



McGovern-Dole Program

The McGovern-Dole Program provides meals to hungry school-children in the world's poorest countries. This simple act not only addresses hunger and poor nutrition, but also promotes childhood education, long-term development and global security.

Created by the 2002 Farm Bill after operating for two years as a pilot, the McGovern-Dole Program is named after former Sens. George McGovern (D-S.D.) and Bob Dole (R-Kan), who worked on a bipartisan basis over their careers to eliminate hunger at home and abroad. McGovern-Dole projects are funded through USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and implemented by NGOs, the World Food Program (WFP) and governments. Since 2001, McGovern-Dole has supported projects in 44 countries.

Alleviates Child Hunger

There are currently 66 million children in the world's poorest countries who at-

tend school hungry. At a cost of \$50 per child each year, all 66 million children could be provided school meals for about \$3.2 billion annually. These figures do not include the many chronically hungry children who do not currently attend school.

The McGovern-Dole Program will support about 4 million children this year, while WFP will reach more than 20 million children through contributions from the international community.

McGovern-Dole awards have been granted to the following countries for FY 2009: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Yemen.

Promotes Education, Especially for Girls

Advancing educational attainment in developing countries is a fundamental component of broad-based economic growth and overall global stability. Food attracts children to enroll in school and helps keep them there, as parents are less likely to keep children home to work

During the first year of a school meals program, average enrollment increases by about one-fourth, with even higher increases occurring in programs that operate for more than one year.

As an additional incentive, many school meals programs incorporate take-home rations. In 2008, WFP provided take-home rations to 2.7 million girls and 1.6 million boys. Programs that combine take-home rations for girls with on-site meals for all pupils have seen sustained increases in girls' enrollment of 30 percent.

Provides a Critical Safety Net

In the wake of natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies, school meals programs ensure that children receive at least one nutritious meal per day and encourage students to resume their studies, facilitating the reopening of schools after a crisis. Amidst the high food prices of 2008, for example, WFP scaled up its school feeding projects for 5 million children and their families in 14 countries. The World Bank and WFP just released a

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WFP/A. Chicheri

McGovern-Dole Program, *continued*

joint report entitled “Rethinking School Feeding” that focuses on the use of school meals as a safety net.

Furtheres Additional Health and Nutrition Interventions

Globally, school meals programs play a key role in establishing partnerships to further a wide range of critical health and nutrition interventions, such as micronutrient supplementation, de-worming treatment, HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention education and the planting of school gardens.

Demonstrates United States’ Generosity and Goodwill

The delivery of U.S.-labeled bags of food to feed children is an effective instrument of public diplomacy that demonstrates goodwill and generosity.

Promotes Infrastructure Development and Self-Sufficiency

Over the past 45 years, approximately 30 countries, including China, Ecuador and Peru, have phased out WFP school meals programs, and many now have the capacity to operate programs on their own.

Supports Global Security

Providing food in schools offers an alternative to children who might be susceptible to recruitment by groups that provide meals in return for attendance at extremist schools.

Additional Funding is Needed

In 2008, Congress reauthorized the McGovern-Dole Program for five more years (2008-2012) as part of the Farm Bill and provided a one-time injection of \$84 million in funding. When combined with the \$100 million regular appropriation, \$184 million is available this year. All of these resources were awarded to projects as of April 2009.

For FY 2010, the administration has requested \$199.5 million for McGovern-Dole and both the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Bills have matched the request.

The capacity to feed and educate more children through this program is clear: not only is the program only meeting a small portion of the global need, but in FY 2008, there were more than 60 applications requesting \$1.8 billion in funding.



WFP/Marcus Prior

Guivinciane Nguingaza, Central African Republic

“I go to school to learn, but also because I am hungry,” says Guivinciane Nguingaza, age 7. Before WFP’s assistance, she often ate only one daily meal. Now she is one of more than 400 children eating breakfast and lunch each day at her school in the Central African Republic. “My favorite subject,” she says, “is corn meal.”

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