

EXCERPT FROM NGO MATRICES

3.23 UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND: NATIONAL SCHOOLS NUTRITION PROGRAM (NSNP)

Goals

- To alleviate short-term hunger;
- To enhance learning capacity among primary school learners.

Objectives

- To contribute to enhanced learning capacity through school feeding;
- To generate food production and economic activities in school communities;
- To improve household food security;
- To strengthen nutrition education in the school curriculum and the community in general.

1. Development of best practice models

Grant summary:

- Category: Basic Education
- Type: Evaluation¹: Evaluated National School Nutrition Program (NSNP) for National Department of Education

Rationale: Improve research, evaluation, and advocacy efforts related to developing systemic, national efforts to support orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa.

Work undertaken:

The work done was implemented in three phases. A brief discussion of each will follow:

Phase One:

- The research implementation plan was developed and executed; this resulted in selecting KPMG (a private consultation company) to undertake the evaluation work.

Phase Two: (Site identification, Research tools and Provincial workshops)

- 271 schools (divided into rural and urban samples) were identified throughout the country's nine provinces to participate in the evaluation.
- Workshops were conducted in the nine provinces with district offices from 89 education districts. The workshops included planning for the data collection process, an understanding of the data collection instruments and sharing/understanding of government processes and procedures.

Phase Three: (Evaluation Process)

- Key stakeholders were interviewed to get a clear insight into NSNP achievements and challenges: at provincial level with program managers; at district level with nutrition coordinators and liaison officers; and at school level with principals and/or nutrition coordinators.

¹ GRANT NO.: 07-284: Report received

- Data was gathered from the 89 district offices although there were variations. This was because certain provinces, such as the Western Cape, kept school files which made it easy to access information on NSNP programs, whereas in other provinces no records were kept, making access to this information more difficult.
- A total of 30 school visits were carried out across nine provinces of South Africa; three school visits in each of eight provinces and two in one province.

Organization's contribution/achievements:

- According to the UNICEF evaluation findings, children are now fed every day of the school week, as opposed to on the first three days of each week, as previously.

Challenges:

- The school survey used data available in district offices, however record-keeping, particularly for 2004, was generally found to be poor.
- Random sampling was compromised by time constraints, as those schools originally selected that required more than a day's travel were replaced with closer schools.
- Where district offices did not keep files for schools, district program staff familiar with the school had to be interviewed to answer the questionnaires.

2. Advocacy and Policy Influence

Work undertaken:

- The draft findings were shared with the Director-General of the Department of Education (as per the Minister's request) and the provincial Heads of Department of Education. They were also presented to the National Technical Reference Team (NTRT).

Organization's contribution/achievements:

- The motivation for the evaluation was based on the fact that the NSNP was in complete disarray, due, in particular, to the dismissal of Eastern Cape Education MEC on the allegation of the misappropriation of funds. The findings show that the program is generally working despite the numerous challenges it faces.
- The findings of the evaluation contributed to decisions taken by the Minister of Finance and articulated in the Budget Vote speech.

3. Institutional Development

This section is not applicable.