

Efforts to Introduce Milk in School Feeding Programmes in Uganda

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Introduction

- Food is a basic human right and food security is an essential requisite for optimising productive and quality human resource.
- There is a link between learning and school children's health and nutrition
- Improving children's nutrition & health results in substantial gain in educational effectiveness.

Introduction Cont'd

- Temporary hunger, common in children who are not fed before going to school or in the course of a school day can have an adverse effect on learning.
- Hungry children - have more difficulty concentrating and performing complex tasks, even if otherwise well nourished.

Current Status in Uganda

- According to the 2nd Participatory Poverty Assessment the major explanatory factors contributing to poor performance of children under Universal Primary Education are:
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Social and cultural practices
 - Malnutrition
 - Hunger

Current Status in Uganda

- Many children do not have breakfast
- Children are hungry at school - most schools have no feeding programme.
- Where food is availed
 - Only few children benefit
 - Issues of quality, quantity, lack of information & hygiene.
 - Menu is not child friendly.

Current Feeding Practices in Uganda



A few children pack lunch (< 5%)

- Irish potatoes
- Sweet Potatoes & beans
- Mattoke & beans
- **Milk is conspicuously absent**

Current Feeding Practices in Uganda

- A few districts in northern Uganda benefit from a GoU/WFP School Feeding Programme
 - Involves school management committee
 - Involves parents – contribute financially + firewood
 - Hot breakfast & lunch provided – No Milk
 - Children, teachers & parents were happy

Preparation of porridge for breakfast on wood saving stoves



Efforts to Introduce Milk in Schools

Kabwohe Co-operative (Mbarara)

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- . Supplied Nganwa Junior School from DCL (MCC).
- • DCL resolved - no milk should be sold from the MCC.
- Supply to the school from the MCC ceased.
- • Co-operative selected a few farmers to supply the school directly.
- • Milk is delivered to the school by a farm worker.

Efforts to Introduce Milk in Schools

Dairy Coop Initiatives

- **Kabwohe Co-operative (Mbarara)**
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Dairy Coop Initiatives

- **Kabale Tukore Dairy Cooperative (Kabale)**
- Had excess milk with no market.
 - First Provided free milk to the schools.
 - Convinced schools preparation of milk was cheaper than maize porridge (through calculation of costs).

Dairy Coop Initiatives

- Convinced schools to purchase the milk.
- Supplied milk for two weeks on this system after which some schools opted out.
- One primary school (Maria Goretti School) continued and milk was supplied at a reduced price of Sh. 150 per liter.
- Increasing the price of milk (during the dry season) resulted in reduction of consumption.

Dairy Coop Initiatives

- The milk supplied is given in tea, porridge as well as plain milk.
- Started in February 2001 with 50 liters but currently (Sept 2001) supplies 150 liters per day.
- Next year (2002), the school is to convince parents to pay shillings 7,000 per child per term for milk.

Dairy Coop Initiatives

- **Kigarama Dairy Cooperative Society (Bushenyi)**
- Supplies 200 liters of milk per day.
- Held a meeting of parents & convinced them to pay for the milk.
- Reason used to convince the parents was that children drink milk for the 3 months they spend at home in a year but are denied milk for the 9 months they spend at school.

Dairy Coop Initiatives

Children attended the meeting and requested their parents to pay for the milk.

- Parents pay Sh. 10,000 per term and the children get milk every day.
- Milk is given in porridge.

Processing Companies

- ● Approached schools through letters to the Head teachers school management.
- ● Dry season the milk is not enough – high demand for the public demand including the schools.
- ● During the dry season prices of milk rise and the schools cannot afford it.
- ● During the dry season the company only processes pasteurized milk.

Dairy Sector Agencies

- DDA held discussions with civic leaders, school administrators to convince them to introduce milk
- Land O Lakes has held in-school promotions in over 200 schools.

Stakeholders' Views

- The position of central government seems to be that providing breakfast & lunch is part of the households' contribution to the UPE programme.

&

- Children's Act – states that it is the parents' responsibility to feed their children.

Stakeholders' Views

- There is consensus on the need to feed children at school
- Breakfast and lunch should be made mandatory for day schools
- Teachers and support staff should benefit

Stakeholders' Views

Roles of Stakeholders:

- Central Government
 - Should contribute to financing school feeding because of prevailing poverty
 - Sensitize public - should inform public that the responsibility of feeding school children rests with parents.
 - Monitor & supervise the process

Roles of Stakeholders cont'd

Local Government

- Enact by laws that compel parents to contribute to school feeding.
- Impose a local education tax part of which should be used to feed children
- Sensitize parents
- Monitor school feeding – using school inspectors

Roles of Stakeholders cont'd

Parents:

- Finance school feeding
- Monitor & supervise school feeding
- Produce the food required by schools
- Participate in preparation of the food

Roles of Stakeholders cont'd

School Children

- Manage school gardens – vegetables & fruits to supplement
- Fetch firewood
- Clean the kitchen, plates & dishes

Gaps

- Uganda has no specific policy and guidelines on feeding school children
- The draft School Health Policy – which focuses on school child nutrition amongst others is under discussion

Gaps

- Lack of policy compromises:
 - Quality of food - nutritional value and safety
 - Efficient use of resources invested in feeding
 - Enhances parents' "running away" from meeting their responsibility

Cost of Feeding cont'd

Urban Schools

- Allowed to charge Sh. 10,000 per term
 - Term has 64 days
 - Gives Sh 156 per child per day
- Daily allowance is too low to procure 2 decent meals for the child
- Needs to be revised.

Conclusion

- School feeding is desirable.
- National coverage using public funds may be out of reach
 - Targeting use of public funds for the most underserved could be the option
- Local governments and communities should be encouraged to actively participate

Conclusion

- Need to expedite the process of developing a school feeding policy & clear guidelines including minimum standards + implementation plan.
- This will be instrumental in compelling the concerned parties to provide meals to school going children.

Conclusion

- Community should be involved from the beginning – planning
Result:
 - Ownership
 - Sustainability
- Monitoring system is necessary
- Cost benefit analysis of school feeding would greatly help in advocacy

Conclusion

- Nutritionist or dieticians should be consulted on what to feed these young children
- Use of **locally grown food** should be encouraged – will contribute to poverty alleviation
- Use of fast cooking foods should be encouraged to save on time and conserve energy

Thank You!

