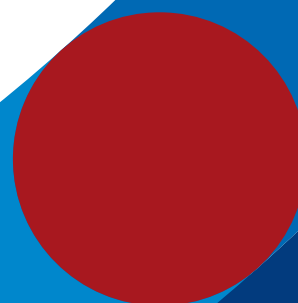


EDSC/11/3.2.b

PROPORTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN RECEIVING SCHOOL MEALS (COVERAGE)



Metadata





SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

METADATA

Target 4.a By 2030, ensure that all children have access to a safe, healthy, nutritious meal in school.

4.a.4 Proportion of primary school children receiving school meals (coverage)

Definition

Proportion of school-enrolled children receiving school meals in primary schools (coverage)

Rationale

Children cannot learn if they suffer from the effects of poor health and nutrition; furthermore, long-term goals in health, nutrition and food security are unattainable without an educated population. The SDG4 indicator on the proportion of primary school children receiving school meals will help measure the extent to which school children are being provided with the essential nutrients that can improve their health and cognitive function; thereby enhancing their ability to learn.

Definition of concepts

- **School Feeding:** The provision of food to children through school meals programmes on a regular basis. Such programmes can provide meals, snacks, or conditional household transfers in the form of cash, vouchers or in-kind, take-home rations. School feeding should therefore be understood as children receiving meals, or another form of food, in schools. The definition of school meals is therefore not limited to children benefitting from free and government-funded school meals.
- **National School Feeding programme** A programme managed by the government either alone or with the support of development partners to provide food on a regular basis to school children. While the majority of school feeding programmes are government-funded and/or government-led, some countries have opted for locally managed school feeding programmes and/or collect contributions from parents to finance their school feeding programmes.

Calculation method

School feeding coverage in a country i (C_i) is defined as the number of children receiving school feeding in primary schools in a given year (B_i) divided by the total number of children enrolled in primary schools in the same year (P_i). The result is multiplied by 100 to express the coverage as a percentage:

$$C_i = \frac{B_i}{P_i} * 100$$

Description of variables

B_i : number of children receiving school feeding in primary schools in country i , for a given year.

P_i : Total number of children enrolled in primary schools of country i , for the same year.

C_i : School feeding coverage rate in primary schools in country i ,

Formula for aggregation

The following formula can be applied to calculate aggregate coverage for a group of countries x , such as income groups. The result is multiplied by 100 to express the coverage as a percentage:

$$C_x = \frac{\sum B_{i,x}}{\sum P_{i,x}} * 100$$

For each group of countries x , the total number of children receiving school feeding $\sum B_{i,x}$ is divided by the total number of children enrolled $\sum P_{i,x}$

Interpretation

- Coverage estimates range between 0 and 100 percent.
- A higher value for the indicator denotes a higher number of children enrolled in primary education receiving school feeding at school.

Disaggregation

The indicator can be disaggregated by sex.

WFP, along with the Data and Monitoring Initiative of the School Meals Coalition, intends to support governments to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation systems, thereby in the future, further disaggregation is expected. The intention is to gradually expand to measure coverage for all school levels, not just primary school.

Data sources

Description

In 2013, WFP published the State of School Feeding Worldwide using data from a survey for the World Bank publication “Rethinking School Health” and a subsequent survey led by WFP (169 countries surveyed of which 99 were surveyed by WFP). For the 2020, and 2022 analysis for the State of School Feeding Worldwide, data were obtained from publicly accessible, official sources primarily from the Global Survey of School Meal Programs, and supplemented with data from World Bank, the African Union and WFP. The Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) conceived and launched the Global Survey of School Meal Programs in 2018. The Global Survey was designed with expertise contributed by technical experts from academia, UN agencies, and governments, and covers topics including nutrition standards and practices, procurement, linkages to farmers, private sector engagement, job creation, and general, demographic, and management aspects of school meal programs. The Global Survey is conducted on a regular basis and is completed by government-appointed Focal Points. This process is supported by partners in-country including WFP. The first two rounds of the Global Survey captured information from 155 countries.

For the next round of data collection taking place in 2023-2024 gathering data for 2022 school year, data will continue to be sourced from the Global Survey of School Meal Programs, implemented by GCNF.

A Data and Monitoring Initiative (DMI) set up by WFP through the School Meals Coalition to engage partners in a collaborative effort for data collection process for the SDG4 indicator for the following round.

The data for the number of children enrolled in primary school for a particular country during the report year will be gathered as reported by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Country level data collection processes

Countries can collect data on this indicator using administrative data from entities (schools, state/sub-national administrations) or through national household surveys. Data will be collected and reported biennially initially, with plans to move to annual reporting in the future.

Quality assurance

WFP along with the Data and Monitoring Initiative of the School Meals Coalition will set the standards, and quality control protocols for country data reporting, and maintain the global database of school meals.

Before the inclusion of any data point in the database, it will be reviewed by technical focal points at WFP headquarters to check for consistency and overall data quality. This review will be based on a set of objective criteria, developed in collaboration with the Data and Monitoring Initiative, to ensure that only the most recent and reliable information are included in the database.

Data Availability

Data on the indicator collected through implementation of the Global Survey of School Meal Programs, implemented by GCNF, are expected to become available early 2025. Comparable data collected by the GCNF are currently available for 155 countries.

Calendar: Data release


Updated data will be available in the SDG reporting period in September 2025 and biennially thereafter with plans to move to annually.

Comments

WFP, along with the School Meals Coalition through its Data and Monitoring initiative has committed to develop a global database to track school feeding, which is intended to form the basis of future editions of the State of School Feeding Worldwide publication and to collect the proposed SDG4 indicator.

The first version of the database was soft launched early in 2024 and will be further strengthened over a period of several years. Initially, the database will be populated primarily by GCNF's Global Survey data. Additional data sources will also be incorporated, including efforts from the School Meals Coalition's Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition, which is based in the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

GCNF and WFP will work closely together on the shared vision to transition data from the GCNF's Global Survey of School Meal Programs database to the WFP-hosted database. GCNF is a major partner of this work and will offer its experience in global data collection from governments around the world to help inform future processes. GCNF and WFP will also work together to explore GCNF's continued contribution to data collection and the database.



Proportion of primary school children
receiving school meals (coverage)

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