



The Journey of the National School Meal Policy development process

To institutionalise school meals, the formulation of the National School Meal Policy was initiated following the visit of a high-level delegation to Brazil in 2012 with technical help from the World Food Programme (WFP) and WFP's Centre of Excellence (CoE), Brazil. A Draft National School Meal Policy (NSMP) was developed between 2013 and 2016 through extensive consultations with various stakeholders.

After drafting the NSMP, **Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) carried out 7 rigorous Divisional level consultations** in Rangpur, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram, Barishal, Sylhet, Mymensingh and Rangamati from June 2016 to May 2017. These consultations at the divisional level included Ministers, Parliament Members and representatives from various Government departments, civil society, academia, and UN agencies, NGOs and development partners. WFP supported these consultations in partnership with GAIN and CAMPE.

A Technical Committee was formed by the MoPME in July 2016 to review the draft policy and incorporate necessary changes based on the outcome of the consultations, discussions, and reviews from various stakeholders, global perspectives and studies. The Technical Committee is headed by the ADG of DPE with members from various Government ministries, WFP, UNICEF, GAIN and CAMPE.

Eight relevant ministries gave written feedback/recommendations on the draft policy. It recognizes the importance and relevance of school meal.

The draft **National School Meal Policy (NSMP)** envisions a transition from biscuits to school meals and gradual expansion of the program to reach all primary school children. The international experience and local consultations show that this transition from fortified biscuits to home grown school meals is essential to provide school children the proper nutrients they require to succeed in school and in life.

The **Technical Committee submitted the revised version of the policy to MoPME** in October 2017.

An **inter-ministerial committee**, headed by the Secretary, MoPME, was formed and **two meetings were held on 15 November 2017 and 2 January 2018**. The inter-ministerial committee systematically reviewed the draft version of the policy, revised it and thereafter **endorsed a draft final version of the national school feeding policy**. Along with a suggestion for a national level workshop for wider sharing of the endorsed draft.

In February 2018, MoPME & DPE posted the draft National School Meal Policy on their website for wider sharing.

Meanwhile MoPME requested WFP to provide support to **identify the minimum nutritional requirement** for school meals in July 2018.

WFP along with MoHFW held an Inter-Agency Technical workshop in November 2018 on “School Meals; addressing school children’s nutritional needs”

From this workshop, a technical committee including BNNC, IPHN, INFS/DU was formed by MoHFW to identify the minimum nutritional requirement for school meals. The committee held two extensive meetings and provided their recommendations, including a suggestion to change the name of the policy to National School Meal Policy considering the importance and appropriateness to MoHFW.

MoHFW sent the final recommendations to MoPME in February 2019 to prepare the policy as a nutrition-sensitive policy considering the minimum nutritional requirements of school meals.

The revised nutrition sensitive draft “National School Meal Policy 2019” has been endorsed by the Inter-Ministerial committee on 5 March 2019, the penultimate step before formal approval by the Government.

