

ADRA NORWAY FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY

ADRA Norway Food Security Strategy

Version

Board Review

2.0

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Background

The eradication of hunger has long been an international objective which is expressed in the UN Millennium Development Goals¹ and UN Sustainable Development Goals².

In May 2022, the United Nations has warned of a global food security crisis.³ Despite all the world's resources, food security or reliable access to enough affordable-nutritious food is a pressing issue in multiple countries.

The global community can feed every human being. Yet developments such as the war crisis in Europe, armed conflicts in multiple countries, climate change and economic instability have left millions on the brink of famine. More people are being driven into poverty and hunger than ever as they are exposed to:

- a) protracted instability, insecurity, and conflict
- b) climate change related droughts, flooding, and environmental degradation
- c) major disruption to economies, supply chains, markets, and livelihoods
- d) threat to food supplies due to locust infestations
- e) rising prices of food, fuel, and input prices as well as shortages of certain commodities

Vision

ADRA Norway intends to focus its food security intervention on home-grown and school feeding (HGSF) programs. ADRA Norway aims to strengthen food security programs across the Horn of Africa, Sahel, Myanmar, and other regions impacted by humanitarian disasters or protracted food insecurity conditions.

Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to address the following areas:

1. Reflect global **evidence-based research** on the multiple benefits of home-grown and school feeding (HGSF) programs with links to smallholder farms and local economies.
2. Build on ADRA Norway's strength in the **education sector** to focus its commitments on **home-grown and school feeding (HGSF)** programs, and skills training linked to food production and value chains.
3. Lay out how ADRA Norway will **advocate** globally, and work in partnership, to address gaps in guaranteeing a proper school health and nutrition response for children in schools.

Who We Are

ADRA Norge, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency Norway (ADRA Norway), was registered as a foundation on 19 April 1993 and is a licenced member of the international ADRA network with 120 offices.

For the past 30 years, ADRA Norway has supported the most marginalised people in local communities and addressed sensitive cultural issues such as stigma and discrimination, power and gender injustices, rights

¹ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (who.int)

² Home - United Nations Sustainable Development

³ Global Report on Food Crises: acute food insecurity hits new highs (fao.org)

of women, children and the disabled, and mitigated the negative influence of climate change and food insecurity.

ADRA Norway's strength comes from being a global organization, present in many countries, connecting in multiple ways across country borders and continents while working in complementary ways to reinforce and strengthen local partners and communities.

ADRA Norway currently implements programs with funding from Norad, MFA, KAVLI Foundation and Global Affairs Canada on inclusive education, education in emergencies, TVET and skills training, youth empowerment, disability inclusion, mental health, food security and climate resilience. ADRA Norway operates in fragile conflict affected countries and has extensive experience in conflict sensitive programming that contributes towards peacebuilding and strengthens mutual trust and cooperation between stakeholders.

What is Food Security?

According to Norad's definition⁴, adopted from UN and global fora resolutions, food security rests on four pillars: availability, access, utilization, and stability.

- a) Availability refers to the supply of food. For farmers and fishers, availability depends on what they are able to harvest from land or sea. Availability for the urban population is more dependent on storage, transport, and trade.
- b) Access refers in part to having the means to acquire food. Even though a country has good food availability, access to food may be unevenly distributed in the population.
- c) Utilization is partly linked to people's ability to absorb the nutrition the body needs. This is dependent on a varied diet, health, and food security.
- d) Stability entails having sufficient food over a period of time. Availability and access must be secured in changing environmental, political, and economic circumstances.

Evidence-based Research Digest

Healthy and well-nourished schoolchildren learn better. Healthy children also have better chances to thrive and fulfil their potential as adults. Ensuring that girls and boys stay in school and are able and ready to learn allows countries to develop their human capital and individuals to achieve their full potential in life. It strengthens community cohesion, stability, productivity, and connectivity, and helps make people and societies more resilient in a rapidly changing world⁵ (see graph on multi-stakeholders' connectivity benefit on top of the next page).⁶

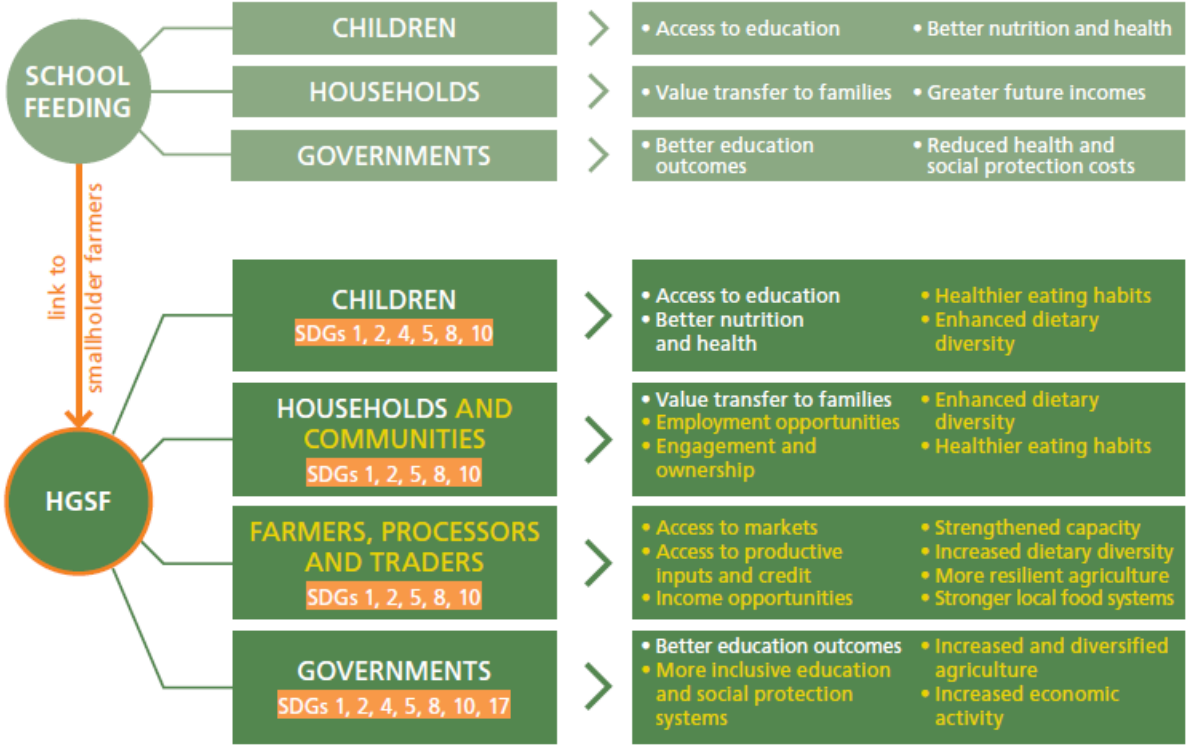
Global evidence on the multiple benefits of home-grown and school feeding (HGSF) programs is extensive and growing. The evidence is particularly strong on the multiple benefits of HGSF, which links school feeding to smallholder farms and local economies. In 2015, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the

⁴ [Food security \(norad.no\)](https://www.norad.no)

⁵ [Home-Grown School Feeding Resource Framework | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)](https://www.wfp.org)

⁶ [WFP-UNICEF-SHN-Partnership-Integrated.pdf](https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-unicef-shn-partnership-integrated)

United Nations (FAO) identified HGSF as a ‘win-win’ solution that supports family farming through social protection.⁷



Governments are increasingly investing in HGSF programs as a strategy for accelerating development by combining benefits in education, health, nutrition, agriculture and trade, social and economic development and intergenerational well-being. Thus, contributing to zero hunger (SDG 2), ending poverty (SDG 1), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8,) reduced inequality (SDG 10) and partnerships for achieving the goals (SDG 17).⁸

Furthermore, HGSF programs have been shown to be a cost-effective means of improving children’s access, participation, and learning, as well as physical and psychosocial health, with most benefits accruing more to disadvantaged children. A review of 216 education programs in 52 low-and-middle-income countries found that school feeding interventions improved enrolment, attendance and completion and had a positive impact on cognitive, language and maths tests. In sub-Saharan African, the effect of school feeding programs on learning outcomes have been estimated at 0.13 standard deviations higher than in other regions. In addition, a meta-analysis of school feeding programs in sub-Saharan African countries showed an average increase in enrolment of 10 percent in schools with HGSF programs.⁹

In addition, home-grown and school feeding programs are among the most effective interventions for narrowing gender gaps in access to education, particularly in contexts of high food insecurity. The meta-analysis in sub-Saharan African countries found that school meals, coupled with take-home rations for

⁷ Home-Grown School Feeding Resource Framework | World Food Programme (wfp.org)
⁸ African Union on Home-Grown School Feeding
⁹ Home-Grown School Feeding Resource Framework | World Food Programme (wfp.org)

girls, increased the enrolment of girls by 12 percent compared to boy's enrolment.¹⁰ Research has also shown that failure to address growing food insecurity has the potential to exacerbate exploitation of women and girls, risks of early/forced marriage, child labour and increase the number of children out of school.¹¹

Conversely, ADRA Norway has witnessed student dropout in SEAQE supported schools due to rising levels of food insecurity and the withdrawal of World Food Program (WFP) support in South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Mali. In Mali, severe drought, significant increases in food prices, increases in food and agricultural input prices, a reduction in food production and cuts to food assistance programs is leading to increased levels of student dropout. In Ethiopia, the dropout rate has reached 7% due to rising food insecurity because of extreme draught. In South Sudan, the withdrawal of WFP funding for school feeding is having a gendered impacted, with increased rates of student dropout contributing to increased rates of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

Commitments to Home-grown and School Feeding (HGSF) Programs

ADRA Norway is intentional in its commitments to strengthen interventions across the Horn of Africa, Sahel, Myanmar, and other regions impacted by poverty and humanitarian disasters by focusing on home-grown and school feeding (HGSF) programs. This will be achieved by addressing the following areas:

1. **Inclusive Education** – leverage ADRA Norway's extensive partnership reaches and expertise within the education sector by -
 - a. scaling up mobilization of community groups around family resilience initiatives, home-grown and school feeding and nutritious food preparation
 - b. increasing home, school, and/or community-based food production, e.g., through climate smart agriculture by schools and small holder farmers
 - c. rolling out programs on climate education, locally led climate actions, renewable energy, recycling, and safe schools.

Lesson learnt – to maximize focus on education, the food grown can supplement school meals, but the gardens should focus on education rather than agricultural production, as a focus on production would risk overburdening schoolchildren with agricultural chores or distract teachers from their teaching responsibilities.

Inclusive Partnerships – adopt a localized approach that is community-designed and driven in collaboration with partners and stakeholders to address the root causes of food insecurity. Engaging local community in decision making and implementation fosters community participation and ownership.

ADRA Norway will design its engagement building on its partnership network expertise and tap into Norwegian and international links to achieve the following –

- d. scaling up and/or establishing civil societies and grassroots organizations to ensure functioning and sustainable change
- e. engaging parents in home-grown school feeding programs through school clubs and parents' associations and committees such as PTA/SMCs
- f. engaging community members in the preparation of school meals and through the provision of donations and in-kind contributions

¹⁰ [School-Feeding-Toolkit-2021_FINAL.pdf \(foodbanking.org\)](#)

¹¹ [Food-Security-Update-LXXXIV-May-4-2023.pdf \(worldbank.org\)](#)

- g. strengthening local food systems through engagement and support for smallholder farmers
 - h. strengthening livelihood diversification through community savings and loans associations
 - i. providing capacity support to
 - i. improve agricultural practices and productivity
 - ii. strengthen natural resource management
 - iii. strengthen participation in value chains
 - iv. access finance and markets through partnerships with Norwegian actors
 - v. strengthen climate adaptation and resilience
 - vi. maximize benefits for smallholder farmers by linking schools to local food production and value chain.
2. **Inclusive Skills Vocational Training** – continue to strengthen participatory vocational training programs in local livelihoods and value chain development programming. This includes training and scaling up in the following areas -
- a. involving local stakeholders in the design and implementation of need-based training programs suited to rural economy
 - b. building the skills vocational training program on the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment TREE model which has proven successful in reaching a variety of target groups, such as youth, women, and persons with disabilities¹²
 - c. training girls and women to empower them in gender-segregated societies
 - d. engaging and transitioning women from volunteer to paid positions in school settings (kitchens), supply chain, including smallholder cooperatives
 - e. incorporating principles of Green TVET, to promote the use of renewable energy and contribute towards climate resilience
 - f. utilizing solar energy in agricultural value chains and vegetable production by establishing partnerships with actors from the private sector.¹³
 - g. incorporating in the skills vocational training
 - i. climate smart agriculture
 - ii. agro processing – use of agriculture products and agri- waste
 - iii. business planning
 - iv. digital knowledge acquisition and technical application
 - v. small-scale enterprise development
 - vi. market analysis and participation.
3. **Inclusive Health** – integrate home-grown and school feeding programs and nutrition education components that uses a ‘whole school’ participatory approach to enable the development of children’s capacities and motivation for healthier food-related practices. This is achieved through -
- a. promoting the design and adoption of quality and safe standards for fresh and local foods
 - b. supporting crop and dietary diversification
 - c. integrating food and nutrition education in the school curriculum to promote behavioural change and support healthy and culturally appropriate eating habits
 - d. participating in deworming campaigns in cooperation with the local ministry of health
 - e. establishing sustainable climate-friendly home-grown and school gardening to improve nutrition and good diets and promote to the wider community

¹² [Training for Rural Economic Empowerment TREE](#)

¹³ [Energy-Smart Food for People and Climate](#)

- f. teaching about nutrition-sensitive crops and smart agricultural practices
 - g. monitoring and minimizing biological, chemical and physical hazards that can compromise the safety of food and therefore negatively impact the health of students
 - h. identifying, training, and provisioning safe and nutritious food to ensure safety measures along the food chain¹⁴.
4. **Inclusive Functional Infrastructures** – ADRA Norway appreciates the importance of community participation and ownership as a key factor to the success of home grown and school feeding programs. There are numerous examples of such as providing water and/or firewood and contributing labour. ADRA Norway is committed to this participatory approach of community engagement and aims to strengthen to include, but not limited, to the following -
- a. securing safe drinking water, hand-washing and adequate sanitation for students and teachers
 - b. harvesting rainwater and apply low-cost treatment
 - c. building/acquiring fuel-efficient stoves
 - d. participating in construction of climate-friendly kitchens and storage facilities
 - e. providing land for school/community gardens.
5. **Inclusive Advocacy** - there are ample opportunities for ADRA Norway to engage in evidence-based advocacy at global, regional, national and subnational levels. ADRA Norway will continue to champion and work in partnership to address gaps in guaranteeing a proper home-grown school feeding program, health, and nutrition response for children in the most neglected communities. This will be achieved by -
- a. scaling up advocacy campaigns to parliamentarians, high-level government policymakers and officials to transition ownership of home-grown and school feeding to national governments and increase national resource allocation, particularly in conflict affected and fragile contexts
 - b. communicating and advocate to parents and community members on the value and multiple benefits of home-grown and school meals to ensure local buy-in and community participation
 - c. improving networking approaches through collaboration, sharing best practices and lessons learnt tailored to national and local contexts to transform the lives of the most vulnerable children, their communities, and countries.

¹⁴ [Global Child Nutrition Foundation | GCNF](#)