



Exploring the views of learners and parents on the effects of school feeding

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Report WCDI-19-078

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Summary

This report presents the results of the second phase of the action research on the SNV TIDE School Milk Programme (SMP). The study explores the views of learners and their parents on three aspects of school feeding that were identified in the first phase. These areas are 1) Relation between school and home feeding, 2) (Rise of) inequality among learners and 3) Sharing food in school. Focus group interviews were held with parents and learners in three schools, split into groups based on the level of participation in the programme.

Key conclusions and recommendations for action in the three areas of interest:

1. The SMP is appreciated by learners and their parents. They perceive an improvement in in-class concentration and school attendance from consuming school meals. School meals are generally preferred by learners over going home or bringing food from home.
2. School feeding does not seem to reduce home feeding. However, serving porridge does not add much diversity to the learners' overall diets. Explore the possibility of stimulating schools to (periodically) include extra food groups into the school meals that are not commonly consumed for breakfast or supper at home.
3. Non-participants indicate to be aware of the benefits and would like to participate, but cite financial inability as their reason not to join. Their suggestions focus on lowering the SMP fees or providing additional programmes to allow for income generation. If efforts were to be taken to reduce inequality among the families, these should prioritise reducing financial barriers to participation in the SMP over sensitization efforts in existing SMP locations.
4. Sharing of food is a socially respected practice. Children are unlikely to share too much of their food, as they indicate that they only share if they feel they can get satisfied themselves. The practice is also not limited to school meals – food brought from home may also be shared. Therefore, it does not seem necessary to intervene in children's sharing practices. However, it may be advisable to monitor parents' perceptions of sharing, as it may reduce the parents' willingness to pay for the SMP.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

CEGED	Center for Governance and Economic Development
FGI	Focus Group Interview
LCB	Local Capacity Builder
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SMP	School Milk Programme
TIDE	The Inclusive Dairy Enterprise
WCDI	Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research
WUR	Wageningen University & Research

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Under SNV TIDE, The School Milk Programme (SMP) began in 2016 as an initiative to improve nutrition among school aged children in 7 districts in South West Uganda. The School Milk Programme has the following objectives:

Child level	School level	Community level	Producers level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Alleviate malnutrition and temporary/hidden hunger among school children•Promote in-class concentration, cognition, and other performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Promote school enrolment and attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Build a milk-drinking culture among school children, which can be passed on (to households and) across generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Develop the dairy sector by increasing milk sales in the short term and milk demand and market in the long term

Figure 1 - Multi-level objectives of the SNV School Milk Programme¹

To achieve these multilevel goals, the School Milk Programme draws upon the collaborative effort of national and district governments, individual schools, parent-teacher associations, and local capacity builders (LCBs) selected and supported by SNV. Each district has its own LCB leading the project design and execution in each of the schools enrolled in the SMP. The project strategy generally consists of a) adding milk to maize porridge and serving it as a hot meal to learners in school, b) subsidizing the purchase of school kitchen materials through a matching grant, and c) promoting household nutrition and awareness. The intervention scheme differs slightly by school in how these elements are implemented. For example, some schools distribute milk to all learners without distinguishing between those whose parents pay for the programme or not, while other (most) schools only allow children of contributing parents to receive milk¹. The SMP Theory of Change is based on the premise that continued mobilisation and awareness on the benefits of the programme would encourage parents to voluntarily contribute to the purchase of hot school meals that include milk. Some schools provide solutions to parents that cannot pay. Examples include cases where parents provide labour to the school in exchange for fees, or cases where big farms are contacted to provide milk for the poorest group.

By the end of 2018, the SMP has been implemented in 652 schools in 7 districts. Within these schools, it has been observed that coverage of participation in the programme increases gradually. Whereas it is often not possible for all parents to come on board all together at once, there is a trend that the longer a school participates in the SMP, the larger the share of parents that participate becomes. In 2018, 33% of all schools had full coverage among their pupils. This has now increased to almost 50% schools reaching full coverage. The Ministry of Education intends to further expand the programme within the covered districts and to 5 new districts, with a proposed target of 1,000,000 pupils taking school milk in the programme's second phase

¹ SNV/WCDI: The SNV TIDE School Milk Programme in South Western Uganda; Working Paper no 1, 2017

1.2 Reviewing the SMP

In order to inform further rolling out, SNV and partners are undertaking a review of the programme. The review entailed a participatory action research approach. In the first part of the research, schools that are implementing the SMP mobilised teachers, parents and learners to participate in a survey, conducted by themselves. The local capacity builders (LCB) of 3 selected districts (i.e. CEGED, ARISE and KABIP) were trained by WCDI to coach and implement, train and coach the participatory survey techniques. Following in-school training, learners (716) interviewed each other about their experiences with the school feeding and milk programmes. Teachers interviewed each other (190) about the SMP as well as parents of the learners (725). 12 primary schools in 3 districts participated, covering rural, urban, public and government schools.²

Having done the participatory survey, the next step for all participating stakeholders was to reflect on the results of their data collection efforts. This second part involved group discussions with learners, parents and other key stakeholders on pertinent issues surfacing through the survey findings and that are relevant for the future of the SMP.

1.3 Pertinent themes in this qualitative review

The results of the surveys have been reviewed and discussed with LCBs supporting the implementation of the SMP and at the LCB meeting held in November 2018. The findings have triggered some key questions around the following themes:

Relation between school and home feeding

The survey results indicate that children who do not get a meal at school are less likely to eat breakfast at home than those that do get a meal at school. However, those that do get a meal at school are a bit less likely to get dinner at home than those who do not get a meal at school. Critical question is: How does getting a school meal relate to feeding at home and why?

(Rise of) inequality among learners

The survey results indicate that almost all parents are in favour of and/or do support the programme but that not all of the parents do have children in the programme. A large portion also believes that the SMP increases inequality among children. Critical questions are: How do parents whose children do not access the programme feel? What makes that parents do not take part in the programme? What increases or decreases their perception of inequality? And how do children that do not access the programme feel? And how do those that do participate?

Sharing food in school

The survey results indicate that learners sharing food is common in schools. The survey also suggests that after controlling for differences in liking milk and other factors, children who share their milk tend to be more happy more often with the meals in schools than children who share less often. Critical questions are: Is the food shared with those who do not get meals? How does sharing make the learners feel? How does it make feel the ones who receive shared food and how does it make feel the ones that share food?

In the current qualitative follow-up study, the pertinent issues that surfaced through the first part of the action research are reflected upon and explored in a participatory manner to answer the identified critical questions.

² SNV/WCDI: Review of the School Milk Programme, South West Uganda; Phase 1: Participatory survey research Learners, Parents and Teachers. Draft report, November 2018

Table 1 - Part I and part II of the SMP action research

Part	Set-up	Topic
I	Quantitative survey	Experiences with the school feeding and milk programmes
II	Qualitative focus group interviews (FGI)	Three pertinent themes identified from part I: 1) Relation between school and home feeding, 2) (Rise of) inequality among learners, 3) Sharing food in school

2 Methods

This section describes the methods used for this qualitative study, in which group discussions with learners and parents were used to reflect on pertinent issues that surfaced through the action research part 1, the survey outcomes. For the methodology and results of this first part of the action research, we refer to the “Review of the School Milk Programme, South West Uganda - Phase 1: Participatory survey research Learners, Parents and Teachers” by SNV/WCDI.

2.1 Selection of participants

Selecting schools and contexts

From the 12 schools that participated in the survey research, 3 were sampled for the follow up, one in each district:

- Muhito Primary School in Sheema District
- Kagamba Primary School in Ntungamo District
- Rushanje Primary School in Mbarara District

Detailed school profiles are attached in [Appendix 1](#).

The reason for selecting these three schools is that they allowed us to gauge feelings, perceptions and behaviours of learners as well as parents that have or not have access to the school milk programme. It also allowed us to study the three issues we have identified in relation to important differences in the context of the stakeholders.

Taking into account these differences in context was important as we believed that context relates to how people experience (the risk of) the SMP increasing inequality among children. For example, we hypothesized that not receiving milk may be experienced more strongly by a child if most of the other children do get milk. Similarly, sharing of meals might be seen as a logical and common thing to do when a majority shares its school meals with a minority of non-takers. Sharing meals in a context in which most children do not receive a school meal could be more contested.

With regard to the relation between consuming school meals and home meals, the variation in context might also be relevant. Parents of children who go to school where most children get meals might assume their children are being taken care of, whereas parents of children at schools where few meals are being served might be more aware of the need for feeding at home. Children at schools where few get meals might be more likely to get various meals at home than are children where most do get part of their daily meals at school. Of course this reasoning is based on mere speculation. Studying the relation between home and school feeding in varying context will help us to test some of these assumptions.

Based on the survey results and school profiles, the selected schools constitute larger and smaller public schools in both urban and rural areas. The focus is on public schools where parents have generally less disposable income than parents of children in private schools. The selection includes also schools with and without matching grants for facilities supporting school feeding from SNV.

Selecting groups

Focus group interviews were held with learners and with their parents in separate groups. We also distinguished groups according to their level of participation in the feeding schemes. This means that within each school we selected learners and their parents, who (a) do participate in both the meal and milk scheme, (b) do get meals but no milk, and (c) do not get meals at all (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Selecting schools and groups

Type of feeding	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
Schools where the majority of children does get milk and meals	Muhito	Muhito	
School where some children do and other do not get milk and meals	Kagamba	Kagamba	Kagamba
Schools where the majority of children does not get milk or meals	Rushanje		Rushanje

In Muhito, where most learners do get a meal and milk, we combined in one group learners who do not get milk with those that do not get a meal at all. These groups together constitute a minority but still represent a substantial proportion at school. The other learners' focus group comprised those who do get a meal and milk. The parents of both groups were invited to participate in a focus group as well. This totalled to 4 focus group interviews in Muhito school, 2 with learners, 2 with parents.

In Kagamba, where about half of the learners get a meal with milk, we had one group of learners that get a meal but no milk. Besides looking into this group's relations with those who get the full package and those who do not get a meal at all, this group also offered the opportunity to zoom in some more on issues related to the school milk specifically. The parents of these learners, who do contribute to meals but not to milk, were studied in focus groups as well. This totalled to 2 focus groups in Kagamba school, 1 with learners, 1 with parents.

In Rushanje where most learners do not get a meal or milk, we combined those learners who do get a meal with milk with those learners receiving a meal without milk as these constitute a minority but still represent a substantial proportion at school. The other focus group at this school constituted learners who do not get a meal at school at all. The parents of both groups were invited to participate in a focus group as well. This totals to 4 focus group interviews in Rushanje school, 2 with learners, 2 with parents.

Selecting individuals

Within the relevant groupings described above, learners from the highest grade, P7, were selected. These groups constitute the children (P6 at the time) who were interviewed by their peers (P7) in 2018. For each focus group interview 8 children were randomly selected per group with a preference for an equal number of boys and girls. The learner groups included boys and girls reflecting the class dynamic. Similarly the parents' group discussions were of mixed gender reflecting household dynamics (Table 3). The minimum of at least six participants was met in all except one FGI (5 participants in the Muhito non-paying parents group).

Table 3 - Selection of individuals and actual number of interviewees per group

	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
Muhito	Learners (n=8, 4 female) Parents (n=7, 3 female)	Learners (n=8, 4 female) Parents (n=5, 3 female)	
Kagamba		Learners (n=8, 4 female) Parents (n=8, 4 female)	
Rushanje	Learners (n=8, 4 female) Parents (n=6, 4 female)		Learners (n=8, 4 female) Parents (n=6, 2 female)

The parents or caregivers of the selected children were selected with also a 50% gender split (roughly). In order to avoid parents influencing their children and vice versa, focus groups were held at the same time.

2.2 Focus group interviews

We developed tailored FGI protocols and tools for learners and parents in together with key LCB representatives, selected to implement the FGIs (Appendix 2). Once near final these were piloted in one school with children and adults and adapted where necessary.

Discussing access to food is a sensitive issue. The focus groups therefore needed to offer a non-judgemental and respectful environment, allowing all participants equal opportunity to participate. Various methods were applied in the FGI to ensure also that participants do not feel forced to share (too) personal experiences, views, and feelings, and that they could express themselves in various ways, such as through story-telling, role plays, listing issues and voting exercises.

The FGI facilitators were well-trained prior to conducting the FGI and the specific methods that were employed. We selected two professional LCBs well-acquainted with the SMP (CEGED and ARISE) and trained 4 to 5 of its staff members in the FGI schedules and tools. The training included the pilot of the FGI instruments. A detailed manual was provided.

Each FGI was conducted by a pair of FGI facilitators, one of which was managing the group interview, the other managing the drawing, listing and note taking. The FGI lasted up to 2.5 hours, running from 10 am until 1 pm. Timing of the FGIs with both parents and learners was done in close consultation with school management, because for reasons of practicality it was hardly feasible to do the FGI after a school day. The FGI with learners and parents ran in parallel.

During the focus group interview refreshments were provided. The need for additional incentives for participation was discussed with the school PTA, and it was agreed that transport would be refunded for the parents who participated in FGIs. The PTA was informed beforehand by the LCB about the interviews through their learners and consulted on logistical matters.

The FGI were held at the school premises to minimise logistical inconveniences, in April/May 2019, over a period of two weeks. The methods for selecting participants were carried out according to plan, and the FGIs were carried out according to the pre-defined protocol ([Appendix 2](#)). Validation sessions with key stakeholders involved in the SMP of the selected school will follow once initial results are ready for sharing.

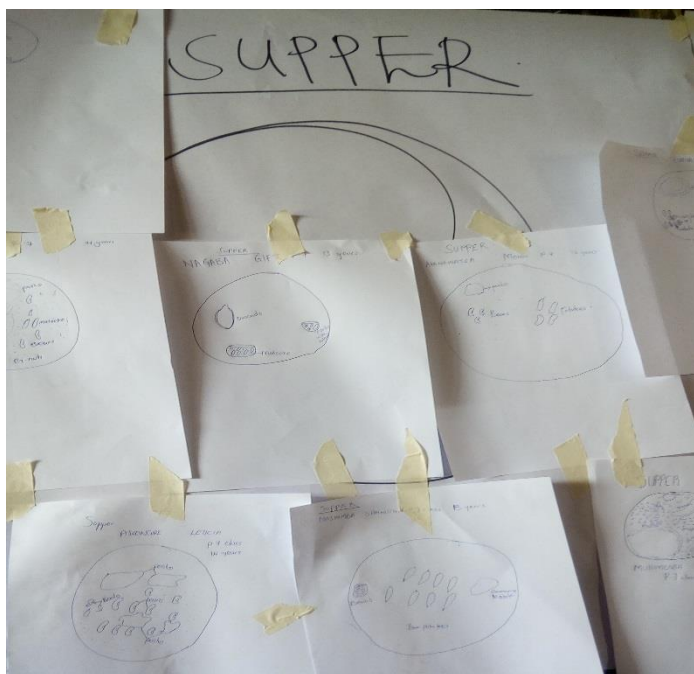


Figure 2 - Learners' drawings of their supper plates

For the focus group interviews, the interview protocols (one for learners, one for parents) in [Appendix 2](#) were followed. In these protocols, the three pertinent themes identified in the earlier survey are addressed.

Food consumption at home was addressed partly through an interactive exercise in which parents and children drew their supper and breakfast plates, which were subsequently discussed in plenary. The food items that were consumed were listed by the session facilitators. On the topic of sharing, children carried out a roleplaying exercise to act out an equal sharing and a non-equal sharing situation. The children's responses and observations were noted by facilitators.

Further details on the FGI protocol can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

2.3 Analysis

Hand written notes were taken during the FGI in a notebook. The notes were typed up and completed for each FGI with information from the listings done during the FGI.

For data analysis a thematic analysis procedure was developed, building on top down coding grounded in the FGI protocol. Bottom up coding was added to capture different perceptions, views, opinions, and actions in respondents own words. These codes were added after a first assessment of the data. The coded segments were then copied into a table like the one in [Appendix 3](#) in order to cluster the findings according to the different contexts (schools where learners and parents fully participate in the school milk programme, where this is mixed, and where few learners and parents are participating) to allow for comparison.

To analyse food consumption (chapter 3), the foods that were named by the parents and children were listed and grouped according to context. The foods that were named by either children or parents, but not by both, were marked. Comparisons were made based on the total number of foods reported by the FGI participants, which is taken to be a rough indication of dietary variety. The food consumption per group was compared to the different food groups (as defined by Kennedy et al., 2011)³.

³ Kennedy, G., Ballard, T., & Dop, M. C. (2011). Guidelines for measuring household and individual dietary diversity. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i1983e.pdf>

3 Relation between school and home feeding

The results of the action research part 1, the survey outcomes, suggested that children who do not get a meal at school are less likely to eat breakfast at home than those that do get a meal at school. However, those that do get a meal at school are a bit less likely to get dinner at home than those who do not get a meal at school. Critical question is: **How does getting a school meal relate to feeding at home and why?** [Appendix 3](#) contains a full overview of the foods that were mentioned in each of the interviewed groups. A few conclusions could be drawn based on the FGIs.

3.1 Parents and children do not eat the same

For both breakfast and supper, and across all groups, learners report to have eaten a larger variety of foods than their parents. They also eat different types of food as a large share of the foods that are reported by the parents, are not reported by the children, and vice versa. An explanation that is offered to this finding is that there is no time to prepare breakfast before they go to school, so they eat leftovers from supper the night before. Parents report very few items in their breakfasts that are not consumed by the children too, suggesting that “repeating” supper for breakfast does not necessarily mean that children eat a less varied diet. Both parents and children indicate that not all family members consume the same foods. Preferences, young age and health reasons (ulcers and intolerance) are often cited as reasons for a family member to eat something else. Cultural taboos for women to eat liver or grasshoppers were also mentioned.

3.2 Parents eat what is available and children eat what makes them strong

In response to why people consume what they had listed as the most commonly eaten foods parents tend to say something along the lines of “this is what is available”. In some interviews, this is further specified: because it is what is produced locally (**availability**), or it is what the family can afford (**access to food**). A distant third reason for consuming specific foods is good taste or **preference** for that food. In two FGIs, parents mention that boys and girls have preferences for potatoes and rice respectively, because the former is hard like the boys’ muscular bodies, and the latter soft and tender, like girls’ bodies. **Convenience** is also mentioned – both in terms of how the food is grown, prepared or consumed (i.e. eating potato and cassava on-the-go to avoid being late for school). Children, on the other hand seem to be less concerned with practical matters related to food consumption. They mainly list **health reasons** for eating specific foods: “to get energy”, “to avoid malnutrition”, “to help me grow”, in addition to taste preferences (“it is sweet”).

3.3 Women decide what is eaten by the family, unless purchases need to be made

Questions around decision-making concerning food at home led to lively discussions among the parents. The arguments that were made can be summarised as follows:

- Women decide, because they (are home to/are cultured to) do the cooking;
- Women decide, because they do the farming;
- Women decide, because they know the family’s preferences best;
- Men decide, because they make purchases and exchanges (for specific food products, such as meat, fish, posho and salt);
- Men decide, because they decide what is planted;
- Men or children decide, because they have specific preferences;
- Another family member (e.g. grandmother, aunt, brother) decides, because they do the cooking.

All in all, participants agreed that women make most of the decisions, unless money is involved, which is typically the case with meat and fish consumption.

3.4 Consumption outside the household

Questions on whether children ever consume food outside of their home led to mixed responses. In some groups there was a unanimous “yes”, in others it was unanimously “no”. Facilitators noted that this may be due to a tendency to agree with the first person to speak. The learners that indicate to eat outside their home sometimes, eat at school, the house of a relative, neighbour or friend. The reasons they gave for eating outside their home included paying a visit to or attending a function at another household, the food not being ready at home, or no availability of food at home. Food at home is generally preferred because of the familiarity and safety of it, although some children indicate to prefer the taste of food elsewhere, for example at school. Eating outside the household is also associated with festivities. Some parents see eating elsewhere as an opportunity for their child to have a more diverse, balanced diet, and to promote the spirit of sharing and togetherness among kids. Others do not like the idea of their children eating outside their homes.

3.5 Children receiving meals and milk tend to consume slightly more types of foods

The learners that consume school meals with milk seem to be slightly better off than the group that (partly) does not, in terms of the number of products consumed as a group (see [Appendix 3](#)). This applies to both breakfast and supper, and includes at-home consumption of milk. The only exception is that the Rushanje non-taking group reports a larger diversity for breakfast than the taking group. For the parents, a similar conclusion can be drawn: those that pay for school meals, report a larger diversity of products consumed at home, compared to the non-payers. Here, there is also one exception: the Rushanje non-paying group reports more diversity for supper. However, there are fewer parents participating in the non-taking FGIs, compared to the taking groups, so a lower diversity at group level is expected. Overall, these findings do not provide backing for the earlier findings that consuming school milk has negative consequences for at-home food or milk consumption.

3.6 Recommendations for school meal composition based on home consumption

All groups of children report to have consumed cereals and white roots and tubers for either breakfast or dinner (or both).

Some food groups were reported by most, but not all focus groups. It is likely that not all learners in the focus group consumed these items.

- 4 out of 5 focus groups report consumption of fruits (other than dark orange/yellow fleshed: bananas and avocados)
- 4 out of 5 focus groups report consumption of eggs
- 4 out of 5 focus groups report nuts and seeds (ground nuts)
- 4 out of 5 focus groups report milk consumption
- 4 out of 5 focus groups report consumption of legumes (beans)

The following food groups were not present in most or all of the meals consumed by the learners⁴. As such, it is likely that they were not consumed by most of the learners:

- Dark orange/yellow vegetables and tubers⁵
- Dark and green leafy vegetables (reported by 2 groups, dodo)
- Other vegetables (reported by 3 groups, tomato and eggplant)
- Dark yellow or orange fruits⁶ (reported by 1 group, mango)
- Organ meat
- Flesh meat (reported by 1 group⁷)
- Fish and seafood (reported by 1 group)

To maximise the learners’ dietary diversity, schools could consider (periodically) including one or more of the not-universally consumed food groups into the school meals.

⁴ Other food groups are oils and fats (not reported), sweets (reported in one group) and spices, condiments and beverages (reported in 1 group).

⁵ One focus group reported to have eaten sweet potato. As it was not specified whether this was white, yellow or orange sweet potato, it is not sure whether it is vitamin A-rich or not.

⁶ Food consumption was reported for breakfast and dinner – it is possible that some food groups, like fruits, were consumed outside meals.

⁷ Not specified whether organ or flesh meat, assumed to be flesh.

4 (Rise of) inequality among learners

The results of the survey outcomes (action research part 1) indicated that almost all parents are in favour of and/or do support the programme but that not all of the parents do have children in the programme. A large share of the respondents of the earlier survey also believes that the SMP increases inequality among children. Critical questions are: What makes that parents do not take part in the programme? How do parents whose children do not access the programme feel? What increases or decreases their perception of inequality? And how do children that do not access the programme feel? And how do those that do participate?

Table 4 provides an overview of which groups form a majority in the three studied schools, and how the interview groups are distributed.

Table 4 - Overview of which groups form a majority in which contexts

Type of feeding	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
School where the majority of children does get milk and meals	Muhito	Muhito	
School where some children do and other do not get milk and meals	Kagamba	Kagamba	Kagamba
School where the majority of children does not get milk or meals	Rushanje		Rushanje

4.1 Lack of money is reported as the main reason not to take school milk or meals

In all groups, a lack of money to pay the fees was perceived as a main reason not to participate in the programme. Some parents indicated that they already had difficulty paying the school fees without the extra cost for meals. Milk intolerance was also mentioned as a reason not to participate (mentioned by both learners and parents).

4.2 Almost all parents want (their children) to participate in the programme

Parents also expressed many reasons why they participate in the SMP, most commonly that it leads to better school performance of their children. Another common reason is that it is a way of caring for their children. Learners believe their parents pay for the meals to show their love for their children, to accommodate their children's preference for hot food, to help their children's health and ability to concentrate, and because they are unable to cook food for their children at home during lunchtime. "To avoid kidnapping when going back to get lunch" was also mentioned as a reason why parents would pay for school meals.

A full list of reasons to participate or not participate can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

4.3 Parents of non-takers feel sad about their inability to participate

A parent in the Muhito takers group said: "I feel bad for those who don't get meals and try to talk to their parents basing on the benefits of SMP." However, many of the parents in the non-takers group seemed to be already convinced of the benefits of the SMP. For example, in the Muhito non-takers group (which is a minority in their school), parents said that they feel bad when they do not participate in the program while knowing its benefits. They expressed sadness over seeing their child loitering in the compound miserably when meals are served. In Rushanje, where non-takers form a majority, there was also a sense of sadness - parents felt bad for their children not taking part in the programme and wished to be part, but felt powerless to change it due to the lack of money described in the previous paragraph.

4.4 Parents see potential for inequality to increase due to the SMP

The takers' parents in Rushanje (who are a minority in their school) expressed a concern for the health and well-being of the non-takers, and a fear that there could be class differentiations among those who take and those who do not. They think that those who take meals are seen as the "rich" and those who do not as the "poor". This feeling was also present in the Muhito non-taker group. In the other FGIs, there were no explicit comparisons made between the takers and non-takers. However, as mentioned, many references were made to the perceived benefits of participation and missing out on those. Parents that pay for school meals recommend sensitization activities to promote the benefits of the programme, seemingly assuming that the non-paying parents are not aware. In Rushanje, paying parents comment that when children get meals at school, they become equal and reduce segregation. They also discussed that "children who don't get meals at school, hate themselves and drop out of school eventually".

4.5 School lunches make the takers feel happy, but the non-takers feel sad

Learners indicated to feel sad, disappointed and jealous when they see others eating the warm school meals. Comments were made about the difficulty of carrying containers of food to school and about getting back late to school (or not at all) after going home for a meal. The children that take school meals, are happy about this. They say the hot school lunch prevents them from sleeping in class, the hassle of going back home, sickness from eating cold food brought from home, and stomach pain from ulcers from not-eating. It makes them feel good, lucky, satisfied and blessed.

4.6 Recommendations to reduce inequality focus on financial aspects

- To allow more people to use the SMP, parents suggest to either reduce costs of the school meals, reduce the costs of the milk, or use alternative sources of money to pay for the meals (e.g. government, "agencies", school fees).
- Parents also suggested activities to be employed to increase local incomes, to increase financial literacy, and to increase access to loans for business ventures.
- Learners suggested a scheme in which parents work at school in exchange for their children's participation in the SMP.
- Finally, learners suggested that the school should provide cups so that each pupil gets the same amount of porridge.
- Parents and children also gave recommendations on other topics than financial aspects. For example, programme sensitization efforts by non-local officials are suggested as an effective strategy to increase participation. The full list of recommendations can be found in [Appendix 5](#).

5 Sharing food in school

The results of the action research part 1, the survey outcomes, indicated that sharing food is common in schools. That survey also suggested that children who share their milk tend to be happier with the meals in schools than children who share less often. Critical questions are: Is the food shared with those who do not get meals? How does sharing make the learners feel? How does it make feel the ones who receive shared food and how does it make feel the ones that share food?

5.1 Food is shared depending on the type and quantity of the food

Uncommon foods (chapatti, biscuits, cake and bread) are reported to be less likely to be shared than common foods (matooke and posho): the children who have rare food, want to enjoy the special occasion for themselves. The less food a child has, the less likely it is they share it, as they fear to be left unsatisfied with the portion that remains for them. The roleplaying exercise on sharing showed that keeping a large amount of food to yourself when you have enough to share is not viewed in a positive light by the learners and is seen as “greedy”. Sharing, on the other hand, is associated with friendship and loving each other. Reasons to share equally include: feeling good, being taught to do so and to get help in class from the learner who receives the food. Food can also be exchanged among two learners who have different foods, so both end up with a more varied meal.

5.2 Sharers feel mostly positive, whereas learners who receive foods do not

Learners who share their food generally have positive feelings about it. They feel good, friendly, loved, comfortable and happy about sharing. In Muhito and Rushanje, children also experience negative feelings toward sharing: “I feel partly not good because when I share I don’t get satisfied”. The learners in Rushanje (where the non-takers form a majority) were the only ones that commented on how it feels to receive food from others. They indicate that they do not feel good begging. They feel bad because you cannot get satisfied from sharing, and they feel shy when asking food from a friend to whom they cannot return food.

There do not seem to be large differences in the feelings of learners across contexts.

5.3 Parents have mixed feelings about sharing food

On the one hand, some parents see sharing as a good habit. They like that their children are “givers”, as opposed to recipients, who are considered to be like beggars. On the other hand, parents say that they would like their children to receive what they have paid for or have packed for them. Sharing reduces the amount of food available for their child and creates dissatisfaction. Some parents comment on an increased likelihood that disease is spread through sharing a cup. In Muhito, non-paying parents (minority) said that it was impossible for children to share meals, as the ones who get porridge are served in the feeding shelter yet those who do not get served (in a cup that is too small to share) remain in the compound. However, the paying parents say that they are aware that their children share their food, and their children indicate that they do share.

6 Discussion

6.1 Reflection on validity of the study

Some of the usual drawbacks of an FGI applied. The facilitators noted a tendency in the groups to agree with the first person who spoke, which may mean that weaker signals did not come to the fore. Views that are considered socially unacceptable may not be expressed to save face. In the learners groups, boys were observed to have a tendency to be more outspoken than girls. Some invited parents did not show up, which means that their points of view were not part of the discussion.

The nature of this study is exploratory: perceptions are collected on relevant themes for the SMP. The used methods allowed for participatory discussion, which works well in conducting the FGI, but makes it harder to draw firm conclusions. For example, the food consumption data do not pick up variations in frequency or quantity. The sample was small, meaning that there is a chance that the intergroup differences can be explained by factors other than whether meal takers, milk takers or non-takers are the largest group in that school. The intergroup comparisons should therefore be taken as an indication. However, taken together, the perceptions that came to the fore in the FGIs lead to several conclusions that provide insight into the relation between school and home feeding, the (rise of) inequality among learners, and sharing food in school.

6.2 Reflection on the pertinent themes

Relation between school and home feeding

How does getting a school meal relate to feeding at home and why?

The results of this study do not point to negative consequences of school feeding to home feeding, for either breakfast or supper. If anything, learners who take school meals seem to be also better off at home. An explanation for this finding is not evident. We hypothesize that the extra money spent on school meals has little consequence for consumption at home, as most foods consumed are not purchased but grown at home. As such, the two are not necessarily in direct competition. Parents that are able to afford school meals may also find themselves in a more favourable situation to grow foods at home. If spending money on school meals does mean that overall, less money is spent on foods, negative consequences will likely be found for foods that need to be purchased. Meat, fish and salt were mentioned as products that need to be purchased (usually by men). These products (if the salt is iodized) are nutritious and would diversify the learners' diets, but seem to be consumed very little in the studied groups, whether paying for school meals or not. If money is a problem, matooke may be sold and substituted with posho, which is cheaper. Insight into food products that are commonly served for breakfast and supper at home can be useful to inform the composition of school meals for more dietary diversity among learners.

(Rise of) inequality among learners

How do parents whose children do not access the programme feel? What makes that parents do not take part in the programme? What increases or decreases their perception of inequality? And how do children that do not access the programme feel? And how do those that do participate?

Having enough money to pay for school meals is conditional to participation in the programme. Those who do not participate, indicate that a lack of money is the main reason why. This means that an existing class difference is replicated through participation in the SMP. Those who do not participate, miss out on the SMP's benefits, which may enlarge the inequality. Withholding some of these benefits can potentially have a long-lasting effect: missing school more frequently when taking lunches at home, getting sick from eating contaminated foods when carrying food to school, and even possibly getting kidnapped. Furthermore, school lunches create a moment where it becomes obvious that not all children are equal. Learners across contexts indicate that this causes negative feelings among

many of those who miss out. Recommendations to overcome this inequality are focused on overcoming financial barriers. Sensitisation efforts to the benefits of the programme are also suggested, mostly by parents who do pay for the programme, but may be less relevant as most people indicate to know about the benefits of SMP already and want to participate. Comparing these findings with the signalled trend that SMP participation within schools increases to 100% over time begs the question what ultimately leads parents to prioritise the SMP over other expenditures. The facilitators of the interviews noted that the participants in the non-taking groups seemed demoralised, inactive and sad, in comparison to the taking groups.

Sharing food in school

For the sharer, sharing means losing part of their food. If a learner feels that they will be left with too little food to be satisfied, they may choose not to do so. The fact that the learners freely discuss this, can be taken as an indication that not-sharing is accepted in these cases. The role play showed that not-sharing when one learner has a lot of food, is much less acceptable. Sharing offers some benefits to the sharer: help in school, different food in return, and it is perceived to be good behaviour. When a sharer has enough food, sharing makes them feel good. Receiving has a different connotation attached to it. Receiving learners feel they are in an awkward position. Parents also say that they do not want their children to be receivers, as they would be like “beggars”.

6.3 Key conclusions and recommendations

1. The SMP is appreciated by learners and parents. Learners and their parents perceive an improvement in in-class concentration and school attendance from consuming school meals. School meals are generally preferred by learners over going home or bringing food from home.
2. School feeding does not seem to reduce home feeding. However, serving porridge also does not add much diversity to the learners’ overall diets. Explore the possibility of stimulating schools to (periodically) include extra food groups into the school meals that are not commonly consumed for breakfast or supper at home.
3. Non-participants indicate to be aware of the benefits and would like to participate, but cite financial inability as their reason not to join. Their suggestions focus on lowering the SMP fees or providing additional programmes to allow for income generation. If efforts were to be taken to reduce inequality among the families, these should prioritise reducing financial barriers to participation in the SMP over sensitization efforts in existing SMP locations.
4. Sharing of food is a socially respected practice. Children are unlikely to share too much of their food, as they indicate that they only share if they feel they can get satisfied themselves. The practice is also not limited to school meals – food brought from home may also be shared. Therefore, it does not seem necessary to intervene in children’s sharing practices. However, it may be advisable to monitor parents’ perceptions of sharing, as it may reduce the parents’ willingness to pay for the SMP.

A full list of recommendations put forward by the FGI participants can be found in [Appendix 5](#).

6.4 Management response

We congratulate the authors of this report with an excellent action-research and interesting insights into the TIDE schoolmilk project (SMP).

The SMP theory of change is premised on the basis that continued mobilisation and awareness on the benefits of the programme, would encourage parents to voluntarily contribute to the purchase of food that includes milk consumed as part of the overall hot meal served to learners at school.

The school milk program is built on a strong pillar of ‘behavior change’, where the project sensitizes parents on the role of school feeding in improving the education outcomes, as a way of convincing

them to contribute a fee to feed their children, which has not been happening during the last 20 years of the UPE policy.

Behaviour change does not happen overnight and we have seen great changes over the last 3 years, with early and late adopters coming on board at their own speed. During last years' verification, we confirmed that one third of all schools had (almost) full coverage with over 90% of children participating (against attendance levels of 94%). This has now increased to 50% of schools (450). Poverty is a serious problem that requires to be addressed continuously. Some leaders are not buying the idea of poverty being the hindrance to paying a fee for SMP. They think the majority of parents can generally afford the required contribution.

However, the issue of poverty has been discussed in all learning events. From our experience, local schools are able to develop suitable approaches of dealing with this. In a number of cases school management committees have come up with solutions. For example, the parents of such children provide labour to the school in exchange for fees, or the school has been contacting big farmers nearby to provide milk to the very poor, amongst other measures taken.

Appendix 1 School profiles

	MBARARA District	SHEEMA District	Ntungamo District
<i>School information</i>	RUSHANJE PRIMARY SCHOOL	MUHITO P/S	KAGAMBA PRIMARY SCHOOL
Geographical information: Place (sub-county, village, ward), rural or town-based, and accessibility of school	Children come from around the school. Rural based.	Located in Nyakazinga cell, Muhito ward, Kitagata Town council. Rural based and hard to reach. The children come from far though in the neighbourhood	Children come from around the school; Rural
Orientation of school (public, private, other)	It is a public school	It is a public school	Public, mixed school. Not full boarding.
Size of the school (# learners, # teachers)	<i>Has 248 total enrolment (# teachers missing)</i>	Has 687 total enrolment with 19 teachers	710 learners, 20 teachers
Start date SMP	2017 (1 st trimester)	2016 (1 st trimester)	2016 (3 rd trimester)
SMP performance (% children participating) according to school numbers	28% participation	70% participation	66% participation
AR part 1 Survey participation	58 learners, 59 parents, and 7 teachers	50 learners, 52 parents, and 17 teachers	66 learners, 65 parents, and 22 teachers
Percentage of learners who said they receive school meals (percentage who receive milk at school)	38% (24%)	82% (66%)	77% (42%)
Percentage of parents happy with availability of meals at school for children	78%	75%	78%
Procedures/structures in place to support SMP (SFC in place, payment arrangements, safety nets for poor households? Other?)	SFC in place, Milk is got from parish farm and this farmer is paid on a weekly basis and parents are willing to pay, no safety nets for poor households	SFC is in place, Each child pays Shs. 12,000 for only drinking, shs. 38,500 for drinking and lunch, and shs. 168,000 for boarding	SFC in place. Milk from a farmer and this farmer is paid on a weekly basis. No safety nets for poor households.
Facilities/utensils for preparing and eating the food (or other measures for good food provision and safeguarding food safety)	saucepans, kitchen, plates and cups though inadequate.	Have an old kitchen but are building a new one , and with moderate preparation utensils like saucepans	Saucepans, kitchen, plates, and cups

	MBARARA District	SHEEMA District	Ntungamo District
<i>School information</i>	RUSHANJE PRIMARY SCHOOL	MUHITO P/S	KAGAMBA PRIMARY SCHOOL
Percentage of parents claiming to pay for children's' school meals (need #s)	97%	98%	43%
Milk provision arrangements (provider, pricing, stability, quality control)	From parish farm, UG sh.1000# per litre constant ,good.	The milk is supplied by the local farmer who increases price depending on the season. Price ranges from shs. 800 to shs. 1,500 per litre	Farmer at 1400 per litre and there are no measures for quality control.
Personnel for preparing food (for teachers, for pupils)	Three people preparing food for both the teachers and learners	The same cooks who prepare for teachers do for the pupils	Two people preparing food for both the teachers and learners
Water systems in place	Tapped water/Gravity not available.	Has no piped water but with rain water harvesting tanks	Water purification system
Positive/committed PTA/School management committees			Committed PTA

Appendix 2 Focus group guides

SMP Action research Part 2 - FGI Topic Guide Learners

Name School :
Date :
Location FGI :

Min.	Topic	Method
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction FGI – key message is that SMP is a good thing according to some and a less good thing according to others and that we need to know why in order to make it good for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use FGI information sheet (as attached) Check for consent; consent forms Fill the participant records Warming up for learners: let them design their own name tag
30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction topic <i>Meals at home</i>: presenting foods in meals Question: Thinking of yesterday, what did you have as a meal? Learners individually compose their most typical/ordinary home meals – breakfast and dinner – that they consume and present this to each other. <i>NB: in case of a special occasion or festivity, ask learners to compose a meal of an ordinary day</i> 	<p>Learners are asked to close their eyes and think of yesterday. Then ask to think of their meals. Start with drawing dinner first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instruct them to draw a circle, symbolising a plate, and draw the combination of foods. Use a separate sheet of paper in different colours. Next, ask them to label the foods (add names of foods eaten) Make sure they add name, age, and gender to the drawing. Then repeat the procedure for breakfast Have them show the drawings to each other and let them discover variations (differences, similarities in meals in the morning, in the evening) Then stick the drawings to the wall/blackboard
20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Question: Why do you consume these meals? Include rating to grasp frequency/preference/likelihood of getting the those foods etc. 	<p>Discuss in plenary - Probing questions:</p> <p>3a. Do you eat these meals because ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the taste? What do you like in particular? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are used to it? Do you often eat this (every day?) You have no choice, no say in it? Then who makes decisions about what is eaten, and why? <p>3b. Do you get meals outside home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where do you get them (at school, with friends/fam)? How do these meals compare to meals at home (better, worse ...) <p>3c. Do all members in the household eat the same food? If not, what are the differences, why?</p>
15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction topic <i>Sharing of food and Inequality</i> (prompting toward those who share and who do not and those who feel deprived and those <i>who do not</i>) 	<p>Interactive play by learners:</p> <p>Invite 4 learners, 2 boys and 2 girls, and ask them to form a couple. They both get a package of cookies (or other food which is easy to count)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One couple is instructed to not share equally, and one of them keeps the larger part to him/herself Other couple is instructed to share equally

Min.	Topic	Method
		<p>Then let the first couple act out, and reflect with the actors on how it felt for each of the learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it feel to share? • How did it feel to receive? • How did it feel to not share equally? • How did it feel to not receive equally? • Have the rest of the group share observations <p>Repeat with the second couple.</p>
15	5. SMP is about getting access to food and getting an equal share of food, equal care, regardless of who you are is.	<p>Probing questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this work for you? Did it ever bother you that not all of you are involved? • Is food shared in school with those who do not get meals? What do you think of that? • For those whose parents pay: What makes your parents pay for SMP? And how does that make you feel? • For those whose parents don't pay: Why do you think parents don't pay for milk/meals at school? And how does that make you feel? • For those who don't have milk/meals in school: would you like to have meals at school? Why, and how would it make you feel? •
10	6. Boys group and girls group separately discuss what aspects of the SMP they find relevant 'Develop list key issues and challenges	<p>Probing questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should anything change around SMP in your school? • What actions would be needed and why? • Who should take part in this? or take responsibility for it?
15	7. Plenary discussion on how to address the key issues and what should be prioritised. The facilitator lists all aspects.	<p>Both groups share their main points from the discussion and jointly reflect in the outcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop list key issues and challenges. • What are the most important issues that need to be addressed first?
10	8. Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the participants for their time and effort, and explain once more that their answers will help develop the SMP programme and support the school in implementation • Also explain that there will be a report back to the school in a later stage after all information has been gathered and analysed. • What is the take home message?

SMP Action research Part 2 - FGI Topic Guide Parents

Name School :
 Date :
 Location FGI :
 No of participants (total, # men - # women):

Min	Topic	Method
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction FGI – key message is that SMP is a good thing according to some and a less good thing according to others and that we need to know why in order to make it good for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use FGI information sheet (as attached) Check for consent; consent forms Fill the participant records Prepare (name) tag
20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction topic <i>Meals at home</i>: presenting food in meals 2. Question: Thinking of yesterday, what did you have as a meal? In a male group and female group parents individually compose most typical home meals - breakfast and dinner - for their children and present this to each other. <i>NB: in case of a special occasion or festivity, ask parents to compose a meal of an ordinary day</i> 	<p>Parents are asked to compose yesterday's meals - breakfast and dinner – on two separate sheets of paper in different colours. Start with drawing dinner first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instruct them to draw a circle, symbolising a plate, and write out the combination of foods. Use a separate sheet of paper in different colours. Next, ask them to label the foods (add names of foods eaten) Make sure that they note name, own gender, and whether they draw for a son or daughter on the drawing. Then repeat the procedure for breakfast Have them show the drawings to each other and let them discover variations (differences, similarities in meals in the morning, in the evening) Then stick the drawings to the wall/blackboard <p>List the observed differences mentioned</p>
30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Male group and female group discuss the roles in providing food to the children of <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) home and (b) school 	<p>Probing questions:</p> <p>3a. Does your child eats this meals because ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the taste? What does your child like in particular? You are used to doing it like this/ out of habit? How often do you offer this type of meal ? Every day? <p>3b. Who makes decisions about what is eaten, and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who provides meals s at home Who prepares meals at home <p>3c. Does your child gets meals outside home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where does he or she gets meals (at school, with friends/fam)? Who decides whether your child eats elsewhere? Child, mother, father? <p>3d. Do all members of the household eat the same foods in the household?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If not, what are the differences, why?
20	Break (optional)	
10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Introduction topic <i>Participation in feeding schemes/SMP</i> Prompting toward parents ability and willingness to participate in the SMP and school meals and 	<p>Interactive one-to-one interview between facilitator - parent volunteering or by 2 facilitators. Invite parent to have a short interview in front of the audience. Two scenarios: 1) in which parents are</p>

Min	Topic	Method
	how it feels to be participating or not part participating)	<p>participating, 2) one in which parents are not participating</p> <p>Outline scenario 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome interviewee, ask name, thank him/her for stepping forward Are you participating in the SMP or school meals ? yes Why do you take part in this? How does it make you feel? How does it make you feel about your child, how do you feel about children who are not receiving meals/milk? <p>Outline scenario 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome interviewee, ask name, thank him/her for stepping forward Are you participating in the SMP or school meals ? no - partly Why do you not (fully) take part in this? How does it make you feel? How does it make you feel about your child, how do you feel about children who are receiving meals/milk? <p>Then thank participant for sharing; in mixed group, do exercise with both a participating and a non-participating parent</p>
30	5. Male group and female group discuss what aspects of the play they recognise, and what not. The facilitator lists all aspects and tries to cluster (affordability; peer influence; school rules/choices; choice between schools)	<p>Probing questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you recognise in this conversation? How do you feel about that? What is new or different from your experience or views? Do you have any other experiences with (not) taking part in the SMP? How do you feel about children sharing food in school? What or who helps to take part/ to stay in the programme? What would be needed in the long run?
15	6. In groups they vote on the issues that need to be addressed first, based on the listing of key issues and challenges (ranking).	<p>Probing questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the most important issues that need to be addressed first? <p>Let people discuss freely</p>
15	7. Plenary discussion on how to address the key issues.	<p>Probing questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should anything change around SMP in your school? What actions would be needed and why? Who should take part in this? or take responsibility for it? What would be your advice to schools/parents who are not participating?
10	8. Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank the participants for their time and effort, and explain once more that their answers will help develop the SMP programme and support the school in implementation Also explain that there will be a report back to the school in a later stage after all information has been gathered and analysed. What is the take home message?

Appendix 3 Food consumption at home

Table 5 - Foods consumed for breakfast. The coloured foods are the foods that do not match between learners and parents.

	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
Muhito			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans • Chapatti • Pancakes • Potatoes • Porridge with milk • Bread • Yellow bananas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potatoes • Sugarcane • Avocado • Water • Matooke • Porridge 	
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bananas • G-nuts • Yellow bananas • Sweet potatoes • Millet porridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porridge • Sweet potatoes 	
Kagamba			
<i>Learners</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow bananas • Porridge without milk • Potatoes • Porridge with milk • Cassava • Milk • Fired cassava • Cake • Bread 	
<i>Parents</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Beans • Cassava • Dodo • Poshos • Sweet potatoes • Dry tea (= tea without milk) • G. nuts • Maize porridge 	
Rushanje			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava • Bread • Yellow bananas • Eggs • Porridge • Pancakes • Sugarcane • Porridge with milk 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugarcane • Milk • Cassava • Soda • Sweet potatoes • Porridge • Eggs • Beans • Pancakes • Bread
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Porridge • Yellow bananas • Milk • Black tea 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one person had breakfast

Table 6 - Foods consumed for supper. The coloured foods are the foods that do not match between learners and parents.

	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
Muhito			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans • Chapatti • Pancakes • Potatoes • Porridge with milk • Bread • Yellow bananas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potatoes • Sugarcane • Avocado • Water • Matooke • Porridge 	
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bananas • G-nuts • Yellow bananas • Sweet potatoes • Millet porridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porridge • Sweet potatoes 	
Kagamba			
<i>Learners</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow bananas • Porridge without milk • Potatoes • Porridge with milk • Cassava • Milk • Fired cassava • Cake • Bread 	
<i>Parents</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Beans • Cassava • Dodo • Poshos • Sweet potatoes • Dry tea (= tea without milk) • G. nuts • Maize porridge 	
Rushanje			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava • Bread • Yellow bananas • Eggs • Porridge • Pancakes • Sugarcanes • Porridge with milk 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugarcane • Milk • Cassava • Soda • Sweet potatoes • Porridge • Eggs • Beans • Pancakes • Bread
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Porridge • Yellow bananas • Milk • Black tea 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one person had breakfast
	Meal Milk	Meal No Milk	No meal
Muhito			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundnuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eggplants 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice • Potatoes • Egg plants • Cassava • Fish • Yams • Milk • Mangoes • Beans • Sugarcane • Matooke • Posho • Tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tomatoes • Posho • Cassava • Potatoes • Millet • Porridge 	
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Beans • Dodo/greens • Water • G-nuts • Millet • Cassava • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Beans • Dodo/greens • Sweet potatoes • Meat • Millet • Egg plants 	
Kagamba			
<i>Learners</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potatoes • Beans • Posho • Matooke • Vegetable (Doddoo) • Ground nuts • Avocado 	
<i>Parents</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Beans • Cassava • Dodo • Posho • Sweet potatoes • Dry tea • G. nuts • Maize porridge 	
Rushanje			
<i>Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava • Matooke • Greens (doddo) • Sugarcane • Pancakes • Eggs • Posho • Beans • Porridge • Potatoes • Groundnuts • Sugarcane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet potatoes • Posho • Meat • Matooke • Cassava • Beans • Groundnuts • Tomatoes 	
<i>Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Greens • Beans • Posho • Pumpkins • Sweet potatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matooke • Posho • G. nuts • Egg plants • Dodo • Pumpkins 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G. nuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peas • Meat • Water • Sweet potatoes • Black tea • Yellow banana
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Appendix 4 Reasons to (not) participate

Reasons to participate, according to taking learners

Kagamba

- Because they (our parents) love us.
- Because at times they are not at home to prepare lunch for me.
- Avoid kidnapping in case you were going back to get lunch.
- My parents are always busy during the day working and don't have time to cook food for me.
- My parents want me to eat hot food at school.
- My parents want me to be healthy and concentrate.

Muhito

- To avoid sleeping/dozing in class.
- To eat warm food unlike the cold food I pack from home, which prevents diseases.
- To avoid stomach pains caused by eating cold food.
- I would not want to miss afternoon lessons because sometimes when I reach home there is no food or food is not ready.
- I want to also eat hot food so that I keep alert and not doze off when the teacher is teaching.
- Food at school is very well cooked.
- Avoid stomach pain from ulcers if you do not eat food.

Rushanje

- They do not want me to be disturbed by going back home for lunch
- To avoid eating contaminated food that would have been cooked at night and eaten the following day at one o'clock.
- To eat enough food at school.
- To eat well prepared warm food.
- To stay at school and not waste time going back home to eat food.
- My parents do not have time to cook lunch for me because at lunch time they are in the garden.

Reasons to participate, from paying parents

Kagamba

- That denying child meals at school is a form of corruption.
- That since parents do eat at home, children should as well be provided with meals at school.
- That meals at school saves time for other developmental activities while at home. That being stress free at break and lunch time enables parents to have time to do other income generating activities for meeting other school needs.
- As a baby's derives happiness from the mother's breast, a learner's joy and happiness is determined by a cup of porridge and a plate at break and lunch time respectively.
- Once children are provided with meals, they like what they do, which boosts academic excellence.
- That meals create a positive attitude towards learning among the children. Communities end up having educationists hence socio-economic development.
- That because of the love parents have for the children persevere has made them support the programme. It's one way of showing children that their parents care. The result for this is child-parent relationship that leads to respect and togetherness in homes as well as reducing violence's at home.
- A lot of appreciation was given and extended to SNV since ever since the programme started, children pay attention and performance has increased which is the major motivation for parents to pay money for the school milk.
- That parents have hopes for their children to be better when they get good education and so parents persevere to continue supporting the programme.

- Avoidance of future regrets by children on the parents' side has made parents to keep supporting the children to acquire good education.
- That even if school fees are paid without meals, it will be a wastage. Therefore meals have to be paid for to make children concentrate and utilize money paid fees.
- That the absence of school milk creates fear and rebellions in the family leading to drop school drop outs.

Muhito

- I feel happy children getting meals since they hardly become hungry.
- That children study well by paying attention since they get meals at a right time and get time to prepare themselves.
- Children benefit a lot nowadays because of warm school meals unlike cold ones that creates dizziness.
- It was found out that the current situation among children [academic excellence, children's happiness and healthy bodies] motivates us to continue supporting the program.
- Being a government policy, parents find it hard dodging school payments because even if the children go to another school, the same program will be found there and it will affect them.

Rushanje

- That their children's health require milk because of the food values it contains like fats and proteins that are needed for the body's growth.
- SMP is seen as a good programme benefiting both parents and children. Its benefits have even encouraged outsiders to visit their school communities to come and see how the program is implemented; therefore whom are they not to participate in it?
- In the first instance, parents are feeling happy because their children become happy too and healthy because of milk at school.
- That their children become so excited finding warm meals at school. As such, chances of dozing in class are minimal as they used to be reported by teachers.
- Children getting meals love schooling because they at times get better meals at school compared at home.
- School meals make their children keep focused unlike home meals that are at times not ready at a time when needed.
- Children lack important food values in the absence of meals.

Reasons to not participate, according to non-taking learners

Muhito

- Parents do not have money
- Some pupils are orphans
- Parents do not have jobs to get money.

Reasons not to participate, from non-paying parents

Muhito

- Lack of money was found to be a stumbling block for the participants' involvement in the school milk programme. However they appreciate and like it so much.

Rushanje

- Low incomes among the members was ranked as number one since even other small businesses require some capital which they cannot afford.
- Poor climatic conditions that are now hard to predict affects farming which has made people become poorer hence hindering them from participating in the programme.

Appendix 5 List of recommendations

From paying parents

Kagamba

- SNV/TIDE/CBOs and government structures should take lead in promoting income generating activities or financial literacy.
- Follow-ups should be strengthened to keep the SMP going forward especially by the government officials and the lead CBOs.
- Officials outside the district should also take lead in sensitization programs since their messages are more respected than those of locals ("An angel can't have respect in one's area").

Muhito

- Practicing modern methods of agriculture like addition of manure in the soils.
- The headmaster together with the SMC should revise the costs of meals by reducing a little such that the funds cut from school fees be part of meals.
- The organization SNV/TIDE should take part by supporting parents to have the costs reduced by paying part of the school meals.
- The cooks should be helped by the organization to have improved salaries through topping up on their salaries.
- Massive sensitization be extended to all the parents to know the benefits of SMP like improved performance.

The following agencies were cited as responsible implementing such above;

- NGOs like SNV/CEGED since they have funds to carry out sensitization through paying workers.
- Community members like parents, local council chairpersons and others since they speak with authority
- Government through its structures can carry sensitization and funding especially in agriculture by providing soft loans.

Rushanje

- The quality and quantity of milk added in the porridge should be increased by getting milk from the diary.
- The government should provide resources like saucepans, milk and cups since the school is government-aided.
- People should be sensitized on income generating activities like piggery and poultry keeping so that they can get sources of income and participate in the programme.
- Government supporting village banks to help parents acquire loans and start small projects geared towards supporting SMP.

The following were the recommendations for parents who do not pay for meals:

- School meals are served in time.
- When children get meals at school, they become equal and reduce segregation.
- That children who do not get meals at school, hate themselves and drop out of school eventually.
- Parents should understand the benefits of feeding children at school like improved academic excellence and good health.

From non-paying parents

Rushanje

- Establishing good markets that can pay higher prices for the existing agricultural products like matooke and beans.
- Reducing on costs for meals so that they can manage to join the programme.
- Practice commercial farming other than subsistence through getting simple loans coupled with forming farmers groups.

-
- Changes should be made in the SMP to cater all the parents by reducing the costs for meals and having children getting free meals if a parent can afford paying for more than three kids.

The participants further suggested some of the agencies that can come in and do help to support and take part in the programme:

- That Government through its structures and being the policy formulator with all the resources and mandate can pay part of the fees to cater for the children.

No recommendations were given by the Muhito non-paying parents.

From takers

Kagamba

- Schools should encourage parents to pay for their children through PTA meetings.
- Parents should work hard to pay for their children.
- They should reduce money for milk.
- The school should provide cups so that every pupil gets the same amount of porridge.
- Sensitize parents about SMP and its benefits by sending them letters about SMP.
- Head of nutrition in the school should sensitize the pupils about the SMP on school assembly every Friday morning.

Muhito

- Reduce on the amount of money paid for meals and this is to be done by the school administration.
- Government to help provide financial support to those who cannot manage paying for meals for their children through different organizations like SNV that can provide milk.
- Head teacher to tell parents to pay for their children.
- Sensitize parents about SMP so as to pay for their pupils through PTA meeting
- Sensitize parents about dangers of eating left over cold food.
- Sensitize parents through radios and TVs in the disadvantages of not paying for meals.
- School committee to inform parents about the good about paying for their children's meals at school.

Rushanje

- Head teacher should sensitize other pupils about the importance of SMP.
- Parents to try in all ways so that the children take meals at school for example parents who do not have jobs can be given jobs at school so that when the parents work at school the pupils school fees and meals are covered instead of paying the parent who is working at school.
- School to rear animals/Cows and have a garden to provide milk and food so that price for meals is reduced.
- SNV should give free meals to those who perform well in class.

From non-takers

Muhito

- Sensitizing parents about the advantages to SMP through the head teacher by sending them messages or letters that talk about SMP.
- Calling/inviting parents to school for meetings to discuss issues of feeding at school.
- Sensitizing parents about dangers of cold food and how this can affect their academic life.
- Talking to parents politely so that they pay for us.

Rushanje

- Sensitizes the parents on the benefit of pupils getting meals at school.
- The school should make it mandatory for every parent to pay for meals by adding the money for meals as part of school fees.
- Through school assembly the head teacher should continuously sensitize the learners in the school about SMP and its benefits because some pupils don't know about it.

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