas of poverty and development specific needs, will prepare meal in a designated area inside the school. Meals will be distributed in the classrooms within the designated time and through agreed methodology.³¹</p> <p>The production, distribution monitoring as well as the reporting will be carried out by the school management (MoE) staff, with possible technical support by WFP and potential NGO partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritionally viable option, especially if the wheat flour is fortified. • Provides job opportunities for local communities, especially for women. • Scalable model and fosters decentralization. • Supports local economy, especially small-holder farmers. • High level of local community engagement and support. • Promotes healthy eating habits in comparison to date bars or HPBs. 	<p>Requires dedicated infra-structure</p> <p>Requires close food safety monitoring</p> <p>Requires strong food waste and damage control</p>

30. Same as above

31. During the last 15 minutes of the third class session with the condition that the students can eat their meals inside the classroom or in the designated food area if available, with the supervision of the teacher, who is responsible for ensuring hygiene and safety of the meal consumption..

Annex IV

Participants in the Preparation of the National School Feeding Strategy

1	Nawaf Ajarmeh	Ministry of Education	Secretary General
2	Sami Mahasis	Ministry of Education	Managing Director of Education
3	Mustafa Rusan	Ministry of Education	Managing Director of Legal Affairs
4	Mohammad Manaseer	Ministry of Education	Managing Director of Financial Affairs
5	Lama Alnatoor	Ministry of Education	Head of Development Cooperation Unit
6	Yousef Abushaar	Ministry of Education	Managing Director of Planning and Educational Research
7	Ahmad Mmsa'efeh	Ministry of Education	Director of Public Education
8	Abeer Bashabsheh	Ministry of Education	Member of Educational Waquf Directorate
9	Khitam Hattar	Ministry of Education	Head of the School Health and Nutrition Division
10	Mohammad Kiswani	Ministry of Education	Member School Health and Nutrition Division
11	Samar Batarseh	Ministry of Health	Director of School Health Directorate
12	Amer Ahmad	Ministry of Finance	Policies and Economic Studies Division
13	Thamer Madarmeh	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Coordinator of the Productive Grants Program for Cooperatives, Military Retirees and Director of Cooperative Training
14	Khitma Halalmeh	Ministry of Agriculture	Head of strategic planning division
15	Mahmoud Al-Rabie'	Ministry of Agriculture	Director of Studies and Value Chain Development
16	Waleed Shatarat	Ministry of Social Development	Head of Institutional Performance Development Division
17	Zubaida Ghait	Ministry of Social Development	Researcher
18	Hana Kharabshe	National Aid Fund	Head of Institutional Development Division
19	Amal Ireifej	Royal Health Awareness Society	Head of Program
20	Mohammad Ismail	World Food Programme	Deputy Head of Program
21	Umut Pamuk	World Food Programme	Head of Social Protection Department
22	Rabab Baker	World Food Programme	MoE Liaison Officer – Social Protection Department
23	Susanne Shomali	World Food Programme	Consultant

