



**PLAN**  
INTERNATIONAL



# INTEGRATED SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME: PROGRESS & STORIES OF IMPACT

# ACRONYMS

ISFP	Integrated School Feeding Programme
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
TOT	Training of Trainers
HGSFP	Integrated Home-Grown School Feeding Programme
PIIA	Project Implementation & Influencing Area
NFI	Non-Food Items
PISL	Plan International Sierra Leone
RMs	Regional Managers
WRA	Western Area Rural
GTAs	Gender Transformative Animators
FM	Food Monitors
GE&I	Gender Equality and Inclusion
WAR	Western Area Rural
SMC	School Management Committee



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# COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



## EVARISTE SINDAYIGAYA

*Country Director  
Plan International Sierra Leone  
2018-2023*

Our perspective and ambition as Plan International are that we recognize that all girls must stand strong creating global change, and children, especially girls must learn skills for work and life. In addition, the agenda universal access inclusive quality education is personal to Plan International. Therefore, Plan International acknowledges the value of school feeding in ensuring that girls access schools, stay in schools and complete basic and secondary school education.

Therefore, in order to facilitate an inclusive, equitable, continuous, and supportive educational foundation for girls, boys, and at-risk children, Plan International Sierra Leone (PISL) in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone implements the integrated school feeding programme with the overarching outcome to improve accessibility to sustainable education and educational rights of children, especially girls. The ISFP's intermediate outcomes are 1) improved access to education for girls and boys, 2) improve participation of women in market accessibility and agri-business production and economics, and 3) increase stakeholder & community awareness of gender equality, radical inclusion, and child protection.

The commitment from the government of Sierra Leone to ensure children get school meals and support they need to thrive in school is extraordinary. The integrated school feeding programme has increased enrolment and retention in primary schools, and it has also given more chance to children from poor households to pursue their education, thereby reducing failure and drop outs. For children living in remote communities, school feeding has become an essential safeguard by contributing to educational continuation. I thank the government of Sierra Leone for shifting school feeding from social protection programmes to a core feature of the country's strategies to ensure food and nutrition security for all. The adoption of home-grown school feeding as a strategy to improve nutrition, increase smallholder farming and eliminate hunger is commendable. My appreciation goes to the leadership of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education for making school feeding a priority in order to improve retention, attendance and performance of children in schools.

A big thank you to all our partners who made it possible for us to do what we do every day and supported our journey of helping girls learn, lead, decide and thrive. The exciting work described in the pages of this magazine would not have been possible without you. I call for more investments in school feeding programmes and other social interventions that promote access and success in education so that every child and every girl in rural communities reach their full potential.

In this magazine, you will see some great examples of how the integrated school feeding programme is improving retention, attendance and performance of children in schools. I hope you are inspired as I am by the value of the integrated school feeding programme in ensuring that girls access schools, stay in schools and complete basic school education.



# MINISTER'S MESSAGE



**DAVID MOININA SENGEH**

*Chief Minister*

Dear Readers,

I am delighted to share with you the remarkable progress and impact of Sierra Leone's National School Feeding Programme. As the Chief Minister, I am honoured to be part of this transformative initiative that is nourishing the minds and empowering the futures of over 748,000 school children across our beautiful country. Implemented in collaboration with esteemed partners like Plan International, the World Food Programme (WFP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Knight Investment and Development for social Integration, this initiative stands as one of the largest and most impactful school feeding projects in the world.

Aligned with President Bio's Transforming Education Agenda, the programme has yielded remarkable results. By providing daily meals, it has significantly improved school enrolment rates, attendance, and participation. The programme plays a crucial role in reducing dropout rates by allowing more students to stay in school and complete their education. It also eases the financial burden on families, allowing them to allocate resources to other essential needs. Notably, it has a particular focus on empowering girls and addressing the challenges they face in accessing education.

What sets Sierra Leone's National School Feeding Programme apart is its commitment to sustainability through the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP). By promoting local agricultural production, the programme not only provides nutritious meals but also stimulates community-led economic growth. It creates job opportunities, income generation, and agricultural education initiatives for students and local communities. Through the HGSFP, we foster self-sufficiency, resilience, and the long-term social and economic development of Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone's school feeding programme is a collective effort. It is not just an 'us' programme; it is a 'we' programme. The success and international recognition we have gained would not have been possible without the support of our partners and stakeholders. We are deeply grateful for our close partnership with Plan International and their unparalleled commitment to deliver on promises. Together, we are ensuring that more Sierra Leonean children have access to education and can realise their full potential, one plate at a time.

# TEAM LEAD'S MESSAGE



## ANDREW IRAGUHA

*Team Lead  
Integrated School Feeding Programme*

In my role as the Team Leader for the Integrated School Feeding Programme in Sierra Leone, I have witnessed first-hand the tremendous importance of school meals in improving education. By supporting food-insecure communities, we are not only providing nourishment but also empowering children to overcome obstacles and reach their full potential. Success, to me, lies in the tangible outcomes achieved when children complete their education and get the certificates that open doors to a brighter future of gainful employment.

The response from the communities we serve has been incredibly heartening. Their positive feedback about the quality of the food, the additional services provided, and the dedication of our staff, reaffirms the positive impact of the programme. We have also learned valuable lessons along the way, such as the importance of addressing delivery delays and access challenges. These lessons drive us to continuously improve our strategies and ensure that we are effectively serving the needs of the children and communities we support. Together, we are working towards a future where education becomes a transformative force, enabling every child to thrive and build a better world.

# PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

The Integrated School Feeding Programme (ISFP) supports over 1,300 pre and primary schools in Sierra Leone. This means over 300,000 children including 152,500 girls are targeted to receive school meals at lunchtime. Thanks to the funding from the Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education with financial contribution from Plan International Canada, it creates a social safety net for vulnerable children, families, and communities, increasing children's access to education. Through the project, we focus on girls rights and access to education through gender equality and child protection initiatives.

## WHY SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

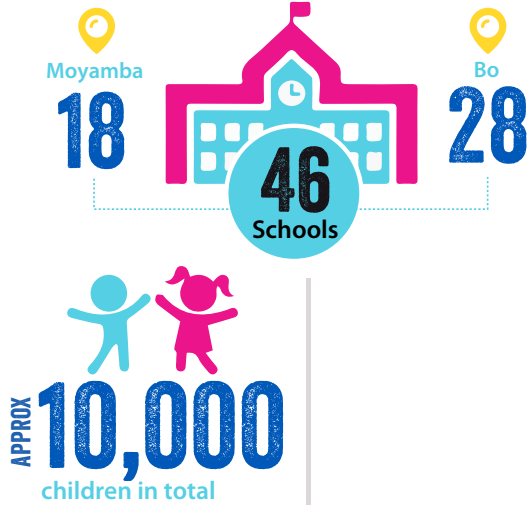
Sierra Leone faces food insecurity, which impacts over half its population. Almost 2 million children lack sufficient food, and over 1 million are at risk of child abuse. The School feeding programs improve educational access, and can improve supply chain of locally sourced foods, which is a commitment of the government in Sierra Leone. ISFP provides meals, promotes gender equality and child protection, and addresses social norms. It enhances enrolment, attendance, and nutritional outcomes, as well as eases the financial burdens for poor families. Investing in these programs prioritises children's well-being and education for a more equitable Sierra Leone.



# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

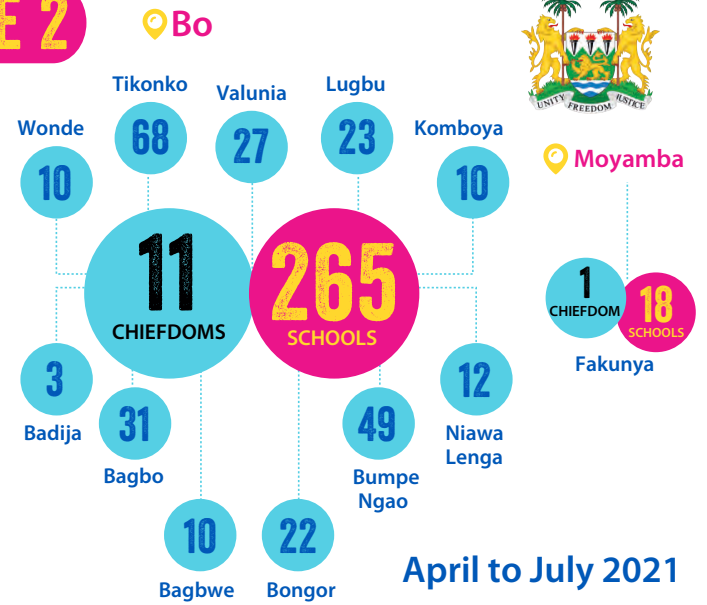
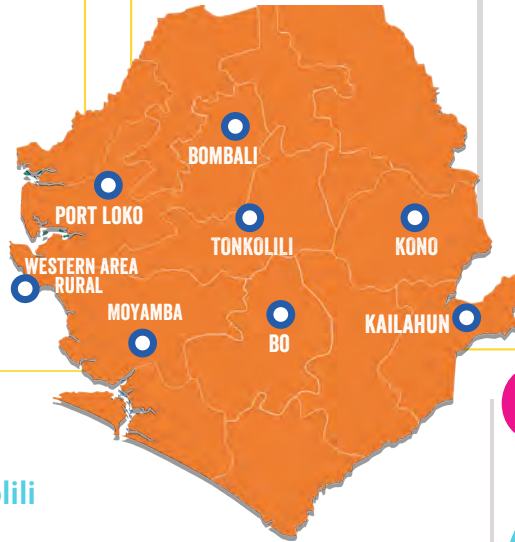
## PHASE 1

January to April 2021



## PHASE 2

APPROX **67,000** pupils targeted



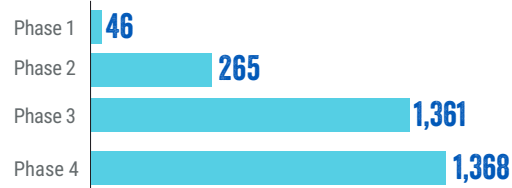
## PHASE 3

January to July 2022

Port Loko + Bombali + Moyamba + Tonkolili + Kono + Kailahun + Bo



This was a substantial increase from Phases 1 and 2, which only focused on schools in Bo and Moyamba.



## PHASE 4



Bo, Moyamba, Kailahun, Bombali, Port Loko and Western Rural

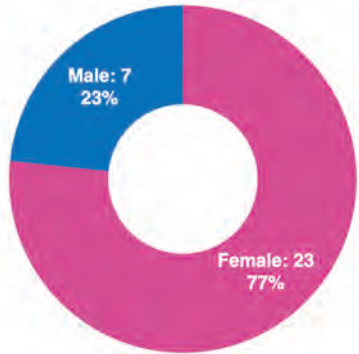
November 2022 to August 2023



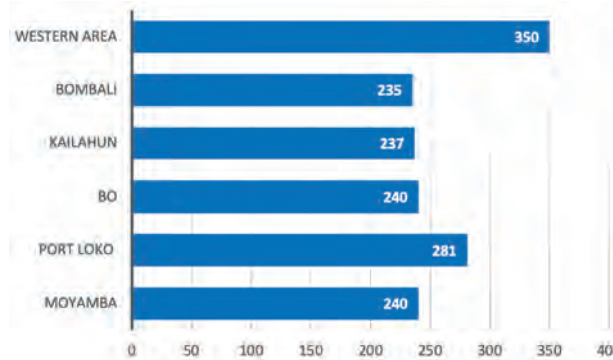
Moyamba

1 CHIEFDOM  
18 SCHOOLS  
Fakunya

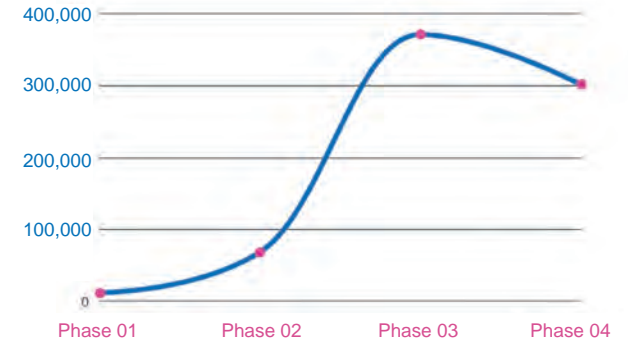
# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



Number of Participants for Women Cooperative group training



Number of community members trained on safeguarding, child protection, gender, psychosocial, positive parenting

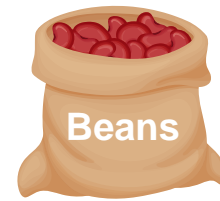


Number of Programme Beneficiaries

The following commodities were disbursed during the implementation



Rice



Beans



Gari



Salt



OIL

METRIC TONS	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
Rice	176.5	889	2,293	3,361
Beans	44.13	222	774	975
Gari			783	332
Salt	7.36	7.4	150	150
OIL	14.71	74	253	325



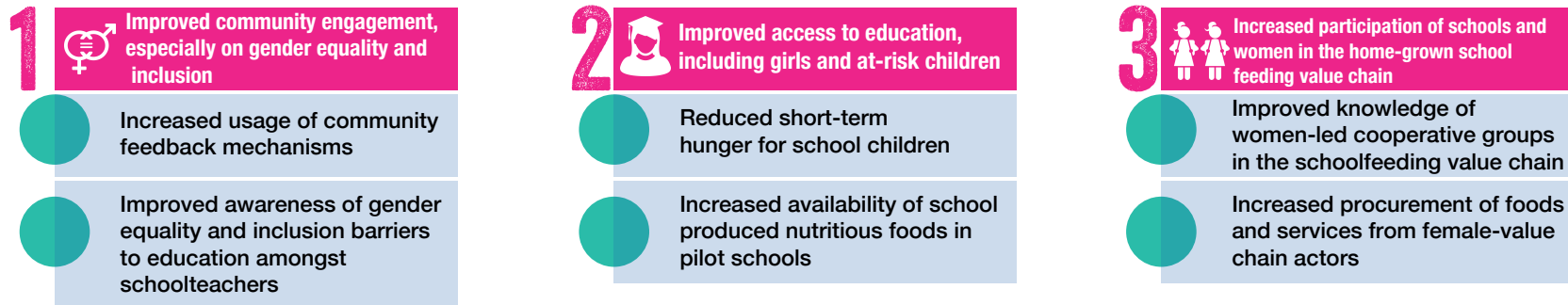


Bo Community Training

# PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES



## Improved realisation of the right to education for children, especially girls



# PHASES



## Phase 1

This phase started in January and ended in April 2021, covering two districts: Bo and Moyamba. Food and NFIs were distributed to 46 schools, with 28 located in Bo and 18 in Moyamba, benefiting a total of 10,672 children.

## Phase 2

Phase two started in April and ended in July 2021. Targeting 66,989 pupils in Bo and Moyamba, with extra attention to 11 areas in the Bo district. These areas included 10 schools in Wonde, 68 schools in Tikonko, 27 schools in Valunia, 23 schools in Lugbu, 10 schools in Komboya, 12 schools in Niawa Lenga, 49 schools in Bumpeh Ngao, 22 schools in Bongor, 10 schools in Bagbwe, 31 schools in Bagbo, and 3 schools in Badija.

## Phase 3

Phase 3 of the project started in January 2022 and concluded in July 2022. It expanded significantly, covering seven areas: Moyamba, Kailahun, Bo, Tonkolili, Bombali, Kono, and Port Loko. During this phase, we worked with 1,361 schools and 371,054 pupils. This marked a substantial increase compared to the earlier phases. The number of programme participants saw a significant rise in Phase 3. In this phase, there were 371,054 participants, indicating a substantial 3,376% increase in the number of people involved in the programme.

## Phase 4

Launched in November 2022 and ended in August, Phase 4 covered six districts: Bo, Moyamba, Kailahun, Bombali, Port Loko, and Western Rural, impacting 1,368 schools and over 301,397 students. This phase introduced 'Bridge Feeding' in Term 1 to distribute surplus commodities from Phase 3. In December, children received meals for 12 days before the holiday break to ensure continuous support.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME



01

Food delivery to schools is monitored through waybills. School heads or focal persons sign off on waybills to ensure accountability.

02

Schools use canteen request form, the daily school register, and the school store bin card to record food utilization based on pupils attendance per day.

03

Food monitors visit schools regularly to oversee the feeding programme, assess implementation, identify issues, and provide guidance.

04

Information focal points are deployed to gather feedbacks from communities, which are shared through Telerivet. Communities can also report their concerns through 511 (toll free line).

05

Joint Monitoring exercises conducted with MBSSE and other partners to share learnings and best practices in implementing the school feeding programme.

06

Our quality assurance team monitors how food is transferred from the warehouses to the schools. They also check accuracy of waybills.

# TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT)



ISFP Staff





## WHY TRAIN STAFF?

ISFP aims to provide children with education and nutritious meals while addressing gender inequality and societal norms. A training session was conducted for field staff. The objective was to equip staff to promote positive change in communities, with the aim of stakeholders being able to start to question and challenge societal norms that cause barriers for children to realise their full rights, particularly girls

## SESSION APPROACH

The first ToT session in Port Loko equipped PIIA staff with materials for community rollout sessions, using participatory approaches like discussions, group work, skits, demonstrations, and presentations.

## TOPICS DISCUSSED

- Food Preparation/Cooking Hygiene and Portion Sizing for School Meals by School Gardens
- Telerivet Sensitisation and Awareness-Raising
- Communications & Visibility
- Gender Equality and Inclusion, Gender Transformative Marker
- Safeguarding & Child Protection, Positive Parenting, Psychosocial Support



*Livelihood Specialist*

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



ISFP aims to provide nutritious food to children in schools to enhance attendance, retention, and participation. However, the presence of food and frequent interactions with staff, authorities, and partners can increase many risks, including psychological, physical, sexual abuse, exploitation, and neglect. To address these, several key actions are taken:

- 1-** Training 55 ISFP staff members to be trainers on gender and safeguarding, cascading it to education providers and communities
- 2-** Engaging children and adults separately to identify risks posed by the School Feeding programme and recommend risk mitigation measures. Score-carding methodology was used to get feedback from children)
- 3-** Training over 1,583 stakeholders including teachers, SMC (School Management committee) members, focal points, mother's club members, on child protection and safeguarding
- 4-** Popularizing a 511 toll-free line for communities to provide feedback and complaints on the ISFP implementation.
- 5-** Holding periodic radio discussions to raise awareness in communities on child protection, gender equality and the importance of education for children.
- 6-** Training of 166 school focal points and cooks on food safety, hygiene and portion sizing. These efforts aim to safeguard children and ensure a safe program environment.

The training was facilitated by field staff who had undergone a training of trainers workshop. They employed diverse interactive methods, such as presentations, discussions, role plays, and practical demonstrations.

Overall, this training empowered community and school stakeholders to create more inclusive and accountable environments, ensuring the well-being and development of children in their communities.



*Stakeholders trainings*



# GENDER EQUALITY & INCLUSION IN SCHOOL FEEDING



ISFP recognised the importance of addressing gender disparities to empower girls' education in Sierra Leone. Through analysing the impact of inadequate food, risky behaviours, and social norms, ISFP designed a gender-responsive programme during Phase 4, in response to the MBSSE Radical Inclusion Policy (Est. 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021).



Plan International conducted trainings for teachers, SMC (School Management Committee) members, and district stakeholders across communities where we implement the school feeding programme to build their capacities and increase their knowledge to be gender-responsive when engaging children. These efforts aimed to enhance gender equality and educational opportunities for girls and women in Sierra Leone.





# WESTERN AREA RURAL LAUNCH

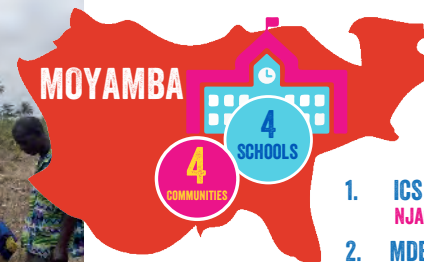


ISFP was officially launched in Western Area Rural (WAR) on January 30th, 2023, in collaboration with MBSSE. The event included exhibitions, speeches, school children's performance, and the introduction of school feeding programme.

# HOME GROWN INITIATIVE



1. **ST. AMBROSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
MAOMA, MASIKA
2. **KRIPS**  
FOUDU SECTION, MASIKA
3. **AHMADIYA MUSLIM PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
FOUDU SECTION, MASIKA
4. **ST. PETERS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
ROMENI



1. **ICS PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
NJAGBAHUN
2. **MDEC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
MOYAMBA JUNCTION
3. **MDEC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
NJADIHUN
4. **SEVEN DAYS ADVENTIST**  
NJAGBAHUN



## WHY HOME GROWN

*Sierra Leone faces a severe food insecurity crisis that affects over 4 million people.*

MBSSE published and passed the National School Feeding Policy in 2021, which has laid the foundational framework for ISFP. Within this policy, specific implementation guidelines are detailed for an Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP). The HGSFP was developed using twelve guiding principles, including mutuality, community participation and ownership, complementarity, cost-efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability, and social equity and gender. These specific principles drove the decision to introduce locally produced foods into the ISFP supply chain.

## GARDEN TYPE

Eco-friendly gardening using bio-pesticides, liquid fertilisers, and organic soil management.

## MEASURES FOR THE DRY SEASON

This include providing watering tools and effective water facilities in schools during dry periods.

## FUTURE PLANS

- Monitor vegetable production
- Involve parents and school management
- Sell any excess vegetables
- Potentially expand to 30 schools
- Implement water harvesting
- Connect with other livelihood projects



## SCHOOL GARDEN PROCESS

1. **Assessment:** Schools in Port Loko and Moyamba districts were assessed for the pilot school garden project. Eight schools were selected based on criteria like water accessibility, availability of land, and the readiness of the School Management Committee.
2. **Caretaker Selection and Training:** Eight caretakers were chosen to manage the garden. The caretakers underwent training on gardening basics, farm tool usage, record keeping, and safeguarding policies.
3. **Procurement of Tools and Seed Testing:** The procurement process for basic gardening tools done. Seed testing was planned, and the distribution of supplies including seeds, was scheduled for May.
4. **Monitoring** regularly done by plan staff.

## SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS BENEFITING FROM SCHOOL GARDEN PILOT

### PORT-LOKO

St. Ambrose Primary School  
KRIPS  
Ahmadiya Muslim Primary School  
St. Peters RC Primary School

### MOYAMBA

ICS Primary School  
MDEC Primary School  
MDEC Primary School  
Seven Days Adventist

# IMPACT STORIES

*Note: The names used for the children in the stories are not their real names.*



*Ishatu with her mother and sisters*



# FUELING SUCCESS:

## HOW A FULL STOMACH BOOSTS ISHA'S EDUCATION



“  
*Thanks to the Integrated School Feeding Programme,  
I now eat every lunchtime at school. It helps me stay  
focused in class, and I am grateful for it.*  
Ishatu  
”

Ishatu, or Isha, as everyone calls her is a 10-year-old girl who lives in a small community in the Port Loko district of Sierra Leone. She is a bright and curious child, always eager to learn new things. She is currently in class 3 in primary school. As the third of four sisters she is being raised by a single mother who is struggling to make ends meet. Isha’s mother has no job and often has to borrow money to feed her children. Before the school feeding programme was introduced by the Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education implemented by Plan International, her mother could only afford to give her one Leone (\$ 0.04) for school. This left Isha without money for lunch.

Therefore, Isha was often late for school or missed classes altogether. Isha wakes up at 5 a.m. every day and washes the dishes, fetches water, and gets ready for school. Isha and her sisters attend the same school, and they all walk there every day. After school Isha is responsible for cleaning the house and fetching more water. They live in a one-room apartment with six other people, including her aunt and their children. This means Isha and her sisters have to sleep on the floor.



Isha is living a difficult life due to false accusations made against her mother by her aunt, causing her mother to lose her business and undergo family struggles, leading to financial hardship for the family. Isha's mother struggles to support her children financially and has to ask a teacher to help her pay the school fees.



However, since ISFP has been ongoing in their school, they now eat lunch every day at school.

“

*The Integrated School Feeding Programme is not just about providing meals; it is about giving children a chance to learn and succeed. I have seen the difference it has made in the lives of Isha and many other children like her, and I believe it is a crucial investment in our future.*

**Musa Koroma**  
*Ishatu's teacher*

”

Musa Koroma is Isha's teacher. He describes Isha as a brilliant girl who absorbs everything taught to her very quickly. However, Mr. Koroma reveals that before the introduction of the school feeding programme, Isha was often late for school as her family struggled to afford her lunch. He recalls that Isha used to visit him at home, and he would provide her with food that she would share with her sisters. He stresses the importance of the school feeding programme, as it has enabled Isha and other students to focus on the studies without worrying about where their next meal will come from. Since the introduction of the programme, Isha has become more active in class; she has even become the most active child when it comes to representing the class or answering questions. He emphasises that many children in the community want to go to school but are unable to do so because of poverty. Mr. Koroma urges the government to continue providing support to children like Isha by ensuring that the school feeding programme remains in place. He believes that with this kind of support, more children in the community will have the opportunity to receive an education and reach their full potential.



# THE POWER OF A SCHOOL MEAL: KADIATU'S STORY



“

*I look forward to the meal at school every day, as it is the first thing I think about when I wake up*

**Kadiatu**

”

Kadiatu is a 12-year-old girl who attends primary school in Port Loko District. Despite her young age, Kadiatu has already experienced a lot of hardship in her life. She lives with her grandmother, she has never met her mother, and her father does not take care of her. Her grandmother is old and cannot work, so they struggle to make ends meet.

Kadiatu's situation was especially difficult when she was attending her previous school. She was unable to pay her school fees, so her primary school teachers helped pay them in exchange for her doing housework for them. This continued until Kadiatu was able to finish primary school. However, she was still struggling financially, and when she reached fifth grade, she was forced to leave the school due to financial issues.

Thankfully, one of Kadiatu's neighbours brought her to a new primary school, and they were able to take her in without having to pay any tuition fees. Kadiatu was also given school supplies, a uniform, books, and socks, all for free.

But even with the school's help, Kadiatu's life remained a struggle. She lives in a rented single room with her grandmother; the house leaks, and they have no toilet. Her grandmother pays 50 leones (\$2.2) every month for the house, but they have to rely on different people for help. Kadiatu has to wake up at 5 a.m. every day to sweep the house and wash the dishes before heading off to school.



Before the school feeding programme implemented by the Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Plan International, Kadiatu attended school without lunch. She would often have to wait until she went home to cook for both her and her grandmother. They could only afford food if they were given money from neighbours or teachers for the day. The situation was difficult for Kadiatu, and it affected her health, making her frequently fall ill.



*Kadiatu outside her school*

With the introduction of ISFP, Kadiatu's life changed. She no longer has to worry about food during the school day, and she even looks forward to the meal every morning. With the school providing her with a healthy meal each day, Kadiatu became more energetic and healthier, and she had more time to study after school, which was a great relief.

ISFP not only gives Kadiatu the ingredients she needs to learn and grow, but it also gives her hope for a better future. Kadiatu dreams of becoming a doctor so that she can help people in her community, just as people have helped her throughout her life. She wants to make a difference and break the cycle of poverty that has held her family and her community back for so long.

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*"ISFP has had a significant impact on the health and well-being of our school children. It's not just about providing them with food; it's also about giving them the energy and motivation to learn and grow." – Florence B Conteh (Kadiatu's teacher)*

Florence B. Conteh is Kadiatu's teacher; she has noticed a significant difference in Kadiatu since the school feeding programme was introduced. Kadiatu no longer falls ill as frequently and is more active in school. Florence is grateful for the program, as it not only provides children with food but also gives them the energy and motivation to learn. The teachers are also happier teaching children with full stomachs, and the programme has improved attendance and retention in the classroom. Kadiatu's story shows us the transformative power of a school meal for children from less privileged communities.



## ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL GROWTH THROUGH SCHOOL MEALS



Haja Zaniab Koroma's life is not an easy one. At only 11 years old, she wakes up every morning at 5 a.m. to wash dishes, sweep, fetch water, and bathe her limbless and blind uncle, whom she and her brother take care of. Haja has never met her mother, and her father lives far away in Freetown doing carpentry.

**She lives with her uncle and brother in a one-bedroom home where they all sleep on the floor, and their leaking roof allows water to enter the room. There is no toilet in their home, so they have to visit their neighbour's toilet whenever they need to use it.**

Despite her difficult living situation, Haja attends Our Lady of Guadalupe primary school in Marampa chiefdom, Lunsar Town, Port Loko District. Her grandmother brought her to the school as recommended by her aunt. Haja did not pass the entrance exam with the score required for her age level, but she was fortunate enough to be accepted into the school. The school did not charge school fees, and she was given a uniform and books by the school. She was placed in class three instead of class six. Despite this setback, Haja persevered. She wakes up early and is happy to come to school, but she is often late because of the work load she has at home. After school, she goes home to cook, fetch water, launder, and feed her uncle again. By the time Haja finishes her household chores, it is late in the evening, and she struggles to study.

**Before ISFP started, Haja would come to school with no food and would often go to bed hungry. ISFP has made a big difference in her life. She no longer worries about food and sometimes even sleeps with the food she has eaten from school till the next day. The programme has also helped to improve her health, and she now wakes up with more energy and is better able to focus on her studies.**

“

*I used to be worried about food all the time, but now with the Integrated School Feeding Programme, I can focus on my studies and my future*

**Haja**

”

“

***Thanks to the Integrated School Feeding Program, we've seen a big improvement in our students' academic performance. It's not just their physical health that's improved, but their mental health too***

***Monica Gibateh-Haja's teacher***

”



Haja's class teacher, Mrs. Monica Gibateh, noticed a significant improvement in her academic performance since ISFP began. Haja was no longer distracted by hunger and was now able to participate actively in class discussions. Her mental health had improved as well. Mrs. Gibateh was impressed with Haja's resilience and hard work, considering the difficult circumstances she faced. Despite her difficult living situation, Haja remains positive and encourages other children to stay in school and finish their education. She knows that the suffering she is going through now will pass, and she will reap the benefits of her education in the future. ISFP has made a big difference in Haja's life, not just in terms of her physical health but also her mental health. It has given her the energy and focus she needs to do well in school and to work towards a brighter future. The programme has also had a positive impact on the entire community, as it has helped to improve the academic performance of all the students and has brought hope to families who struggle to provide for their children.





# MEET THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF THE GARI PRODUCTION FOR THE INTEGRATED SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME



*When someone wants to do something, do it with your whole heart. Learn to be trustworthy; this will make people help you achieve what you want*

**Hawa Agnes Bio**  
Leader of Muamia Women's Cooperative



*This cooperative has helped me a lot. The factory has benefited me, and I want to thank Plan International because, as a single mother of four children, my children have benefited from the Integrated School Feeding Programme, and I also benefit from it through the production of Gari*

**Lucia Bio**  
Administrator of Muamia Women's Cooperative



*In anything you do in life, go hard on it. And whenever you see a woman doing something, give her all the support she needs. Because anything a woman puts her hand on will expand and make a big change*

**Abubakarr James**  
Muamia Women's Cooperative manger



*As the Chair Lady, I ensure everything goes well. I oversee the cooking for the factory pl and the processing of cassava. Being one of the first people trained by Hawa Bio, I have witnessed the growth and positive impact of Muamia first-hand*

**Isatu Kallon**  
Chair Lady of Muamia Women's Cooperative



Muamia Women's Cooperative is a remarkable example of the transformative power of women's empowerment and community collaboration. What began as a small women's group called Moluma in 1996 has now evolved into a thriving cooperative with a strong presence in Sierra Leone. Under the leadership of Hawa Agnes Bio, the cooperative has not only provided vocational training but also built schools, developed sustainable farming practises, and established a successful cassava processing enterprise. This inspiring case study highlights Muamia's journey, the pivotal role played by Plan International, and the tremendous positive impact they have had on their community.

Moluma, initially established in 1996, was a women's group founded by Hawa Bio with just five members. The group's objective was to train women affected by poverty and war in carpentry, gara tie-dyeing, and soap making. Recognising the need for a more sustainable approach, the women of Moluma decided to form Muamia, meaning "We Are the One." Muamia consisted of ten groups, each comprising 30 individuals, resulting in a total membership of 300. With 25 women and 5 men in each group, Muamia aims to foster unity and provides a platform for graduated women to work together.

Muamia Women Cooperative diversified its activities and ventured into cassava processing, value addition, and marketing. The cooperative sourced cassava from farm gates and personal farms while also collaborating with other group farms. The cassava processing involved several stages, including growing, washing, grating, compressing, and drying. The final product is used to produce flour, or Gari, a popular West African dish. Different varieties of Gari, such as

coconut Gari and ordinary Gari, are being produced, and cassava flour is also being processed. Muamia's success extended beyond cassava processing, as they established a pre-primary school and later expanded to include a primary school to ensure education for their children.



*Muamia First Vocational Training School Building now used as a pre school*



Muamia's collaboration with Plan International began in 2020, gradually strengthening over time. Initially, Muamia catered to ISFP in Bo district, providing meals. As the working relationship deepened, Muamia expanded its supply of Gari to Plan International in Bo, Kailahun, and Moyamba. Due to increased demand, Muamia incorporated other women's groups to handle the growing workload, enabling them to focus on Bo and Moyamba. The cooperative supplied Plan International with a substantial quantity of over 9,000 bags of Gari.

Working with Plan International has brought substantial improvements and growth to Muamia Women Cooperative. The collaboration enabled the cooperative to expand its farms and other initiatives. Financial support from Plan International allowed Muamia to transition from thatched houses to concrete buildings. They were able to construct their first building, and with profits reinvested, they are currently working on a second building. The cooperative's ability to reinvest in infrastructure demonstrates the positive impact of government assistance, fostering sustainability and development.



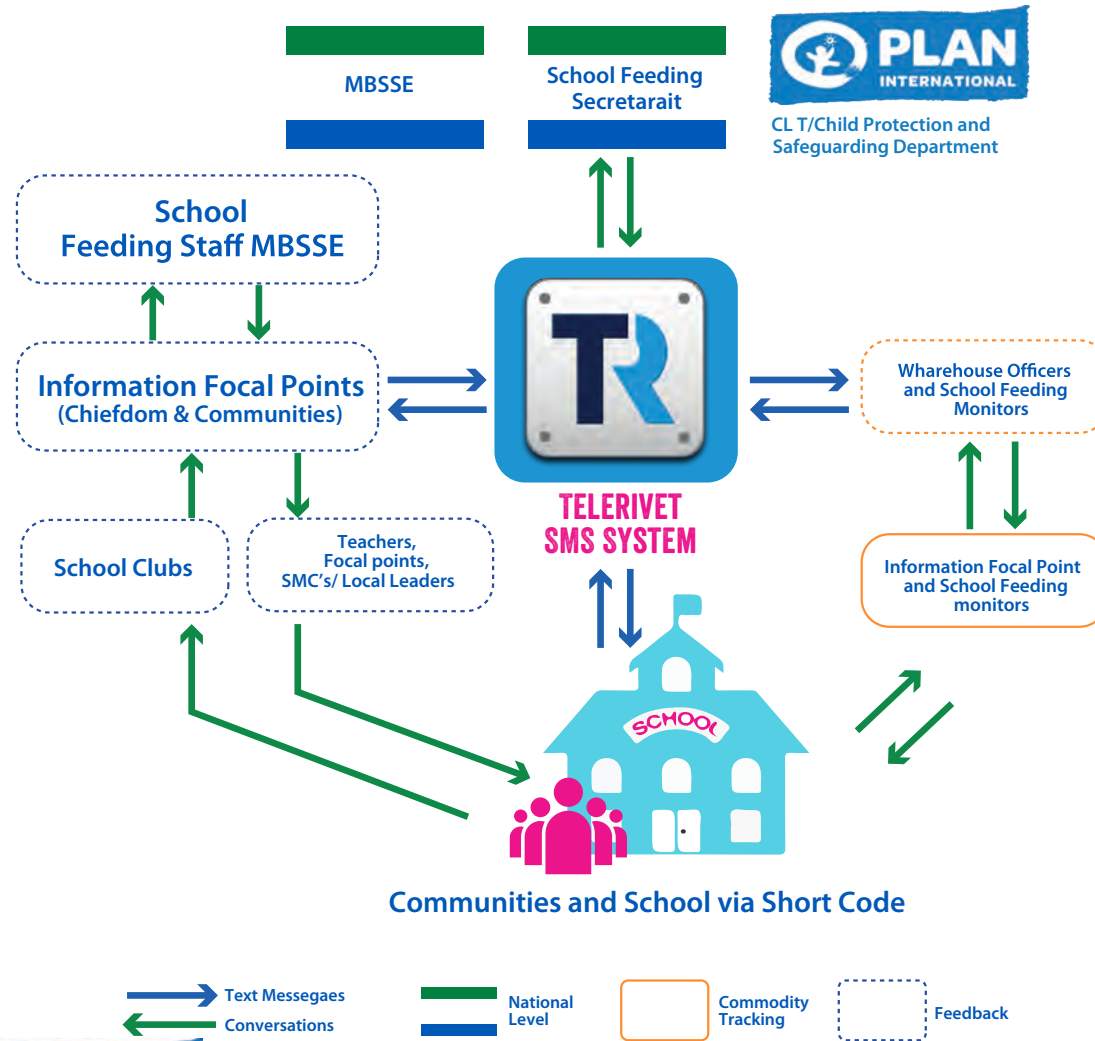
Muamia Women Cooperative faces several challenges, including labour shortages, the cost of raw materials, processing expenses, and the logistics involved in supplying from one farm gate to another. Despite these obstacles, the cooperative continues to thrive and grow. Muamia's resilience and success inspire other groups around the country as they witness the positive influence and long-lasting impact the cooperative has achieved.

Looking ahead, Muamia aims to expand its cassava processing operations across Sierra Leone, bringing modernised equipment to increase efficiency. They aspire to extend their school, progressing from pre-primary to secondary and even establishing a university. Muamia's vision reflects their commitment to community development and the education of children from cooperative groups, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

Muamia Women Cooperative's inspiring journey showcases the transformative power of women's empowerment, community collaboration, and strategic partnerships. With the support of the government and Plan International, Muamia has flourished, expanding its operations, empowering women, and uplifting the community. Muamia's dedication to sustainable development, education, and innovative cassava processing has become a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change.



# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK MECHANISM



Text or call short code 511 for access to accountability and feedback mechanism called Telerivet



Please use this short code to report any wrongdoing (abuse, fraud, or other malpractice) that you may observe impacting ISFP.

You can also use this short code to gather information, and share your thoughts and opinions on how ISFP is going, or on how it can be improved.



# TELERIVET

Telerivet is a mobile messaging platform used for communication in remote areas. It works as a feedback mechanism for ISFP by collecting feedback through text messages from participants, community members, and Information Focal Points.



Benefits of using Telerivet for collecting feedback in ISFP include systematic data collection, proactive monitoring, and real-time commodity tracking, leading to programme enhancement and better accountability.

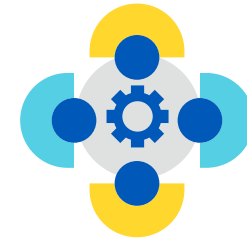


Feedback collected through Telerivet is analysed to identify areas for improvement, enhancing the school feeding programme's effectiveness and responsiveness to participants' needs.

Successful implementations of Telerivet in ISFP have led to increased community ownership, two-way dialogue, and improved programme impact.



On average, over 150 monthly feedback reports are recorded, with a rapid and continuous response rate from field staff. Major issues are escalated to sector specialists for further action.



Telerivet engages stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and community members by empowering them to voice their opinions, ask questions, and contribute to programme delivery, promoting transparency and accountability.







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