



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

**SCHOOL FEEDING IN ADDIS ABABA: THE CASE OF  
BOLE SUB-CITY**

M.A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL  
ANTHROPOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

BY: YIRGA ALEMU

OCTOBER, 2020  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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**BY: YIRGA ALEMU**

**ADVISOR: DESALEGN AMSALU (PhD)**

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## Declaration

This is to certify that this thesis, entitled “School Feeding in Addis Ababa: The Case of Bole Sub-City” submitted to the Department of Social Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Social Anthropology is prepared by Yirga Alemu. The thesis complies with the regulations of Addis Ababa University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

Examiner Getaneh Mehari (PhD)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner Messay Gebremariam (PhD)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Desalegn Amsalu (PhD)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AACALSAB:	Addis Ababa City Administration Labor and Social Affairs Bureau
AAEB:	Addis Ababa Education Bureau
APA:	American Psychological Association
BSCEO:	Bole Sub City Education Office
CSA:	Central Statistics Agency
ECSU:	Ethiopian Civil Service University
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDS:	Forum for Development Studies
FFE:	Food for Education
HIV:	Human Immune Virus
HRC:	Human Rights Conventions
ILO:	International Labor Organization
MoE:	Ministry of Education
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
QPM:	Quality Protein Maize
SFP:	School Feeding Program
SFPTH:	School Feeding Program Training Handbook
SNNPR:	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
WFP:	World Food Program

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## Abstract

*This study investigated the School Feeding Program (SFP) at government schools in Bole Sub-City, Addis Ababa in an anthropological approach. Particularly the research focuses on the experiences of children who lack food, the response of the state and non-state actors to address schoolchildren's hunger in public schools in Bole Sub-city. A transcendental phenomenology qualitative approach was employed to collect and analyze data. Six public schools were purposely selected. The result of the study indicated that many school children in Bole Sub-city face hunger, some dropping out of schools while others engaging in part-time income-generating labor activities to generate money for food. Some others were frequently absent from school due to hunger. In order to ameliorate the problem, the Addis Ababa city government designed a school feeding program for some of the students from the poorest families. Although the program was at its preliminary phase, the study revealed it increased enrollment rates and students' participation as well as it reduced dropout rates and the burden of parents to feed their children. This study also indicated sustaining the program requires huge resources and more commitment from the government and its partners. To this end, the program faced resource constraints from the outset. Besides, increasing costs of living and food prices have consumed the program budget where the budget allocated for a child could not cover daily expenses in the current market price for food items. As a result, children who were once enrolled in the SFP were not served according to the menu originally indicated in the program. Furthermore, lack of independent SFP structure at different levels, integration, and sectorial engagement has been obstacles for the program. Finally, the study revealed the need for strong public participation as well as multi-sectorial engagement for program effectiveness and sustainability.*

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

The introductory chapter deals with background to the study, statement of the problem, Incidents that lead to a curiosity about the topic and the Study Site, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, schools and research participants, and ethical issues. It also includes the organization of this research as presented here below.

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Worlds Food Program (WFP, 2013) defined school feeding is the provision of food to school children. There are many types of programs, but the following two are the main types based on their modalities. The first one is in-school feeding, where children are fed in school; are provided meals or snacks to school children on the site. This can again be divided into two common categories: programs that provide meals, and programs that provide high-energy biscuits or snacks. The second type of school feeding is take-home rations program, where rations are provided to school children for consumption at home. In any case, the food provided to school children can be either prepackaged or cooked on site.

There is no common consensus on the question of where, when, and by whom the SF was first initiated. But many scholars in the area agree that the school feeding concept originated from the activities of European charitable donors. The first school feeding initiatives have been in existence since the late 1700's and originated as projects of donors in Europe. The first school lunches were served in 1790 in Munich, Germany by an American born physicist, Benjamin Thompson (Tomlinson, 2007).The Netherlands is the pioneer of the SFP before any other countries. Although The Netherlands' program did not achieve many results due to lack of institutions and professionals to implement the program, the event is remembered as the first program which provided lunch for poor students (WFP, 2017). Since then, the concept of the SFP has spread to almost all countries and became worldwide issue through UN agencies in order to address the hurdles of poor schoolchildren and motivate low-income parents (Ngajioganga, 2013).

Each country's SFP varies in its design, purpose, implementation and effectiveness (WFP, 2013). In the United Kingdom, significant changes have been made from when school meals were introduced in the nineteenth century. The first national school meals policy was published across the United Kingdom in (Yigzaw, 2019). The policy set the first nutritional guidelines for school lunches, requiring balanced meals which include the appropriate levels of protein, fat, and calories (WFP, 2017). Yet, In the United States, there was a social inequality during the industrial era and there was room for improvement in all territories of education. Poor children were experiencing malnutrition and hunger due to deprivation (Thomson, 2017). As a result, Philadelphia and Boston were the first two cities to institute school lunches in the U.S. though the federal government wasn't involved until the Great Depression in 1920's (Yigzaw, 2019, and Tomlinson, 2007).

SFP was not only limited to these countries, it had influenced other countries to apply the program on the basis of their own reality. With different schemes and procedures, the school feeding program was implemented in different countries (WFP, 2013). To mention some of them, in Brazil, the program established in the course of the Second World War (1945) and this encouraged decentralization structure to license the program properly where government, teachers, parents and civil society were involved (WFP, 2009). The same is true in South Africa; food was made in the schools primarily for the white and colored people.

According to Yigzaw (2019), different items such as milk and enriched biscuits were delivered to students. In Malawi, the program was taking place in order to increase school enrollment, attendance and learning capacity; primarily meal was delivered for orphaned and extremely poor children (Swartz, 2009). The same picture occurred in Zimbabwe, The school feeding program was targeted to support children who were exposed to hunger, out of school and orphaned. Corn meal porridge was provided for the school (WFP, 2004). In Tanzania, the school feeding program started in 1956 and the program was strengthened after they got their independence. Tanzania experience shows half day meal and health matters services got more attention (Missan, 2011).

According to WFP (2013) report, nearly all countries in the world implement SFP. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of the program is determined by the growth level of the countries. The WFP report indicates that high-income countries implement SFP with high standard and quality while the implementation in low-income countries including Ethiopia is low due to lack of capacity to accommodate large size of needy children (students) and resources constraints.

Based on a sample study in 169 countries, about 368 million pre-school, primary and secondary-school children are benefiting from SF and the annual budget is also estimated between US\$47 billion and US\$75 billion WFP (2013). However, report reveals that the primary source of finance is from the government budget (Taddese & Henok, 2013). WFP (2013) report indicates that 43 developed countries feed more than one million schoolchildren. South Asia is the leading in feeding large student population (for instance India feeds about 114 million schoolchildren which is the biggest program in the world), followed by Latin America (Brazil feeds about 47 million schoolchildren), and the Caribbean islands. While in developing countries, about 60 million School children go to school often without food, 40% of who are in Africa. African countries are the least to implement the program (Taylor and Ogbogu, 2016).

According to WFP (2013) report, 49 percent of students benefit from the program in middle-income countries despite the fact that less than 18 percent of students benefit in low income countries. In low-income countries including Ethiopia, there is high need of SFP due to hunger, poverty and poor social indicators, but the coverage continues low and the sources of the finance were from the international donors (Mahamed, 2016).

According to WFP (2007), rich countries even having a small number of needy students have started long time ago and have made SFP effective, however, Ethiopia with the large number of needy students started SFP late until in 1994 when World Food Program initiated pilot project for war-affected zones in Tigray region.

Then, 25,000 students became beneficiaries of the school meal program in 40 at food insecure schools in Afar, Amhara, Oromiya and in Tigray to promote equity, access to education, ad

enrollment and attendance. With further expansion in 2006, the FFE program was implemented in 1,030 schools in Afar, Amhara, Oromiya, SNNPR, Somali and Tigray regions for 639,000 school children (Abiy, 2017, Yigzaw, 2019 Mahamad, 2016, Fitsum, 2012). In collaboration with WFP, USAID, Yenat Weg and other donors, the Ministry of Education has been implementing school feeding for about 850,000 schoolchildren in Ethiopia, mainly for elementary school children in the country for the past 18 years. The program is has been intended to reduce school dropout rate, absenteeism and poor academic performance (WFP, 2018).

Ethiopia is also implementing the national school feeding program at public schools as part of the National School Nutrition Strategy. This program is being implemented in collaboration with partner organizations in order to minimize school dropout rate, absenteeism and poor academic performance (Abiy, 2017, Moe, 2017, Yigzaw, 2019 Mahamad, 2016, Fitsum, 2012). In 2019, Over 1.3 million schoolchildren in different parts of Ethiopia are benefiting from the national school feeding program. And the government allocated over 289.4 million birr for this program in order to help students stay in schools and reduce the burden of parents (MoE, 2017).

Although many of Addis Ababa's schoolchildren were suffering from malnutrition, SFP in the Addis Ababa began in 2015. The first school meal was started by Yenat Weg charitable association in 2015 and followed by WFP and USAID (AAEB, 2018). The poor conditions that existed in the daily lives of the children in Addis Ababa have called the attention of this charitable association to establish SFP in the city. This project is considered as the landmark for the beginning of SFP in Addis Ababa (Abiy, 2017).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Studies by Bundy et al.(2009), Simon & Gregor (1989), Vorley & Corbett (2005), Bundy et al.(2009), Kazinga et al. (2009), Abiy( 2017), Mahamad (2016), and Fitsum (2012) focus on the importance of the SFP, not the challenges SFP faces and the solutions that need to be taken. These studies also did not show that the SFP is facing various challenges. Studies also advocate that food price is affecting low-income households in Addis Ababa (Gelli, Al-Shaiba and Espejo, 2009, API, 2020, CSA, 2020, Coates, 2004).

The researcher had invested considerable time to review document related to the research topic under study. However, it was difficult to find sufficient comprehensive studies on the experiences of food insecure schoolchildren in general and in Ethiopia in particular. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, similar studies on SFP were very few. In this regard, one study conducted was by USAID (2014) focusing on the experiences and expression of food insecurity across cultures. This study presents global experiences in only four categories including dietary change, increase short term household food availability, decrease numbers of people and rationing strategy.

In this respect, Jepkemboi (2018) studied on the physical and mental effects of starvation where he examined lack of enough meal causes hunger which also affects children's physical and cognitive development. His study investigated the physical and mental effects of starvation on the students, but he did not examine the students' experiences in relieving hunger and householders' coping mechanisms. Black et al (2013) focused on the impact of hunger on children's health. Studies by Demissie, Senait, Adefris, and Groote (2018) and Riley et al. (2009) have shown that malnutrition affects students learning, not how they cope with malnutrition.

The above empirical studies emphasis on household income, food access, mental and physical effects of lack of access to food and the effects of lack of access to food on children's learning. However, empirical studies reviewed have given less emphasis on the experiences of school children who have not access to food and households' coping mechanisms of food insecurity. Studying school feeding from anthropological point of view is important to explore experiences of schoolchildren and to uncover students' severe hunger that hamper their academic performance and prospects in the future. In order to fill the gap, this particular piece of study focuses on the experiences of coping up mechanisms conducted by students that had not access to food before the launch of SFP, challenges for the implementation of SFP, as well as which strategies could be employed to improve the current SFP in Bole Sub-city, Addis Ababa.

### 1.3 Incidents that Led to a Curiosity about the Topic and the Study Site

I think many people associate Bole with luxurious living quarters, sprawling residential villas and apartment blocks with the latest cars in Bole the neighborhoods. In addition, many individuals consider it as a place where rich persons who have plenty are residing. While this is true for some, not all are better off in Bole.

Six teachers, including myself, were employed in 2017 to provide tutorials for a fifth grade son of a better-off family living in Bole area. While I was tutoring the son, the house maid usually brought him pizza and milk, and he invited me to eat. However, I told him I did not want to eat. After eating some, he could not even eat half of the pizza. He asked me to eat again and I refused. I saw a look of fear on his face and asked him why. He told me that his father would punish him if he did not finish his meal. The intention the son invited me was not from his generosity but rather to finish the pizza and escape from punishment. Finally, he could not finish the pizza, and then he asked me, “to put it in a trash bin.” I advised him to give it to the children who did not have food rather than throwing it into the bin. The son was surprised and said, “Those children might not get pizza and burgers, but how dare they could not injera and bread?”

On the other end of the household’s experiences to the family of the son I was giving tutorials, I saw a student named Nesru whose mother was a beggar and living in Bole area. The money she collected through begging is not enough to cover the family food expenses. Thus, when Nesru comes to school, the food he is given by his mother is often leftover collected from hotels and apartments. Consequently, he did not always sit and have lunch with his friends; he hides himself and eats the leftovers alone in fear of his school friends bullying him. He brings the leftover food in his lunch box. The above extremely contrasting scenarios for sons of the same Sub-City residents caused me to investigate the SFP to know how the program minimizes such gaps. Particularly, I was more interested in studying at Bole Sub-city because the rest of Addis Ababans conventionally think the Sub-city is a residential area of all well-to-do households in Addis Ababa.

From humanity point of view, it also struck me that these rich people living in Bole Sub-city have camouflaged the hunger and misery of the poor children living in the same neighborhood.

Many people consider there are not any hungry children in Bole areas while the reality shows otherwise. This wrong perception leads children and families in the area to continue to suffer from malnutrition, particularly children who need a balanced diet for proper physical and mental development.

#### **1.4 Schools and Research Participants**

There are 23 schools which are beneficiaries of the SFP in Bole Sub-city. Of these schools, as mentioned above, I chose Goro, Arabsa, Bole Gerji, and Meles Ferie because these schools have high number of student population. I selected Woregenu School because there were rumors circulating on the social media those 33 students were admitted to the hospital due to food poison (eating contaminated meal) in November 2012 when I was selecting the schools which would participate in my study. On the contrary, I also chose Hidassie School because it is different since there was a low student population and the school was a beneficiary from "Yenat Weg Charitable organization". I selected these schools to get information from different settings so that data is gathered from relatively diverse school contexts. I collected data from teachers, mothers hired to prepare food under SFP, parents, school principals and students.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of this study is to investigate the experiences of children in targeted schools, to assess the roles of state and non-state stakeholders and to identify gaps that constrain SFP implementation and sustainability. Within this general objective, the study was intended to achieve the following specific objectives.

1. Investigate experiences of school children who have no or less food in the school.
2. Examine the roles of state and non-state actors in SFP
3. Identify gaps that constrain the effectiveness and sustainability of SFP.

#### **1.6 Significances of the Study**

One of the main attentions of Social Anthropology is to study the voice of the exposed (vulnerable) groups in the society as well as evaluating the outcomes of different projects. To this end, this study presents the voice of children participating in SFP and different stakeholders



and sees the effectiveness of the program on the lives of beneficiary children. The study findings would initiate further study on the issue of school feeding in Addis Ababa and beyond. It also gives organized information for policymakers and school feeding program implementers for better program implementation and sustainability of such programs

### **1.7 Limitation and Delimitation**

This study was limited to six selected government primary schools in Bole Sub-city due to time and other resources constraints. Had it explored more schools and included other sub-cities, it would have given more comprehensive experiences of SFP in Addis Ababa.

### **1.8 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized in to five chapters. The First Chapter is the introductory part consisted of background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, selection of study sites and research participants, ethical issues and the organization of the thesis.

The Second Chapter presents the review of related literature that is relevant to the research. Third Chapter deals the theoretical framework and presents the methodology part and the description of data collection methods. Fourth Chapter deals with experiences of food in secured children. Fifth Chapter is on the responses of the state and non-state actors in the implementation of SFP. Sixth Chapter focuses on gaps and constraints of the school feeding program and its sustainability. The Seventh Chapter, last chapter, presents conclusions and recommendations. References and Appendixes are last parts of this paper.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

This chapter focuses on review of theoretical issues and empirical studies school feeding and experiences of food insecure children, roles of actors in the implementation of school feeding programs and constraints for such programs presented from sections 2.1 through 2.6 below.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the theory of Social Capital. Social capital is a collective asset in the form of shared norms, values, networks, social relations, and institutions that facilitate cooperation and collective action for mutual benefit (Bourdieu 1986). According to him, social capital is made up of social obligations and connections where social capital refers to a sphere of “mutual acquaintance and recognition.” This meant that social capital is a sphere of influence of joint social contact and credit. Bourdieu (1986) divides social capital in two components: the size of ones connections and the volume of the capital (economic, cultural, or symbolic) in these connections possession.

In light of this theory, the success or the failure of the SFP depends on synergies between and among the stakeholders and the amount of resources allocated to run the SFP. With this assumption, one of the factors for successful SFP is having strong relationship between individuals or institutions in both horizontal (parallel) and vertical (top-bottom) relationships. Conversely, if these are relationships are weak, the SFP will not be effective. In addition, the amounts of resources allocated play an important role in the success and sustainability the SFP. When there is sufficient amount of money collected (from the government, from the non-state actors) to the program, there is high tendency of the school feeding program to succeed and be sustained as there will be sufficient finance to purchase food as well as payment for cooks and other service providers. What is more, making program budget which takes into account the existing cost of living will be factors for the SFP to achieve its goals while the reverse scenario will cause program failure.

## **2.2. Experiences of Children Who Don't access of Food**

Demissie, Senait, Adefris, and Groote (2018) also studied on the deprivation food is not only causing health problems for many Ethiopians, but it is also the major reason for student's dropouts in school including in the capital; Addis Ababa. Similarly a study by Riley et al., (2009) shows deprivation seriously prejudiced the enrollment and students' learning capacity. Both researches found out that low school enrollment rates, high dropout rates and poor attendance are extensively persist in all public schools where the problem is worse for girls and it affected them highly.

There are also studies on households' level of income and food access to school children. In this respect, Bessler's study (2012) found that low-income families could not provide enough nourished food for themselves and their children due to lack of income and the rising cost of food. A Kristjansson, Gelli, and Welch, (2016) also stated that eating enough food is hard because of the high prices of food and low income of many families. However, food insecurity also involves, poor academic performance, coping mechanism of households such as begging and engaging in informal activities and child labor among other.

According to Black et al (2013) hunger weakens the body's immune system to defend against diseases because the body did not get vital nutrients. These starved children are more vulnerable to repeated infections. Children who are starved are at an increased risk for repeated infections and are more likely to die. 45% of children's mortality is attributable to malnutrition. But hunger not only causes health problems but also physical and cognitive problems (Jepkemboi, 2018). Having no or little food leads to the miserable growth of children that adversely affect child's mental and physical development and, learning capacity in future life (WFP, 2017)

Grandner et. al. (1999) study indicates that, starving students suffer from behavioral problems where hunger and malnutrition delays the ability of students to learn. A malnourished child have new emotional behaviors, including increased apathy, negative effect (e.g. crying and fussiness) and reduced activity play and interest in exploring their environment (Grandner et al., 1999). A study by Yousafzai et al. (2012) and Lawson, (2012) also identified that food insecurity causes lack of interest and reduces the level of motivation and interaction children with their peers and

the environment associated with higher prevalence of poor health conditions(e.g. stomachaches, headaches, and colds, chronic illness, low weight, etc.).

Researches by Black et al., (2013), Grandner et al., (1999) and WFP, (2017) also show that children face drowsiness due to starvation, absentees from school, not actively participating in class while the teacher is explaining, failure to do classwork and homework due to fatigue, being angry and irritate. These food insecure children perform worse on academic achievement tests and learn less during the school year. Fanzo (2012) reported that, children with a history of malnutrition attained lower scores than children of similar social and economic status who were properly nourished.

Uduku (2011) identified that for food insecure children have difficulty to concentrate at school and have irregular school attendance where these conditions of school children are key factors for poor performance. WFP (2017) also indicates that children feel embarrassed and isolated by the stigma associated with their lack of food, which is the cognitive effects of students who have no food/less food are lower scores in tests and exams as well as in ability to engage fully in school. People be subject to spend their limited mental reserves on resources that they lack, and so hungry children focus on food, which can lead to neglect of other areas of life such as schoolwork. Consequently, as UAID (2017) study indicates children spent their time by searching of food instead of learning.

The above empirical studies focus on household income and food access but these researchers do not reflect the efforts of these families in order to alleviate the hunger of themselves and their children and experiences of food insecure children. USAID (2004) also did not show students' experience, but it focuses on the experiences of parents or guardians.

### **2.3 The Benefits of SFP, State and Non-stat Response**

According to Rethinking(2009), countries referenced two major reasons for launching and implementing school feeding programs: (1) to address social needs and provide a social safety net during crises; and (2) to support child development through improved learning and enhanced nutrition. In addition, a third reason is identified by Food and Nutrition (2007) which links

school feeding in order to local agricultural production and its potential related benefits to the local economy and the incomes of farmers. However, according UN Charter (1945) countries do not start SFP as a charity to their citizens rather all member states have a responsibility to feed their food insecure people, however, it does not mean that the government is responsible to feed every individual. Similarly FAO, (2012) indicates that member states must give adequate nutritious food to its people who are unable to feed themselves.

In this regard, The UN constitution preamble indicates that, UN member states must improve the lives of their citizens and eradicate hunger where everyone has the right to access food based the UN (1945) charter as food is essential for children's' prime physical, psychological, and mental development (Chirwa, 2009). In addition HRC (1948) declared that, everyone has a right to a better living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including foods.

Many studies and reviews indicated the effectiveness and benefits of school feeding programs, (Bundy et al.2009, Simon& Granatham- Mc Gregor 1989, Vorley & Corbett 2005, Kazinga et al., 2009). Empirical study by Bundy et al. (2009) suggests that appropriately designed school feeding program increase access to education and improve children's health and nutrition, especially when integrated into comprehensive school health and nutrition programs. Researchers conducted by Simon& Granatham- Mc Gregor(1989), Vorley and Corbett (2005), Bundy et al., (2009), Kazinga et al., (2009) and Raine et al., 2003 point out that in addition to improving student health, providing either breakfast or lunch or both meals help to narrow the learning achievement gap between poor and rich students.

Pillot et. al., (1981, 1983) studies also investigate the functions of food access where they identified that eating a well-balanced breakfast and lunch is important for the body and mind to function properly. Similar to this, a study conducted in Jamaica indicated that, temporary hunger alleviated when food was provided to students; especially for the starved pupils (Simon& Granatham- Mc Gregor, 1989). According to this study, well-balanced breakfast and lunch increased student's attention and concentration in class where children who had breakfast in school performed better than those who did not have any breakfast.

The SFP improves student learning in three ways. First, SFP programs increase school attendance by encouraging students to attend school regularly and help them to spend more time in class with better concentration on their full-time learning (QPM, 2018 and SFPTH, 2006). The same studies indicated that alleviating students' short-term hunger improves children's cognitive functioning and attention span as well as improving students' nutritional status by providing them calories and nutrients leads to better health and better resistance to infectious diseases and illnesses that would keep children from attending school.

Although, SFP is applicable all over the world, the practice varies from country to country based on income level of countries. To this end, WFP (2013) report indicates that SFPs in first and second world countries have consolidated structure and ownership as well as strong institutions. These countries often have mechanisms for recovering costs from better-off families and using this income to support the cost of feeding those from vulnerable backgrounds. On the reverse the attention of school feeding programs is very low in countries where the need is the greatest including Ethiopia.

The WFP (2013) revealed that the school meal is a source of nutritious meals in developed countries while in poor countries including Ethiopia, it is an incentive to send children to school and continue their education or it provides food security at times of crisis and help children to become healthy and productive adults, thus helping to break the cycle of poverty and hunger.

The above researches investigated the benefits of SFP from the view point of alleviating hunger, improving child health, enhancing learning and child performance. Some of the researches also investigated school feeding programs from human rights perspectives. However, these researches have less focus on the importance of SFP as a coping mechanism for parents and school children during food insecurity.

## **2.4 The Negative Impacts of SFP**

Some studies have been conducted on the negative impact of the SFP on beneficiary schoolchildren. In this regard studies by Raine et al., (2003), Lagbo (2012) and Brainly (2018) show that the SFP promotes a sense of dependency in the community. These studies also

identified that SFP reduces public work motivation and working habit. Some poor parents and children are also unwilling to accept the food, which is being offered because of stigmatization within and from other communities (Raine et al., 2003). Similarly Lagbo (2012) argues that SFP causes the difficulty of freedom and Brainly (2018) also identified that a nutrition program limits children's choice what to eat and it exposes to illness and disease. Dheressa (2011) stated that SFP raises students' enrollment and which leads to classes over crowdedness. Thus SFP negatively affects learning unless school capacity is increased accordingly.

## **2.5 The Constraints for the Effectiveness and Sustainability of School Feeding**

WFP (2013) shows the challenges and recommendations that the SFP faces. According to this study, the resource constraints of SFP which encountered: a financial burden to run the program because fortification of foods is cost-effective; the inflation rate of commodities; the annual running cost of the feeding program is high; a low collaboration of stakeholder's involvement in running the program, the availabilities of commodities, the availability of trained cooks, cooking facilities, and clean water. (WFP 2000) especially, the increasing number of students from year to year, lack of sectorial engagement, lack of financial and institutional capacity as well as lack of independent SFP structure at different levels affect the implementation of SFP and future sustainability of the program. The accessibility and effectiveness of the SF increased because the program has been able to address its shortcomings through progress, relentless effort, and strong public participation. Studies show that while it does not stop progressing, the SFP is still hampered by various challenges (WFP, 2013).

It may have poor performance when SFP is at its pilot stage. Nonetheless, the program can be effective through time, with support from different sources. The sustainability and effectiveness of the program need different strategies. High-income countries such as Sweden, Finland, Estonia, and India provide free school meals to all pupils in compulsory education, regardless of their economic and other differences. Similar to this in India, all public school students accessed free staple lunch through the Midday Meal Scheme. A study of a free school meal program in the United States found that providing free meals to elementary and middle school children in areas characterized by high food insecurity led to better school discipline among the students. Other

countries reduced the price of meals to those who need a degree of assistance with costs. Lower-cost meals are available to students in France, Italy, Hong Kong, Japan, and the United States (WFP, 2007).

Different nations implement SFP in different modalities and different schemes. Nonetheless, the important question is how these countries can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs they are already implementing (WFP, 2013). The growth of the country determines the effectiveness and sustainability of the SFP. Similarly, countries' income level is associated with both the size and the level of consolidation of the program. In high- and upper-middle-income countries, generally, all children have access to food through schools, and the most vulnerable children typically are entitled to subsidize or free meals. In low middle and low-income countries including Ethiopia, by contrast, programs are generally only available to some children in certain geographical areas chosen according to vulnerability factors.

## **2.6 Empirical Studies on SFP in Ethiopia**

Abiy (2017) assessed the effects of the school feeding program on the school performance of primary public school children in Arada sub-city. Mulat (2020) studied the contribution of SFP to quality education in Yeka Sub City's first cycle primary schools. Yigzaw (2019) evaluated the contributions and sustainability as well as the challenges of the school feeding program in Ethiopia Somali Regional State. Demissie, Senait, Adefris, and Groote (2018) evaluated the impact of quality protein maize for School Feeding in Ethiopia. Fitsum (2012) evaluated the impact of the school feeding program on student enrollment and dropout and constraints that hamper its effective implementation. Mahamad (2016) assessed the effect of the school feeding program on student enrolment, retention in Jijiga district. These studies have been done on SFP in the previous have the following gaps and remaining problems:

First, studies do not explain the experiences of students who have severe food shortages. Although different communities have different experiences to address food shortages, the researchers did not show school children's experiences and how these school children cope up food shortage challenges. To this end, no sufficient research has been done to demonstrate how local communities and students cope up the negative impacts of malnutrition. For instance, one



of the coping mechanisms in many parts of Ethiopia during food shortages is sharing food to the households suffering from hunger. It is common to see students sharing food for those who could not bring lunch to school during lunch time. These one mechanism even students try to mitigate the challenge of access to food by poor students. Ethiopia has such experiences in its traditions; however, these kinds of useful traditional practices are not well studied. Second, it is hardly possible to find researches that have identified obstacles and solutions to the constraints of SFP. Third, most of the researches conducted focus on the relevance and positive effects of the programs.

Therefore, this research intends to identify experiences of school children who do not access to food in the school and to identify constraints and management problems in Addis Ababa City Administration particularly in Bole Sub-city in implementing the SFP.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

This chapter deals the methodology part of the thesis and the description of data collection methods, and data analysis.

For this thesis transcendental phenomenology qualitative approach was employed. Because of “Phenomenologists’ focus on describing what all participants has in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell (2007). The main aim of phenomenology is useful to merge individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence. As a result, as a qualitative researcher, I categorized schoolchildren’s experiences that did not access to food in (Manen, 1990). Correspondingly, Mustakas (1994) explained that transcendental means everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time Phenomenology. As a result, I studied several schoolchildren who did not accessed daily food that have shared the experiences and present the data freshly.

In terms of sources, qualitative research often gathers data from relatively small samples of people, and provides a microscopic view of whatever issues the researcher examined (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Pope and Mays (1995) indicates that, qualitative research focuses on the development of concepts which help a reader understand social phenomena in natural (rather than experimental) settings, giving due emphasis to the meanings, experiences and views of the participants. Filstead (1971) states that qualitative method as a research strategy conducted in the form of participant observation, in-depth interview and total participation in the activity being investigated which allows the researcher to obtain first-hand data on the pragmatic social world in question. This approach licenses the researcher to have close contact, enabling him to build the conceptual and logical explanation from the data.

With regard to the sampling strategy, Creswell (2007) found that there is a much more narrow range of sampling strategies for phenomenological study. As a result he advised it is essential that all participants have experience of the phenomenon being studied.

For this research, I used phenomenology qualitative approach for the reason that: first, phenomenology offers a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by many individuals. Understanding some shared experiences can be valuable for groups of schoolchildren who lack food. Second, SFP needs to be explored. Meaning it need to study a group of schoolchildren who did not access food to hear their silenced voices. Third, it gives me detailed information from interviews, and observations (Creswell, 2007). Fourth, qualitative approach is useful in answering the research questions rather than test a hypothesis and data quantification (Bryman 2008).

### **3.1 Data Collection Methods**

In line with the transcendental phenomenological qualitative approach, data collection methods included: document review, interview, focus group discussion, and observation were used. During data collection, the researcher took written accounts such as document review and field notes. As a transcendental phenomenological qualitative approach researcher, I engaged in a sequence of qualitative data collecting activities that included: locating site/individual, gaining access and making rapport, collecting data, recording data, and storing data. Data collection instruments were interview questions, and checklists.

#### **3.1.1 Document Review**

I reviewed both printed and electronic materials in order to get relevant data. Documents which were relevant to this study such as letters, photographs, newspapers, annual reports, official Facebook posts, journals, researches, and statistical data were reviewed. Accordingly, the researcher visited the internet, MoE, AAEB, Bole Sub city Education Offices, NGOs (Yenat Weg Charity Organization, WFP) and selected Schools.

#### **3.1.2 In-depth Interview**

In-depth interview was conducted with a total of 32 informants (7 school feeding program beneficiary students, 4 key informants (Sub city experts, education bureau expert, and NGO experts), 6 parents, 10 teachers, and 5 school directors). In this study, a semi-structured interview was used because the researcher found this style of data collection is more effective way to help informants understand the questions and get adequate and reliable data. These questions were the core of the interview protocol, bounded on the front end by questions to invite the interviewee to

open up. Regarding to the interview I conduct an unstructured, open-ended interview and take interview notes.

### **3.1.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

In order to get in-depth information on the SFP as well as to triangulate (to increase the credibility of and validity of research findings) data obtained through other methods; four FGDs were held (Students FGD, teachers FGD, parents FGD, and cooks FGD). Within these clusters, participants were purposely selected out of a group who has common backgrounds and experiences in relation to the SFP. These different groups had discussions on the same questions. The size of a group is between 6-10 participants (students FGD had 10 students, teachers FGD composed of 6 teachers, cooks FGD composed of 7 participants, and parents FGD consists of 6 parents) and held in schools compounds. The discussions were guided by a researcher. In this context I was a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduced topics for discussion and helped the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion among them. For this purpose, the researcher prepared open-ended agenda items for focus groups discussion (focused and interactive session with a group small enough for everyone to have chance to talk and large enough to provide diversity of opinions) and gathered through this data assortment tool.

### **3.1.4 Participant Observation**

The researcher got close enough to observe subjects (with or without participation) and to understand whether people did what they said or not. Observation is essential for qualitative research (Marshall and Rossman, 1998). Because qualitative research requires the researcher to understand people in their environment, the researcher observed the six public schools mentioned above and spent one day at each school. The researcher used observation checklists that would help the facilities SFP used such as dining places, cooking facilities, water and electric supplies and kitchen utensils (see Appendix II on page 71). My role was gathering field notes by conducting an observation as an observer.

## **3.2 Data Analysis**

With regard to data analysis procedures in the transcendental phenomenological qualitative approach, Creswell (2007) states: identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out ones experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon.

Then I analyzed the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combine the statements into themes. Following that, I developed a description with the combination of what participants' experienced (textural description) and how participants experienced (structural description) to convey an overall essence of the experience.

### **3.3 Ethical Issues**

Social scientists have a great ethical obligation to keep confidentiality. They have to follow the strict code of ethics and protecting any confidential information at all times. Especially, to keep the secret of the community they study (Berg, 1998). Hence, the researcher built rapport to have good relationship with participants and kept their privacy during interview. The researcher respected informant's right to ask questions and the right to know about the research purpose and its significance. Children cannot give consent for interviews by themselves. On their behalf, the researcher got consent from their teachers and school directors. Correspondingly, the researcher kept confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Thus the names mentioned in this thesis are anonymous except the sub city and city education experts (see interview list). Last of all to assure these procedures the researcher gave clear and adequate consent to participants.

## Chapter Four

### Experiences of Food Insecure Children

This chapter deals with experiences of school children who have no or less food in the school and coping mechanisms to alleviate food shortages. Especially, it focuses on the experiences of these children before they get access to SFP. This chapter also deals with how malnutrition impacts school children. The major purpose of phenomenological qualitative approach is merge individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (Creswell). Accordingly, as a qualitative researcher, I grouped schoolchildren's experiences that did not access to food as follows:

#### 4.1 Pretending as if they are not hungry

Teacher Hadush interviewed at Bole Gerji School on February 23, 2020 said that before the school feeding program in Addis Ababa, many students took empty lunch boxes or lunch boxes filled with leftover food. As a result Hadush witnessed, "Schoolchildren who have lunch boxes filled with leftover food want to akin to their friends but they are not willing to eat in front of their classmates. Instead they want to hide to eat in secret because of fear of discrimination from peers." Teacher Lemlem interviewed at Wore Genu School on February 24, 2020 said that before the school feeding program in the school, sitting alone and eating their own food was better than being surrounded by their friends for these food insecure schoolchildren. It was common for the children's of beggaries who sometimes bring leftover food from hotels. Lemlem narrated the experiences of one of her student named Nesru as follows:

*His mother is a beggar. The money from the begging is not enough to cover the family food expenses. Thus, when Nesru comes to school, the food he was provided was often leftovers collected from hotels and apartments. Consequently, he did not always sit and have lunch with his friends rather he hides himself and eats the leftovers given to him.*

Tigist is a school director at Hiddassie Elementary School. She worked for 18 years in public schools and knows more about the experiences of food insecure school children and the process of the present SFP. In an interview with her on January 15, 2020 she said that one of the best ways for these children is acting as not hungered. They bring an empty lunch box and chew empty mouthed, hiding from friends; it seems eating lunch for their peers. They do this not to hide their hunger from peers because of that they did not bring lunch and as a result, did not eat. And for a

couple of minutes, they hide their heads behind their uniforms or lunch boxes and pretend to eat, and then go to the playground ahead of their peers. However, they do not play as energetically as the others children. By this act they may reduce the stigma of their friends, but not relieve their hunger.

Children who bring a little lunch hide out of sight of their peers and eating lunch slowly is another mechanism. Ayalew a school director interviewed at Wore Genu School on February 24, 2020 said that such students eat gently to avoid notice and criticism from their peers. As a result, they finish their lunch equal to others and go to playfield and attend the playground together.

Teacher Kidist has taught in various public schools for 11 years. In an interview at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 she said that she shared her lunch with students who did not have lunch. As she narrated the experiences of her student's hunger and lack of food:

*Although these children pretending as if not hungry, hunger make them weary and weak; I have seen my students become grouchy and cry (fractious) for every small reason or even without any reason. Children love to play with their peers but these food insecure children have low desire and a low ability to play. During playing games with other children, they usually cry and leave the games.*

The experience of the interviews indicated that due to fear of negative peer pressure, poor children hide their hunger. This experience is in line with (Tadeesse & Henok, 2013) who found that such learners are usually stigmatized, labeled, and looked down upon. They also develop an inferiority complex as a result. In consequence, they use different mechanisms to hide their hunger due to psychological pressure.

Due to malnutrition, students also experienced food-related anxiety or worries about food. Ashu is a 13 years old seventh-grader-boy. In an interview with him on January 15, 2020 at Hidassie Elementary School he stated that he was worried about food instead of listening teacher's explanation. Ashu witnessed his food-related anxiety, "before the SFP was established, my focus was thinking about food. Of course, I was worried about food instead of following my teacher's explanation and demonstration. I worried about which one of my friends is willing to share his or her food."

This scenario is also common on parents. Askale a parent interviewed at Wore Genu School on February 24, 2020 said that before the school feeding program started not only children but also parents who cannot afford enough food to meet their family's need were also worried. As result, children develop anxiety. Askale narrated here experience of food related anxiety hereunder:

*I have spent nights without sleep, because I was trying to figure out if I have enough to buy food to feed my kids. I worry about where the next day's food is going to come from. I worry that I may not be able to afford to buy sufficient food. I felt stressed because of not having enough money to buy food. As a result, I can't provide the food that her children want for lunch at school.*

The interviewee indicates that these food insecure school children fear because they don't know where food will come from. The feelings of hunger have emptied their minds, and they worry about what they are going to eat for lunch or dinner instead of listen the teacher attentively. They get depressed and frozen.

Such anxiety for food revealed exacerbated conflicts to harmful quarrels between these school children who do not have food and their peers. Teachers FGD at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 shows that these hungry children easily feel as they are looked down upon or excluded by their peers, and they might feel they are despised. They also face contempt from their peers during games or conversations only because they ate nothing or too small and their stomach is empty. Ayalew stated that even though all children who attend public schools are from poor families, children who eat lunch look down on those who do not eat. Thus, a hungry child finds it difficult to concentrate in class and starts to grumble for food.

During lunchtime food insecure children would go to playfield instead of joining their classmates to eat lunch. Teacher Bontu has worked being a teacher for over 12 years. In an interview at Arabsa Elementary school on February 18, 2020, she stated that students who did not access to food play at lunchtime instead of joining their classmates to eat lunch. They go to the playfield at lunchtime, pretending to eat lunch. As teacher Bontu explained, "playing during lunchtime has two advantages: it helps them to forget their hunger by playing. Second, it will not increase their



hunger by watching other students eat, but prevents others from knowing that they did not bring lunch food may think about lunch even the teacher is explaining.”

Frealem an interview with Adis Lisan Newspaper on november19, 2017 stated that Abele’s (a seventh-grader at Bole Gerji Elementary School) grades were going down and also during lunchtime he would go out to play instead of joining his classmates to eat his lunch. Once his teacher asked him why he was not eating, he would answer that he had already eaten his lunch. While his teacher checked his lunch box one day and she found his lunchbox empty. Frealem described the situation hereunder:

*We were shocked when we heard this, but we arranged him to get food and this experience helped us to support public schools nearby because we found that the problem is serious but did not get attention. There are lots of students who come to school with empty lunch boxes. We realized this was a huge social problem, but did not get solution. Feeding school children is not charity, it is our duty and it is their right. We have to show them our love, care, respect and we have to show them that they are important to this country.*

Teachers FGD conducted at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 indicates that students drop out of school, feel drowsy, and give up learning due to hunger. Seeing students dropping out of school makes many teachers feel more depressed and worried. Sometimes teachers went so far as to share their own lunch.

#### **4.2 Rationing strategy (food managing techniques)**

Students FGD conducted at Arabsa Elementary School on February 18, 2020 and teachers FGD conducted at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 indicate that in order to cope up food shortage students applied the rationing strategy in three ways. First, they cut the size of the meal; that is, to reduce the amount of food they eat. They saved to extend the food those students have by eating less than they should. They cut or reduce the size of meals (minimize the amount of meals). They eat fewer amounts than they want. They eat, not to satisfy themselves, but to relieve their hunger but if they eat until they are full, the food would soon be gone. So they eat less and extended the life of the food. Second, reduce mealtimes. Reducing the number of meals hour per day. These students did not eat three or more meals a day rather they ate only twice. Habitually these students did not have breakfast. They skipped breakfast and ate only lunch and dinner. Even sometimes they ate only once a day. If getting food gets worse, they just

have lunch or dinner. Third, there is less amount of food students can eat either reducing the size of the meal or skip meal times (eat twice or once per day), but if there is no any meal they skip the entire days without eating. They may not eat for a whole day.

Deboch is a school director at Arabsa Elementary School. In an interview at Arabsa Elementary school on February 18, 2020 he revealed the experiences of food insecure students. Deboch explained, “food insecure school children faced two separate but related serious problems: the first was lack of food, children came to school without or with little lunch; the second was the poor quality of meal.” In line to this, Tamrat is a 12 years old sixth-grader-boy. In an interview at Arabsa Elementary school on February 18, 2020 he stated that he did not get enough meal at school and at home too. Tamrat witnessed his severe hunger, “Only we had one meal in a day. We had no supper and breakfast. In most cases we had a very small meal at night.” These interviews indicate that students who have not access of food usually ate insufficient food in amount or sometimes not to eat at all.

Students FGD indicate that they came to school without having any breakfast. Children told that due to lack of food and basic meals they cut the size of meals or reduce the number of meals, or skipped meal times. Solomon a student who was suffered due to hunger narrated how bad hunger affected him and his friends as follows:

*Sometimes we go to school without a meal. Our friends dropped out of school because of absence of food at home. We sometimes only have one meal a day and sometimes sleep without taking in any food. We do not eat any food in the morning and leftover food at lunch. Sometimes we might not get lunch and or dinner.*

The discussion indicates that every morning some school children arrived to school hungry because they have not had enough to eat. If many of children go hungry frequently the problem was basic, and it should be address to concerning bodies. Because these children suffered due to malnutrition have a propensity for behave differently than their peers who eat enough; they don't want to play with their peers and lack the ability to play. They feel sadness about not having food at all or not having enough to eat, and they feel anger. For these children, the stress of not having food at all or not having enough food to eat is real and constant. In line to this, USAID (2015)

indicated that, 44% of school children are stunted, 10% are wasted and 29% are underweight in Ethiopia during hunger.

This shows that some school children ate virtually nothing at all when they wake up in the morning and all the time when they were at school. Those who told they had all the three meals a day highlighted that the amount of food they received per meal was not always enough. It also appeared that the frequency of the meals was a problem considering these statements. This was observed to have a bearing on the academic performance of children. Children who suffer from hunger revealed that they generally become exhausted and stop interacting. Thus, their learning potential is importantly lowered. When children experience food shortages or no food at all, their mental, cognitive and emotional states are altered, which can negatively affect their intellectual development.

Similarly, Teachers FGD indicates that before the SFP, due to malnutrition school children were often feeble, sleepy in lessons and sick and children who walked long distances on empty stomachs failed to concentrate on their education and complete their lesson either grade repeat or promote with low result. According to Kazianga, Dewalque, & Alderman (2009), School Feeding Program improves educational results: First, SFP can increase children's enrollment and regular school attendance. Second, SFP can improve cognitive functions through increasing attention and concentration ability of children. Hunger was a major factor to deteriorate cognitive function of a child.

### **4.3 Rely on low-cost and street foods**

Due to these dire economic conditions, parents do not afford basic needs for their children and have failed to cope with the rise in the price of food. Teacher Ahmed interviewed at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 indicated that poor households were forced to reduce the quality and variety of food consumed by the household in order to cope with the impact of food price increases. As a result, they experienced buying on low-cost and leftover foods. As a result, food insecure school children relied on only a few kinds of low-cost street foods. Tigist interviewed at Hiddassie Elementary School on January 15, 2020 said that food insecure school children also depend on low-priced food items because they have not sufficient money to buy

expensive and non-prepared foods. Similarly, they buy leftover foods. Tigist witnessed one of her student's experiences before the SFP was launched as follows, "Hamza usually brings Bread, Pasty, Bonbolino, Sambusa, Chips, or Biscuits for lunch. His father is a beggar and his father's begging money was not enough to buy quality and expensive foods. As a result, he relies on low-cost and cooked meals."

In line to this Deboch interviewed at Arabsa Elementary school on February 18, 2020 stated that buying low-cost and left over food is one of the experiences of food insecure children. Deboch explained, "these poor school children buy low-cost street and prepared foods and bring to school for lunch. In addition to lower cost, consuming such kinds of foods reduces the cost of cooking. Because such foods are already cooked, there is no process to cook."

#### **4.4 Getting daily food on credit**

Teacher Ahmed interviewed at Bole Gerji Elementary School on February 23, 2020 stated that school children who did not have food were get their food through credit. The credit includes; purchase food on credit and borrowing money to buy food. Purchasing food on credit is also one of their experiences. Ahmed witnessed, "Purchasing food in to credit includes purchasing and eats street foods (such as Pasty, Bonbolino, Sambusa, Chips, and Biscuits) on credit or buying and cooking uncooked food items and cook it at home (such as spaghetti, macaroni, and rice) on credit."

Selam a parent who was unable to feed her children due to low income as well as the high cost of living. Selam interviewed at Meles Fere on Friday February 28, 2020 indicated that these school children who did not have food at home not only buy food by credit but also they borrow money to buy food. This practice is also common among parents; some students alleviate hunger by borrowing money from friends, neighbours, or others. Selam witnessed, "However, those who have borrowed money previously but have not been able to repay it will not be able to get more loans. So they have to go to another lender."

The same scenario, Abeba stated that she was unable to meet her children's nutritional needs due to low incomes and high cost of living. Abeba as a result witnessed hereunder:

*If students do not have enough money to buy food today, they can get food on credit by promising to pay tomorrow or the day after. However, sometimes these students might not get food on credit due to the willingness of the shopkeepers. Shopkeepers do not want to sell on credit. Even they posted a notice debt is for tomorrow, not for today. In particular, those who have previously took a credit but have not yet paid their debts will not be able to get more credit is necessary to persuade the shopkeepers. If the shopkeepers refuse to give extra credit, students may have to move to another shop where they have not already received a loan.*

#### **4.5 Buy food through generating cash from**

Buy food through generating cash from begging is one their experiences. Ayalew said that some students used begging as a temporary survival strategy from which they will eventually move on. However, these children view begging as a shameful activity that they would prefer to avoid, if they had alternatives. These children used begging as their daily living or they considered it as their permanent work in order to survive and fulfil the expectations of their parents and shared responsibilities for family. Almost half of child beggars whom they were sampled lived with step-parents, because of their biological parents died, divorced, or separated (FDS, 2011).

Some students received their daily meals by being obedient to others. Bontu stated that one of her poor student the seventh-grader, named Demwz. A boy has neither mother nor father or other blood relatives. As a result, Bontu witnessed, “He usually received his daily bread by being obedient to others. Sometimes it was by taking hotel crumbs from the waste pool, sometimes fetching water and watering the garden. So the pay for what he did was not money instead of food.” Bontu also added that, He was happy because he had enough to eat and he reduced his hunger. Before starting this job, he would go to school without lunch and even quit school.

Work as waiters during the day and learn at night is also one of poor children’s experience. Kidist indicates that although there were commonly girls, there were also boys who worked as waiters during the day and learning at night before this year’s SFP was established in order to get their daily meal. Following the establishment of the program, they began to attend school at the regular time. These children spent the day working to serve (accommodate) people (in cafés, restaurants, hotels----) and go to school. However, they don’t achieve high grades in education due to tiredness and not having enough time to study and do homework. Many of them face

different obstacles (especially girls). Such as starting a marriage without thought or preparation; dealing with adolescents' misbehavior (exposure to addiction, dislike of education, discouragement); rape; unwanted pregnancy and childbirth; several days absent from school, etc.

Food some poor school children use selling coffee and tea during the day and attending school in the evening is one of their experiences. Beza interviewed at Bole Gerji School on Friday January 23, 2020 stated that some poor school girls sell coffee, tea, and pasty in order generate cash. Beza narrated her challenges and experience to cope up hunger here below:

*Hunger is not simply a lack of food. The greatest thing on earth is the loss of the person who gives us daily bread. It is Beza's only responsibility to raise herself and her little sister. She is a 16 years old girl and her income is from making coffee and tea. She started this business because there is no family to teach her. She lost both of her parents, and she has a little sister. So it is her only responsibility to raise herself and her little sister. She is a seventh-grader, and she is learning in the evening by selling coffee and tea in the day time.*

In line to this, the study by AACALSAB and ECSU (2018) found that 66.67% of children support their parents. Thus, to help a family in economic hardship to the rest of the family when a family member (father, mother, or two) dies countless students are forced to do various jobs during their leisure time, while others leave school to pursue their basic needs, especially food. Working as a maid (domestic worker) and reliving hunger is another mechanism. Meti an expert at AAEB interviewed at her office in AAEB on January, 23, 2020 said that food insecure girls work in employees' home as maids and learning at night is one of their experiences. They receive also salary and attend their evening class, though, the work is exhaustive, and they have no time to do their homework, and study. In line to this, the study of AACALSAB and ECSU (2018) indicated that many school girls work over 42 hours in a week. Specifically, 91% of children work for an average of 63.46 hours. In addition, they often miss school because of being overworked. They get tired of going to class and are not able to pay proper attention. Here is my (the researcher's) witness at Yordanos's house a woman who had a house maid Meri area in 2018:

*Aster, a beautiful, friendly maid girl, who works in Yordanos's house and learning in a night class. I went there to teach her employer's children. Gradually, I started communicating with her. And she told me that her family could not send her to school.*

*That is why she was employed as a maid and attends evening class. She often asked me to help her do her homework, especially mathematics and English homework. Also, she says “I will copy the rest of the homework from my friends.” Even though she was in eighth grade, Aster was poor academically. She did not do her homework not only because she did not have enough time but also she did not have the skill. There was a picture (photograph) of a young man under the cover of her math notebook. This picture is of a young man Aster is in love with. She was looking forward to 5 pm, to go to school early and to meet her friends, and to get respite from her employer. When I went to teach, as usual, I didn’t see Aster. It was a new maid that opened the door for me. I asked Where Aster went? Her employer replied, “Her boyfriend has betrayed her! We saw her trying to kill herself. So we got her out of the house.” Aster’s love was not her priority, but it made her suicidal. Although she was a maid, and she could relieve her hunger; she could not continue her education because the night class brought her a strange thing called, love.*

Yordanos who was the employer of the above girl (Aster) informal discussion at her home around Meri in 2018 stated that the evening class has two sides for these female students (maids). On the one hand, they get some relief from the orders of employers, looking after children, and unrelenting household tasks. They will also meet their loved ones. The second side, however, is encountering unfortunate events. They face the scams of juveniles, the theft of their money, and phones; they begin to fall in love and have unwanted pregnancies. To this regard the study of ILO (2019) found that, many of domestic workers in Addis Ababa are exposed to labor exploitation, verbal harassment, physical punishment, and sexual abuse at their tender age. The study also reported that such children suffer from depression and anxiety. As a result, child domestics are a vulnerable section of society.

#### **4.6 Provide children to foster care or charities**

The study of AACALSAB and ECSU (2018) indicates that 45.18% of parents could not cover the cost of children’s education. Selam stated that food insecure parents who were unable to feed their children would offer their children to foster care. Orphaned or if some poor parents have a child without thinking and readiness, but unable to raise them, the child is given to charities, NGOs, or Child adopters. With the support of these childcare individuals’ or organizations these children can they nourish, nurture, educate, and develop well into adulthood.

#### **4.7 Engage in either legal jobs or illegal works**

Bekele is an expert at Bole Sub City Education Office. Bekele interviewed at his office on Wednesday January 15, 2020, stated that one of the fates of food insecure school children is that students stop learning and be forced to start other temporary jobs not to be starved. As a result, Bekele witnessed, “food insecure school children prefer to work in different temporary jobs rather than attending school. Children engaged in all forms of paid work, in factories, service industries, shops, and marketplaces and in household chores. “In line to this, APA(2017) indicated that people be subject to spend their limited mental reserves on resources that they lack, and so hungry children focus on food, which can lead to neglect of other areas of life such as schoolwork.

According to USAID (2015) study, many children traveled from different parts of Ethiopia to the capital, Addis Ababa, in search of a better life. However, they encountered unexpected life. Really working is hard and these girls work seven days a week. They also had been banned from going to school because the classes coincided with their working hours. In addition, about one third does not go to school, and instead work exhausting 11-hour days, seven days a week. Almost half of them not actually paid, working instead of accommodation and food.

In order to get their daily food, many school children engaged either in legal jobs or illegal works. The families of many of these working children were known to struggle for survival due to the pressing and chronic problem of poverty as a result of the malnutrition. The study by AACALSAB and ECSU (2018) found that 4.44% of Addis Ababa children engaged in various child labor activities due to poverty in Addis Ababa. Many of these children have neither access to education nor have adequate remuneration, satisfactory working, and living conditions. Consequently, they were not protected from the most harmful and exploitative practices. They worked under extreme conditions that constrained their holistic development (Bequele and Myers). According to FDERE (2019), 19.55% of children have never received any education in Addis Ababa.

Teachers FGD and Students FGD indicate that due to malnutrition food insecure school children engage into petty trading (peddler, street shopping, selling mobile card, lottery), taxi assistants



and in construction, manufacturing, shoeshine, car washing, and more. In reverse to this, Bontu witnessed, “Poor schoolchildren also involved in illegal activities (stealing, gambling, occasional robbing in groups (like telephone, laptops, and money) and more to meet their food needs.” As they are being pressured into making income: stealing, gambling, occasional robbing in groups (like telephone, laptops, and money), and more.

Teacher Kidist said that hunger forces some female students to venture into prostitution. Children are also found in other activities constituting the worst forms of child exploitation, such as prostitution. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is more prevalent in Addis Ababa. Young girls, some as young as age 13, are recruited to work in prostitution at brothels, hotels, bars, rural truck stops, and pensions.

#### **4.8 Getting support from others**

Aselefech interviewed at Bole Gerji School on Friday January 23, 2020 stated that Food insecure school children attend school through the help of others (friends, teachers, local community, NGOs, and former school students) one of these the experiences of food insecure schoolchildren was sharing lunch with others. It was this way that Nesru’s friends and his teacher temporarily relieved Nesru’s hunger so that he could continue learning. Aselefech witnessed how Nesru’s friends were supporting him by sharing their lunch as below:

*Nesru is a fifth-grader. He lives with his mother who is begging and unable to feed her child. He did not bring lunch most of the time. But sometimes he brings only an empty lunch box, especially if his mother didn’t succeed in getting any money from begging. So, it seems, the boy who comes with his empty lunchboxes pretends to eat lunch. One day one of his teachers decided to investigate the situation to know whether Nesru was eating sufficiently. She couldn’t believe it because he brought an empty lunchbox. She called the child and asked him and shared the lunch she had brought. She think solutions how to help this boy and on the next day. She proposed and ordered that he bring an empty lunch box and have all of his classmates added a piece of lunch to his lunch box, accordingly, he attended school by eating what his friends provided. In addition, some parents force their children to finish lunch. Those children who couldn’t finish their lunch share it with Nesru or add the leftovers to his lunch box and make him eat dinner later. On the one hand, they are responding to their friend’s food needs at their own pace, while at the same time eliminating the parents’ anger about Nesru not coming with a sufficient lunch.*

#### **4.8.1 Success through support of his classmates and teachers**

It does not mean that all food insecure school children achieved low. Many poor children are learning while struggling with hunger; others give up and stop learning because of starvation. On the other hand, Addis Lisan Newspaper (2019) reports one food insecure student named Eyuel scored a high result. He is one of the neediest students who attend school with many challenges and starvation. He has been taught by the support of his classmates and teachers. He has learned a great deal and has had scored the highest score. He had gone through many hurdles. That is why the road from the main gate to the queues' area is named for him. Therefore, the most talented students can be found among students with food insecurities. The message by Eyuel, "You will be as successful as me, if you pass challenges" has been displayed on a kindergarten and primary school notice board. It is a message that student Eyuel wrote on the school's notice board. In addition to this the school renamed a road "Eyuel Street" for a year. He scored the highest result from grade eighth students even though he had gone through in many hurdles.

The interviewee and the case study indicate it's amazing that these kids try to keep their friends from dropping out of school by sharing lunch. The support that children give to each other regardless of religion, race, color, gender, or sexual orientation is very encouraging. What happened to us (elders)? That we may ask ourselves. We should make such kinds of experiences known to others. School children have experience in order to cope up food shortages or hunger.

In line to this, Mekuria interviewed at Wore Genu School on February 24, 2020 stated that food insecure children attained school by getting the help from the local community and investors. By means of the support of other parties, some children can attend their education and ease their hunger such as support from the school community, investors, and the local community. The local community feeds students from their school to help needy students. Like other areas, the population of Bole Sub-city is socially connected. Some individuals prepare more food for festive meals for baptism, and other religious ceremonies, etc., (Ironically, it is considered the act of justification when feeding the starving) then bring the food to the school and feed needy children. Similarly, there were students who were regularly obtaining meals from local investors and hotels. These food service individuals send food to school at lunchtime to feed children. However, the students wanted to eat but they felt ashamed.

## 4.9 Reliving hunger by drinking water

Ahmed told that some students (including him while he was a student) come out of class while the teacher is explaining. As a result these hungered children drink water to relieve their hunger. He learned at Bole Gerji and is now teaching in this school. He told that he has known this school for a long time. He observed that in this school there is an increase of needy families. Many families cannot afford to send their children to school with enough food and or students may come with empty stomachs. Ahmed witnessed his hunger and his students experience here below:

*This is a real scenario that we have gone through. I once remember some students coming out of class while the teacher was explaining and drinking water to relieve their hunger. He labels how serious the problem was. Recognizing the seriousness of the problem, the school's teachers and administration staff fed our children, bought books, and publicly appealed to various institutions and investors. We also begged government organizations, such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, who purchased the student exercise book last year. Although the children are students who have gone through a lot of problems, they have made good progress. The work of supporting students has been the result of many years, and I have no doubt that it is in this generation that we must invest our knowledge and money. There are some who have been supported by the same people at this school who are at their best today. They know their past and extend a helping hand to other students today.*

### Summary

The children used various methods to hide and relieve their hunger. These methods are applied by the students themselves or by other agents such as school feeding programs, the children's parents or their guardians. In order to get their daily meal, these school children pass through many ups and downs. Phenomenological qualitative approach merges individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the common essence. Based on this, I grouped under nine themes as described in Table 1 below:

**Table 1 Experiences and coping mechanisms of Food Insecure Children**

<p><b>1. Pretending as if not hungry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children, who bring a little lunch, hide from the sight of their peers and eat lunch slowly to pretend that they have enough meal</li><li>• Students who eat leftover food eat their lunch alone by hiding from their friends</li><li>• Students play at lunchtime instead of joining their classmates to eat lunch.</li></ul>
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<p><b>2. Food managing techniques and actions ( rationing strategy)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut size of the meal( reduce the amount of the meal)</li> <li>• Reduced the number of meals eaten in a day</li> <li>• Skip the times of eating (skipping without eating breakfast, or skip lunch or dinner: eating once or twice per day).</li> <li>• Skipping the entire day without eating</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Rely on low-cost and cooked foods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy street foods such Bread, Pasty, Bonbolino, Sambusa, Chips, or Biscuits.</li> <li>• Buy leftover foods from hotels, restaurants, homes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Getting daily food on credit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase food on credit</li> <li>• Borrow money to buy food</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Buy food through generating cash from;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begging</li> <li>• Work as waiters during the day and learn at night</li> <li>• Selling coffee and tea during the day and attending school in the evening</li> <li>• Working as a maid (domestic worker)</li> <li>• Receive their daily meal by being obedient to others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Provide children to foster care or charities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Child adoption</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Engage in either legal jobs or illegal works.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in petty trading (peddler, street shopping, selling mobile card, lottery), taxi assistants and in construction, manufacturing, shoeshine, car washing, and more.</li> <li>• Involve in illegal activities (stealing, gambling, occasional robbing in groups (like telephone, laptops, and money) and more</li> <li>• Venture into child prostitution</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Getting support from others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rely on help from friends and the school community.</li> <li>• Gather leftover food</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Reliving hunger by drinking water</b></p>

## **Chapter Five**

### **State and Non-State Actors Response**

This chapter focuses on the roles of state and non-state stakeholders in SFP. In addition, this chapter deals the criteria for selection of beneficiary children from SFP as well as the experiences of SFP beneficiary children after they get access to SFP. It also presents the progress of SFP into three phases. The voice of the community towards the SFP also included here below.

#### **5.1 The Inception of SFP in Addis Ababa**

As mentioned in the background, Yenat Weg charitable association in 2015 provided the first meal for poor schoolchildren. Later WFP and USAID joined the program (AAEB, 2018). However, Teachers FGD conducted at Goro Elementary School on February, 12, 2020 indicates that since its inception to 2017/18, most students in need of food had not received adequate supports from SFP. This means that the program was not accessible to many needy students. The government's response was low. The city government of Addis Ababa did not provide adequate support to SFP as well as did not organize the program financially, materially, or in manpower.

Similar to this, Bekele stated that the program did not receive strong support not only from the government but also from the community. It lacked strong government and public participation and still does not exist, it was only a few foreign and indigenous NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable association, WFP, and USAID) participate and decide. In line to this, Dereje interviewed at Bole Gerji School on Friday January 23, 2020 said that SFP was left to these foreign and indigenous NGOs. It should still not be a government-given responsibility. That is why it seems that the program was not accessible to many students in need. Over the past years, (up to the program to 2018) only 30 thousand public school students were benefited from the SFP.

Tangut and Aselefech indicate that Yenat Weg Charity Association started the SFP at Hidasie and Bole Gerji primary schools in 2015 by providing meals for students whose parents could not afford to feed them. Bekele stated this phase of SFP was launched in Bole Sub-City targeting children and their families who cannot afford snacks and lunch for their KG and primary school-

going children. The program further supported mothers of the beneficiary students through business training and income generation. This SFP launched by Yenat Weg Charity Association has helped downsize the dropouts by 64%, increased enrollment by 9%, and reduced absenteeism by 9% and reduced dropouts by 64% annually in 43 schools in Addis Ababa. Physical development has also shown growth to 21.8% gain in body weight improvement and 3.7% since the intervention four years ago (Abiy, 2017).

Based on the implementation approaches and the main actors, school feeding practices could present into three phases. The first phase was before 2015, the second phase is from 2015/16 to 2018/19, and the third phase is after 2018/19. Before 2018/19, school feeding was implemented by individual actors (teachers, students, school community, and local individuals) and the second phase was donated by NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable association, WFP, and USIAD) (Abiy, 2017), while after 2018 actors applied the pool fund approach where resources are raised and organized to finance joint a program involving all stakeholders to work towards implementation of a joint program (AAEB, 2019).

## **5.2 The Program to 2015/16 Academic Year**

Dereje stated that the implementation of SFP until 2015 had been run and donated by individuals (the school community). Teachers and students started feeding food insecure children before 2015. They noticed the problem and began to raise funds, and they could donate 1 birr and above in a month. However, the money was not enough. Therefore, they started looking for NGOs. Later, in collaboration with these NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable association, WFP, and USIAD), they began feeding these helpless 400 children (AAEB, 2018). Meseret interviewed at Arabsa Elementary School on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 stated the psychological impact of SFP on beneficiary children. Meseret witnessed, “this program had psychological effects for these benefiting students because of: first not wanting or not eating food to be poor by friends and the school community, who are looking to eat and starve. Second, they are ashamed to eat, but they eat to relieve their hunger.”

In order to reduce psychological effect they changed the modality into take-home rations. Meseret stated that the modality of this program was take-home rations, where rations were

provided to school children for consumption at home because of beneficiaries ashamed and embarrassed to feed at home. Because in-school feeding made the students feel embarrassed and ashamed. It was a solution that they used at the time, providing (rice, coconut, pasta, etc.) as a gift. In particular, they have tried to ease the children's hunger by providing food (in the form of take-home rations) and learning materials than can be prepared at home for Christmas, Easter, and Fetir, etc., rather than in school feeding or providing a cooked meal. Indeed, student anxiety has decreased. However, the grain that was given in the form of take-home rations is only used for a few days. Because of all family members, share it.

Students FGD show that, it is not all about money people also support food insecure children by ideas, and labor. Teachers played a vital role in helping students in need from identifying students in need of food assistance to spending their pocket money. They are the main actors in raising money from themselves and the rest of the school community and persuading other organizations, NGOs, investors, etc. to make money. However, this program benefited only some students with the support of these actors.

### **5.3 From 2015/16 – 2018/19 Academic Year**

Belay stated that implementation of this program has been led by local and foreign NGOs. Supported by NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable association, WFP, and USIAD) some schools in Bole have been implementing a feeding program in schools where students are believed to attained class empty stomach (AAEB, 2018). The modality of this program was in school-feeding, breakfast and lunch was provided for children where children on the site (in school).

In his study Abiy (2017) indicates, the food items provided for children were cost-effective and commonly diets. Local food items: Injera Firfir, Defo Dabo, and Marmalata with tea on different days were included in the breakfast menu and the lunch menu consists of Injera with Lentil Wot, Injera with Shiro Wot, Injera with Potato Wot and Rice with or without bread. The time for breakfast is from 1:00 to 2:30 in the morning and the lunchtime is 6:00 to 7:30 in the noon local time.

According to AAEB (2018) report, for the first time in the 2017 academic year, 51 thousand pupils benefited from Addis Ababa city government spending, NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable



association, WFP and USAID) and school community. Among this 4712 of students were from Bole Sub-city. The main criterion for the selection of beneficiary children was school-age children who didn't have access to get adequate and nutritious food at home and the donors were.

But the role of the government was insignificant. In the 2018 academic year, the number of beneficiaries grew to 70 thousand and the program had been implemented in different public schools (in Addis Ababa). In this project also only 6018 Bole Sub-city students were benefited.

***Photograph 1: School feeding beneficiary children by Yenat Weg Charitable Association in 2017. Source Yenat Weg Charitable Association***

#### **5.4 Problems of the above two previous**

Teachers FGD show that the previous two SFPs (the program to 2015/16 academic year and the program from 2015/16 – 2018/19 academic years) had the following problems: First, it had major psychological effects for the benefiting students. Although it was only supported for some very poor students, these beneficiaries did not want to eat openly and were not eating freely: because they were ashamed and embarrassed. Students who have chronic food problems were targeted. The thing that disgusts with aid is the seizure of freedom: the help of a small coin snatched away the freedom that is the great truth of nature. Beneficiaries were worried and ashamed. Then, they isolated themselves from their friends after eating. They imagined that I am the only one who got this aid. The reason is that I am a poor child. There is a fear that I eat because I am poor, on the other hand, if they receive the food, they will eat it better. In their study, Raine et al., (2003) and Lagbo (2012) expressed the views that some poor parents and children are not willing to receive the meal due to scared of stigma. Second, it only provided support to a limited number of students. Many students need support but what to do because the support was not enough for many children, only very few poor children benefited. So it did not include other students who needed support. Though the need is high, the aid was low (more people, less food, low aid). Third, support was not continuous. It started once and the other was interrupted.



Fifth, as seen in the photograph only some students and some schools had access to the program. However, students in need of food are not limited to certain schools. The number of students who need support may vary from school to school. But it was not appropriate to exclude others with the support of all public schools. Sixth, implementation of the program was different from school to schools because of the supporting organizations and schools (AAEB, 2018).

Meti stated that these above two phases of the program (the program to 2015 academic year and the program from 2015/16 – 2018/19 academic year) has been conducted in a fragmented and in an uncoordinated manner by the teachers, the management, the government, the NGOs, and the local community. In addition the implementation was different from school to school. However, the above two phases of SFP made a significant contribution to helping students who did not drop out of school and repeated classes due to severe hunger. In addition, these two phases gave lesson to launch the program targeted all public schoolchildren.

### **5.5 The Program Launched in 2019/20 Academic Year**

Meti stated that the first massive student feeding program was launched in September 2019 to benefit about 300 thousand students in Addis Ababa. The program targeted to provide free in-site school food to all schoolchildren enrolled in the public schools throughout Addis Ababa, regardless of their socio-economic status or area of residence.



*Photograph 2: The former Deputy Mayor of Addis Ababa launched the SFP at Bole Elementary School on October 12, 2020* Source: Addis Lisan Newspaper October 16, 2019

The main reason for this drastic increase was that students who got school feeding support were embarrassed by their friends and schoolmates. As a result, these students were hiding from other students who were not included in the program. In order to reduce this social exclusion, the City Administration launched SFP which provides a blanket cover for all (from KG to grade 8<sup>th</sup>) public school students. Besides, there is a rising cost of living and high food price which create high demand for SFP to reduce hunger among the large number of students obliging the government to increase the number of beneficiaries. The other reason was: in order to increase enrollment, reduce absenteeism and dropouts among schoolchildren. As a result, all public school students have benefited from the program. The program has launched for students kindergarten up to eighth grade in all public schools of Addis Ababa.

According to BSCEO (2019) report, this SFP makes 45088 students beneficiaries of the program in all 23 public schools of Bole Sub City. Each school-day, 45088 children from all standards and grades (1-8) receive meals at their respective schools. A feeding program in such schools does more than alleviate hunger but also alleviates absenteeism and dropouts. Besides it reduced

the gap between the poor and the rich, nearly all students eat the same food in the school (AAEB, 2019).

Meti stated that the implementation of this SFP has been led by the government. In the previous programs, these needy children served at a personal expense and NGOs spending. Currently, individual actors (NGOs, Individuals) contribute to the pool of resources then implement the program jointly with the leadership of the Addis Ababa City Administration.

In order to run the program, a legal framework (guidelines for SFP) has been set on the operation of public schools in the city administration to ensure its continuity as well as its efficiency and effectiveness. The aim of this legal framework is to lead SFP in a coordinated and organized manner; to enable stakeholders to fulfill their expected roles; to establish a consistent entry system; to support for the effective implementation of support by individuals or institutions; to monitor and standardize the food offered at schools; to prevent health problems associated with hygiene (AAEB, 2019).

Selam stated that before this SFP has been launched, serving breakfast and lunch for their children was too difficult for many parents including her. The reasons were: One reason is that children were bored to eat the same foods over and over again; secondly, so as not to be offended by friends; parents can buy at a lower price but the children don't want to take this low-price meal to lunch is the third reason. Selam witnessed her experience, "When I give Shiro for his lunch, my son goes to school hiding him from me. Because the scared of eating the same kind of food always." The fourth and most important reason was that there was no food at home.

#### **5.5.1 Food items SFP launched in the 2019/20 Academic Year**

According to AAEB (2018) legal framework, Mothers prepare this food on-site in the school kitchen. All kindergarten and primary school children received on-site school meal twice a day, breakfast in the morning, and lunch at mid-day. The menu displayed in the kitchen and classrooms for pupils and mothers (cookers) to know.

**Table 2. Menu prepared for the 2019 Academic Year by AAEB**

<b>Day</b>	<b>breakfast menu</b>	<b>lunch menu</b>
<b>Monday</b>	Injeraferfer with tea	Injera with lentil wot
<b>Tuesday</b>	Difodabo with tea	Bread with rice
<b>Wednesday</b>	Bread and Marmalata with tea	Injera with potato wot
<b>Thursday</b>	Injeraferfer with tea	Injera with Shiro and boiled egg
<b>Friday</b>	Repeat one of the above	Repeat one of the above

**Source: Menu prepared for the 2019 /20Academic Year by AAEB**

The school-meals are cooked on-site in schools in order to serve children. According to the menu set by AAEB (2019) as shown in the above table, local foods that easily accessed listed in the menu, breakfast menu included Injera prefer, Difo Dabo, Bread with Marmalata and tea is common all school days and lunch menu consists of Injera with lentil wot, bread with rice, injera with potato wot, Injera with Shiro and boiled egg. School children eat their breakfast 1:00 – 2:20 before they start the first class and received lunch 6:00-7:20 local time every school day. The food served from the kitchen. The mothers serve the KG children in their classrooms, as they are too young to join the queues.

Teachers FGD and Students FGD indicate that due to many constraints, the menu is not practical most of the time. As a result, many of the students raised concerns that the food provided did not reflect what they had on the menu. Both FGDs witnessed, “The frequency of the meals, the flavor of the meals (taste), the calorie, and the number of meals still in question.”The amount and the variety (kind) of food that schools provide for children should be age-appropriate and adequate. Particularly, for grade eighth students the amount of the meal is not enough and or KG students the variety of the meal is not tasty.



*Photograph 3: KG 3 school children at Bole Gerji Elementary School concerns about the food provided did not according to the menu.*Source: Bole Gerji Elementary SFP Coordination

As seen the photograph 3, children have complains on the applicability of the menu. They expect Injera with Shiro and boiled egg because the day was according to the menu. However, they were given rice. As a result they were not happy with the food. Due to the frequency of rice they were not eager to eat.

Moreover, it does not consider the age difference and students with health problems. AAEB (2018) legal framework forced due to health problems, students who need special food and provide medical evidence for their problem should receive affordable means per student's budget. Some beneficiaries do not like the food they are given.

Parents FGD conducted at Wore Genu School on Monday February 24, 2020 indicate that stakeholders have to ensure the quality and amount of the meal. Similarly, food cookers FGD Practical measures should be taken, to remedy the situation viewed difficult the mothers received only 14 birr per child, which is clearly inadequate. As a result, the daily budget for a child is 14 birr and one month's expense is 308 birr. The money set aside for these children per month is equivalent to the price of a special pizza. Thus, is 308 birr enough for a child per month (22 school days)? The answer is clear and simple. Yes, it is not enough. But it is better to eat less than nothing.

Teachers FGD indicate that the total daily nutrient intake of schoolchildren needs to be studied in order to adjust the meal menu. School-meals might be different in terms of amount, type taste, and nutritional value, where the expected outcome might also be different. It is better to enhance the quality of food in all cases and the food should be fortified.

#### **5.5.2 The outcomes of SFP launched in the 2019/20 Academic Year**

Ayalew indicates that the SFP is contributing a lot in the school's dropout rate, retention, and daily attendance. The program alleviates short-term hunger of malnourished schoolchildren and motivates parents to enroll their children in school and have them attended regularly, address micronutrient deficiencies of schoolchildren too. The SFP could relieve the starvation of poor students who were coming to school with empty stomach and empty lunch box.

Deboch said that this SFP has played a crucial role regarding parental decisions to enroll their children in school who would not have gained the opportunity although they were withdrawn from school in order to get daily food. In line to this, Zinash a parent who has all of her children in this school and benefited from the SF, interviewed at Goro Elementary school on February 12, 2020 told that she took the decision to enroll them because of her experience before the program launched. Even many parents transferred their children from night shift to regular class as a result, the enrollments have increased. Teachers' explanation shows that absenteeism and dropout rate reduced and children have actively participated in school. The program also contributed to increasing the opportunities for children to attain the school.

Equally, teachers FGD show that the school meal helps children; to pay attention and behave in the school, to feel better, reducing headaches and stomachs, and improve their grades. Participants highlighted that SFP does not only benefit schoolchildren but also it has helped to improve the lives of the cooker through the money they get from their service and food supplies, as well as their children, are the part of the program. School feeding also helps to supplement the food stocks in the household because children take only the evening meal at home after they have had breakfast and lunch at school.

The relevance of the SFP is confirmed and appreciated by the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Parents FGD indicate that SFP reduced the burden of parents and guardians. The program is serving all children in the school including non- needy children, to avoid issues of logistics, jealousies, or disgrace that was arising if only some children were fed. But this program is more profitable (favor) the poor for these who have now or less food than the non-poor. To this regard Adelman (2008) and Desalegn (2011) showed that the aim of SFP is attracting the children's of low-income parents. According to parents FGD, SFP has reduced the variety of food that students bring from their homes. It relived the pupil's hunger because all students eat lunch; in some ways, it has brought relative equality among students; the stress of parents has reduced. Reduced stress; there are no students who are late, absent, dropping out, sleeping, and falling down in class, in completing classwork and homework due to hunger.

Cookers FGD show that, in contradiction last year, students who were afraid to eat school's lunch, this year they put the food they brought home and eat with friends. Alternatively, they mix the food they bring home from school lunch and eat with friends. Therefore, eating school food, which used to be boring last year, is now happily eating with friends. Most importantly, it has increased student enrollment in all schools. For example, the number of students attending the Goro School this year has increased by a thousand compared to last year. Quitting school because they do not have parents to support and send them to school. As a result, working in various temporary jobs, even sometimes they were leading a street life.

According to Meti food request has been answered as much as possible. That is why dropped students are coming to school as well as evening students come to the regular (day) program. These students were attending evening classes. However, night students are not the beneficiaries of the program. For that reason, they switched to the schedule to get the benefit of the scheme. This is why the number of students increased.

### **5.5.3 Benefits of SFP launched in the 2019/20 Academic Year for parents**

Food cookers FGD conducted at Bole Gerji Elementary School on Friday February 24, 2020 indicate that the SFP benefited not only children but also their mothers. In addition to the children themselves, 10 thousand mothers have access to food preparation jobs in different schools in Addis Ababa. Mothers feed their children at school and in return children feed by their mothers who the program is brought mutual benefit for both mothers and children. Based on the guidelines AAEB(2019), the office of women and Child Affairs (in Bole) recruited 879 food suppliers or cooker women based on the following criteria: The first is for mothers who have children in the school they work for the reason is that these mothers are supposed to feed their children. It designed to be more vigilant about food preparation, hygiene, quality, and other related issues. In fact, the feelings of these mothers feed their own children. Then, these mothers organized into groups; While Students classified according to their grade level. The food supplier mothers and beneficiary student's assignment was done by lotto.

Similarly the cookers FGD indicate that, a mother may not have the opportunity to feed her own child. Nevertheless, she feeds her workmate's child. This is how other mothers also serve. Therefore, these mothers work because they are directly or indirectly involved in the food preparation and other services; they explain why they do everything carefully. However Dereje indicate that, the ratio of mothers (cookers) and students is 1:48. This means that a mother feeds 48 students. This ratio reduces the quality and quantity of food. In addition, the number of user students is not constant. It fluctuates (sometimes increases and other times decrease).

### **5.5.4 Non-beneficiaries in the 2019/20 SFP**

According to BSCEO (2019) report, 2638 students are not the beneficiaries of this SFP. Ayalew said, these students claimed that they have not to trust the quality and quantity of the food served on most of the days and food items listed on the menu are not according to the menu. They



expressed displeasure due to the variety and taste of the food and its quality. Sometimes they complained that the *ferfer* is too watery or salty and other times they complained that it is not well cooked. Especially KG students put the leftover food as an expression of dissatisfaction.

Some parents still forbid their children from eating school food. According to Dereje the reason is: we do not need anyone's help to feed our children. They provide the reason we have enough capacity. Another reason is the question of quality and variety of food. These parents are skeptical of the program because of the false information presented by social media. This has affected the program. Specifically, rumors circulating on social networking sites say that many children are sick in the hospital because of eating unhealthy foods. To this regard Brainly (2018) argues SFP has problem on beneficiaries: because it limits schoolchildren to eat what they want. Similarly, Tigist indicates that parents have a doubt on the quantity of food provided in school meals.

Opposite to the above scenario, cookers FGD indicates that although parents think that their child should not eat school food, however, children who brought lunch at home leave or mix homemade food with the school lunch and eat with their friends. Because of that they do not want to separate with their friends. If it is possible, the budget should rise up and students should be able to get the food they need. Perhaps it is the inadequacy of the budget that hinders the provision of quality food. State contributions should be committed specifically to this program, and to ensure funds is been used for the purpose for which they were allocated.

#### **5.5.5 The Voice of the Community towards the 2019/20 SFP**

The voice of the community towards SFP is positive for many people and negative for others. Cookers FGD indicate although the program has many challenges to be resolved, the voice of the community is positive and appreciative of the SFP. Mothers are happy to feed their children. Nevertheless, the budget issue is a headache. They said that the benefits are not the money they receive from the food we provide, but rather that we make sure that our children have enough food and attend school.

The parents FGD also show that before the SFP has been launched, serving breakfast and lunch for their children was too difficult. Parents were facing different difficulties, with most trying to do their best under what are often challenging conditions. However, many parents failed to manage their multiple stresses in their lives, up to and including feeding their children. They told their thoughts: they make this kind of wood smoke to cook food and spend all their time in school for little money is the reason that their surplus is to feed their children. A year ago, they could not afford to give their children lunch. Now, there is no problem.

Temesgen is very happy with what the government established the SFP. Temesgen do not have the money to feed his children. He lives in a hand-to mouth Condition. Interviewed at Goro Elementary School on February 12, 2020, he stated that all of a sudden, this year's school meal program has begun and has allowed students to eat the same food. As a result, many parents are happy with the SFP launched this year. He narrated the SFP of 2019 as follows:

*Mr. Temesgen is the father of two children. His children learned from the first grade in the Bole Goro School. The children are now in sixth and eighth grades. His job was a retailing on the street. That was why he could not able to feed and educate the family. He said that he was very happy with what the government had done for his. He did not have the money to feed his children he lives in a hand-to-mouth. He felt that he was living in my country. It was a problem for them (parents) when the school opened/started. Now we are starting the New Year. This year we are not worried about giving breakfast and lunch to our schoolchildren. We started with joy without thinking.*

Similar to this, Mesfin is teaching his son at the same school. He said, "I cannot afford school supplies because I am a guard and no longer able to pay rent, buy food, educate his children, and lead a family life." He shared his thoughts with a sense of joy when he had no words' commendation. His interview is quoted as follows:

*Because the government is supplies breakfast and lunch all this time to my son. It is a pleasure for us the government to understand the problem now and coordinate it. Look at what happened to the rise of living situation, we were worried to buy food commodities. But from now on, it will help us focus our children on their education so that we can focus our attention on helping them.*

The other parents interviewed were Selam and Abeba. Both teach their three children in Arabsa School. They stated that they could not have a steady source of income and buying food commodities for all their children and it would be a headache, and that was why they suffered a lot to cover their children's daily meals. Because of the living expenses, for these low-

income families are unable to provide adequate and nutritious meals for their children because of the family size.

Students FGD and Lemlem indicated that some people (parents and students) did not trust the SFPs due to: the question of quality and variety of food. Specifically, rumors circulating on social networking sites say that many children are sick in the hospital because of eating unhealthy foods. Similarly, they have doubts about the quantity of food provided in schools meal. As a result, some students are non-beneficiaries of the SFP.

In general speaking the rise of the prices of basic household items and the high population demand for food in contrast to the insufficient income of many parents remains the central issue to food insecurity. As a result, many of Bole's school children suffer due to starvation even have no daily meal and access to food. Before the 2019/20 SFP has been launched, serving breakfast and lunch for their children was too difficult for many parents. When I think of the students' starvation before the program established, there is no doubt about the importance and effectiveness of this SFP. However, if we compare it with other developed countries, it is less effective. After all, as I have tried to describe above, the program of entering the developed world is long-term and driven by high budgets and resources, while Addis Ababa's SFP is new as well as managed by a small budget and resources. Thus, it is better to look at this program in terms of our own developmental status; not through the lens of the program of other developed nation.

### **Summary**

The previous two SFPs (the program to 2015/16 academic year and the program from 2015/16 – 2018/19 academic years) have been conducted in a fragmented and in an uncoordinated manner. Only very few poor school children were benefited. Though the need is high, the aid was low (more people, less food, low aid) and brought major psychological effects for the benefiting students. As a result, beneficiaries were worried and ashamed.

The government of Addis Ababa City Administration started the regular feeding program in all public primary schools. Its commitment to the provisions of food for all public school children is great and delightful. The SFP not only relieves children's stress caused by hunger, but it also

relieves the stress of parents because it reduces the economic burden of parents through covering food expenses for their children. The program able to attract children to school and parents who could not afford a daily meal for their children before the launching of this program now they are eager to enroll their children. Children who are benefited from SFP attended school regularly with the provision of the school food, and they improved their results. However, the SFP should be improved the quality including variety and amount of meals.

The money allocated for a child per day is too small. As a result, strong public participation is required to provide rich and affordable food for students, and to reduce government spending, moreover for the sustainability of the program. While it is everyone's responsibility to regulate the future of children by feeding sufficient and nutritious food, the government's priority is.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Challenges to SFP**

This chapter deals the gaps and constraints in implementation of school feeding program. This chapter presents challenges to SFP here below.

Bekele expert at Bole Sub City Education Office team leader at Sub city level, Ayalew a school director, and Deboch a school director stated that the SFP faced many obstacles. It is important to note the constraints of the program in order to solve it. The effectiveness and sustainability of this feeding program are primarily based on our economic development. It is incorrect to view the program totally as invalid because the program had positive effects. Generalizing as the program was wrong and ineffective is disrespecting the role of different bodies that have/had contributed a lot for the effectiveness and sustainability of the program. The SFP of Bole Sub City faced diverse challenges. Based on the phenomenological model I could to merge single obstacle in to a theme description Creswell (2007).I themed the constraints of SFP into four themes as mentioned below.

#### **6.1 Structural and Ownership problem**

The program doesn't have a strong structure that runs intensely with knowledge and ownership. Deboch said that strong institution and administrative structure are necessary to run SFP in order to address the nutritional needs of children. However, there is no institution and structure to run the program effectively. SFP needs a responsible institution and structure to monitor the annual budget set for the implementation of the feeding program and mobilize support and funds from donors. To this regard, Meti told that the agency is established to institutionalize the SFP. However, the agency established recently and it did not start working.

Similar to this, Bekele stated that SFP hasn't coordination at the city, sub-city, Woreda, and school level. It needs a strong structure and a responsible owner. Monitoring and evaluation are being done. The bureaucracy also does not make it possible for the cookers to get their money at the appropriate time. A fragmented and individualized project will be ineffective.

To this regard, WFP (2009) indicates that, in order to make the SFP stronger and more effective as well as available to all food-seeking students: 1) Solid and important institution with a clear mandate and administrative structure is necessary; 2) the constant efforts of authorities and stakeholders should be available; 3) multi-year and liable resource flows from all directions is essential.

Correspondingly, it is a crucially important element of sustainability is the continuity of demand for a program, particularly public demand at the community level, participation and ownership by parents, teachers, and the local community increase the potential sustainability of school feeding programs, Not only must the public demand but also there be teamwork for the effectiveness of the program. All must contribute its contribution and potential and should help with energy, knowledge, money as well as through materials.

It is appropriate to establish an organization that will have a public foundation and ensures the sustainability of the program by linking it too vertically (top-down) and horizontally (with other sectors and the community). It seems to me that the person who does not work is not to be mistaken because he is a human being, and he learns from his mistakes. However, if the error in the work caused by a misconception rather than an action, it is worse. Because the person who has an impression on his mind: he says, or he does is wrong, and for him, all the wrongs seemed to be right, so it can be very difficult to come to the truth or do the right thing. Hence, intensifying the program in human and sectorial institutions posture encounters from the grassroots level to the highest officials. The Journal of nutrition (2013) indicated that weak SFP structure at different levels affects the effectiveness of SFP and its sustainability.

## **6.2 Input problems**

### **6.2.1 Financial constraints (inadequate budget)**

Financial constraint is one of the major challenges identified in this study. The teachers FGD, Deboch, and Ayalew indicate the daily budget for a student is 14 ETB birr and during the day a child would have lunch and breakfast. The feeding would be processed according to the menu (legal framework, 2019). The cookers FGD, “What can be bought for seven ETB birr? The answer is obvious. Honestly, we can only buy one cup of coffee or a glass of tea. It is possible to

buy both breakfast and lunch with in fourteen ETB birr.” Data from observation indicates that the menu posted both in the classroom and kitchen. No objection to the preparation of a menu. It is right that a food list is prepared to provide equal access to food items and sizes to all users. In fact, the amount of food that was included in the menu was good but the money to buy these foods is not sufficient.

The cookers FGD stated that, if a meal is served according to the menu, the cost per pupil would increase to birr 20. On the other hand, on the day of the serving of Shiro and boiled eggs, all students are available to eat, as they took forward to the day of baking. However, enough meal for a student is not served. Instead of serving based on their menu, mothers offer a variety of foods not included in the menu. Because if they bought a kilo of rice for birr 21 and enough for lunch for 8 students.

According to HRC (1948) children need to be fed adequately because they have fundamental rights as children and for a range of nutritional, educational, health, and social reasons. Contrariwise, Ahmed told that due to the budget constraints, the dietary formula prescribed by the manual converts it into easy-to-buy foods which are affordable for mothers. Yet, prevents children from getting the foods they are looking for and the eggs they look forward to.

### **6.2.2 The rising cost of living vs. the high student population with a high demand for food**

Bekele stated that the rising cost of living vs. the high student population with a high demand for food is the major challenges for the effectiveness and sustainability of this SFP. On the one hand, it is appropriate to keep the cost of food, but on the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the project and to provide students with a nutritious meal. The rise in the cost of food is a major challenge for the program. This program is tight by the cost of living versus the high student population with a high demand for food. MOE (2012) school-feeding programs shall be promoted with the intention of providing balanced meals for children in schools especially for those coming from poor households and food-insecure households and areas. However, enriched food is expensive; running the prices of feeding programs is high especially for the growing number of schoolchildren from year to year (2009).

Likewise, APA (2019) found that Addis Ababa is one of the city's most expensive cities. As the collapse, unemployment, and rising living costs have resulted in food insecurity becoming a pressing issue for more families. Bekele told that the rising of living is not just an issue for poor families it continues as the main challenge to the SFP. Especially the greatest increase in the number of children seeking food assistance is as opposed to the rising living cost makes the program challenging. In particular, the cost of living and food prices have got worse over time.

### **6.2.3 Lack of Water**

Utensils and hygiene have been an issue for the SFP. Mothers who prepare food and school children must keep clean. Hygiene and sanitation are very important for the health and welfare of schoolchildren. Adequate sanitation facilities, sustainable water supply, and hand washing are required. As a result; the dining room should have clean and adequate drinking water and water container. The water route should be done for schools that have no water lines. And water trucks will provide water if there is no, says the SFP legal framework (AAEB, 2019).

However, I have observed that Bole Gerji, Goro, Hidassie, and Meles Fere schools have water route but due to the shortage of water supply there may be no water for several days in these schools. Contrary to this Wore Genu and Arabsa schools did not have water route. As a result, lack of water is a serious problem to prepare food, wash hands, and drink. It can expose students to diseases that result from hygiene. In line to this, Chirwa (2009) found that many children lost their life as a result of eating contaminated meals. Consequently, children have the right to get sanitary services, access to clean and adequate drinking water, and access to awareness on hygiene and nutrition.

### **6.2.4 Lack or no Dining Halls**

According to the SFP legal framework (2019) all schools must have available ample space for food preparation and storage, as well as meals for students. Yet, I observed that only Goro has a small dining hall which was built by one local investor. Even it is not enough to all of students. The rest five schools do not have dinning places. As a result, schools feed their students in the classroom, under a tree, or out of the class. Although feeding these poor children encouraged, it is important to have a clean eating area. As stated by the legal framework (2019), the student's



dining room should have a child-friendly, comfortable lounge, and other furniture. The dining room should be at least 10 meters away from classrooms and the restroom.

Belete told that all schools are worried about the dining room. I observed that children eat in their classroom and the classroom will be cleaned after the children eat. And eating in unclean places can lead to many diseases. Dirt, dust, germs, or other foreign substances will have a chance to mix with food. Most of the schools are used classrooms to feed their students. In addition, eating in classroom affect the instructional hours almost every day is wasted on feeding and cleaning classrooms after feeding. Similar to this, there is no proper food cooking and storage ample place.

#### **6.2.5 Lack of electricity supply and the high price of firewood**

Lack of cooking facility infrastructure is also the challenge to this SFP. I observed that all schools don't have enough electricity supply in order to cook school meal. The cookers FGD indicate that due to lack of electric supply and the rise of the price of firewood are the great challenges. In addition, wood-fired cooking is exhaustive and the cost of firewood is high. Mothers in the interview explained bitterly that the supply of electricity. Cookers are not using electricity as a result; forcing them to buy firewood has been a big constraint for food preparation. The cockers FGD quoted lack of electricity supply and the high price of firewood here below:

*It isn't because schools don't have electricity rather they (schools) don't have enough energy for electricity for a whole group of feeder moms. Because of there is no enough transformers. Not only does it cost the firewood, but they also lack the time and resources they need. There are a supply problem and the problem of transport too. Above all, there is a lot of smoke when we cook by firewood. Smoke not only damages our clothes but also changes the odor. Smoke also burns their eyes. When we finish work, we find it hard to see the outside light. So it's not good for our health. It is damaging their eyes. As a result, to prepare food, it is important to use energy-efficient cooking as much as possible.*

#### **6.2.6 Lack of trained human resources**

According to the guidelines of AAEB (2019), It is vital that adequate and trained mothers to provide a quality, balanced, and fresh meal to students on time. The ratio of mothers and students was calculated to have 1 mother prepares meals for 35 students. However, the ratio is 1:127 at Hiddassie, 1:63 at Goro, 1: 57at Arabsa, 1:48 Bole Gerji, 1:39 Woregenu, and 1:39 at MelesFere

schools respectively. This indicates that only few cookers are feeding children above the standard, which leads to food quality and quantity problems.

Deboch stated that, in fact, feeding a large number of students makes the mothers better beneficiaries, and harms children the intended user. Increasing the number of trained mothers can be reducing the problems of diet, quality, quantity, and hygiene. The reason is when a mother prepares food for a specific child and for many children; the quality and quantity will not be negligible. Sometimes they cook better food but less in quantity. And when the size is adjusted, the quality decreases. Students, for example, experiencing high levels of salt or a small amount of oil and preparing injera ferfer that stored water. Moreover, a minimum number of cookers (mothers), wasted the instructional hours almost every day is feeding a large number of students. As a result, lack of trained cooks is a constraint to the SFP.

### **6.3 Awareness Problem**

Tigist said that there was no open discussion between the public sector institutions about the purpose of SFP and the responsibilities of each sector, and the implementation of the program. Awareness didn't create to parents and the rest local community as well as to different public sectors. Increasing community awareness about the feeding program has to be done for the sustainability of the program, and to make the program participatory. While it is good to include the responsibilities of each department in the guidelines, it is important that common consensus that these institutions and stakeholders should be aware of their responsibilities.

For instance, it is the Addis Ababa City Administration Commerce Bureau was tasked with linking foodstuffs (cookers) with the wholesale businesses (AAEB, 2019). However, the cookers FGD and teachers FGD indicate that, Commerce Bureau didn't accomplish its responsibilities. In line to this, Tigist told that there wasn't a discussion between schools and parents about the SFP. The above interviewee indicates that Schools should convince parents through discussion. It is important to inform parents in detail about the program's purpose, the cycle and its results, as well as the challenges they face. This can be resolved by discussion. Otherwise, parents might be shocked by comments posted on social media. Accordingly, the first thing that needs to do is, make the program public and accessible. Organizing and persuasion should do well in order for

parents and children to have trust in the program rather than doubt. So it is better to aware of the people and screening solutions to minimize the confusion. That will reduce their doubts.

Ayalew stated that concerned stakeholders (governmental-sectors) have not informed the public of what the program is doing and its importance. It is not established by the community budget but from government expenditure. The people did not say the program is mine, the community did not say we should support the SFP. The government did not discuss the program with the local community. As a result, the state has not received the support it can get from the public through donations, inheritance, budget support, and leadership. Rome did not build in a day. Similar to this, Bekele added, “We cannot solve all problems at once. Nevertheless, we have to start to solve problems. Let us work on solving problems if we only talk about our problems.” The following case study confirms that the above structural, awareness, and input problems.

### **6.3.1 Neither a food poison nor an expired perfume at Woregenu School**

Ayalew a school director who has detail information both about the previous SFP and the current SFP stated that last November, 33 schoolchildren admitted to hospital due to illness. Various social media have reported widely that the reason for the illness was the poison food provided by the school. However, if food poisoning were common, all students eating from one of the mother’s groups would get sick. Later, hospitals did not get confirm any toxic chemicals by diagnosis. Hospitals have confirmed that the reason for the student’s illness was that it was an expired perfume, not because of poisoned food. One student had bought expired perfume off the street because it was outdated and prohibited, and the scent of the perfume had made these students sick. Surely, perfumes do expire. Of course, outdated perfume can cause health problems. Nevertheless, this does not make students sick at this speed. Sunlight, heat, and humidity will accelerate the expiry of the perfume. The effects are on both the skin and other organs and tissues. If your perfume does expire, applying it could result in an unpleasant smell, skin irritations, or in extreme cases an allergic reaction (Fox, 2012).

According to Chirwa (2009), children get sick or died due to contaminated food or unsafe water. To this regard, when I came down from the cart, I observed dusty neighborhood, garbage dump, scattered plastic, etc. is stored within a few meters. The Woregenu School has no water route at

all. My belief is that student fluorides from toilets fly from the surrounding wasteland on carefully unprotected food. In addition, because of the water shortage, the cooking equipment may not clean well. In short, one of my assumptions is that I think the pain that comes from lack of hygiene. My second supposition is that they may have eaten contaminated food. However, it is not food poisoning as said by the politicians. Nor is it a perfume product. Therefore, I believe it may be food contamination.

Deboch also told that it is the opinion of politicians but defraud and defame the program in order to gain political profit over these underprivileged children. Some people rush to disrupt the program on social media. Even with the problems, it is not wrong to start the program. Nevertheless, because of its lack of preparation and research, it faced various challenges. In fact, barriers arise when starting a new project. Therefore, establishing an effective program by addressing these barriers requires a concerted effort by all stakeholders.

The case study shows that by reducing such uncertainty, it is possible to ensure the continuity and reliability of the program by clearing the project's major obstacles. Thus, the government should prioritize addressing serious problems of the SFP systematically rather than responding to a mismatch.

#### **6.4 Integration problem**

Lemlem stated that the SFP has the problem of integration: Another challenge to the effectiveness of the SFP is the lack of community support or ownership of the program. Consequently, the program has been properly structured to involve all beneficiary communities to serve as the program through their knowledge, material (resources), and as well as they can. In line to this, Bekele said that there is no strong coordination between relevant sectors to facilitate SFP. The program needs multi-sectorial coordination and whole inclusive community and state participation. There are problems of coherence and commitment to the program. Applicable government departments particularly identified agencies that have been identified and accounted for in the role of the directive in implementing the program must work with coordination and commitment for the effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

Tangut told that the provision of logistics is also another key obstacle, which demands solutions. The trade Bureau must establish a market linkage between food manufactures and farmers with mothers (cooks). The lack of market linkage has deprived food inputs at a fair and sustainable rate. Example: teff and rice from farmers or unions; pasta, macaroni, and oil are also from manufacturers; eggs from the poultry, finally, the market link must be created through a commercial and trade bureau from bakeries. To this regard, WFP (2009) indicates that lack of government and community integration to help SFP as well as lack of sectorial engagement makes the SFP ineffective and stopped.

Aselefech stated that it also needs to be linked to urban agriculture and the program. Mothers need to start producing. For example, if stewards were to involve mothers in urban agriculture, they would shift from consumer to producer. They make their meal plans more efficient, and their lives are improved. They make the SFP plans more efficient, and their lives will improve.

**Summary**

As mentioned above the current SFP has been challenging by many obstacles. The following table shows these constraints in four groups.

**Table 3 challenges to SFP**

<b>1. Structural and ownership problem</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program doesn't have coordination at the city, sub-city, Woreda, and school level</li> </ul>
<b>2. Input problems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rising cost of living and the high student population with a high demand for food</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial constraints or inadequate budget</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of or no dining halls</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of water in some schools or in other schools a loss of water for successive days or no water at all at some schools</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of electricity supply and the high price of firewood</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of trained human resources,</li> </ul>

<b>3. Awareness problem</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was no open discussion between the public sector institutions about the nutritional purpose and the responsibilities of each sector, and the implementation of the program.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government did not discuss the program with the local community and parents.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of community support or ownership of the program</li> </ul>
<b>4. Integration problem</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of government and community integration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of sectorial integration and engagement</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The problem of supply</li> </ul>

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter summarizes the experiences of food insecure school children, state and non-state actors in implementing the SFP and constraints to the effectiveness and the sustainability of SFP. In addition this chapter deals the strategies could be employed to improve sustainability of SFP.

#### **7.1 Conclusion**

Food insecure school children were not only dropping out of school to seek out daily food but also learn by applying different hunger cope up mechanisms. Such as food rationing, pretending as if not hungry, buy low-cost and street foods, food credit, begging, by engage in either legal jobs or illegal works, and through the help of friends and others.

The implementation of SFP until 201/16 had been run and donated by individual actors. This program had psychological effects for these benefiting students. In order to reduce psychological effect they changed the modality into take-home rations. The implementation of the From 2015/16 – 2018/19 Academic Year has been led by local and foreign NGOs (Yenat Weg charitable association, WFP, and USIAD) and in 2017/18 academic year for the first time the Addis Ababa city government participated. Similar to the previous program this SFP had also psychological effects on its beneficiaries.

The Program Launched in 2019/20 Academic Year is the first massive student feeding program. It could relieve the starvation of poor students who were come to school with empty stomach and empty lunch box. Reduced absenteeism and dropout rate reduced and children have actively participated in school. This SFP also reduced the burden of parents and guardians as well as contributing a lot in the school's retention, and daily attendance.

However, the present SFP has still many problems that need to be addressed. Such as; it doesn't have strong structure. The rising cost of living and the high student population with a high demand for food as well as other input problems, awareness, and integration are the major problems of the SFP.

## 7.2 Recommendations

The current SFP has reduced the starvation of schoolchildren. In addition to reducing student's hunger, job opportunities have also been created for parents. But it needs to improve its current performance and its current implementation in order to address the problems of students and parents as well as to become a high quality and sustainable SFP. In particular, it should be SFP that can provide the food that students want and love. Therefore, this study suggests the following recommendations:

1. Strong institutional structure with clear mandate is essential for effective and sustainable SFP. To solve the structural problem of the SFP, a dedicated structure must be set up. At the city level, an autonomous and functioning institution should be established, and there must be an institution that maintains the chain and goes down the school. In this case, the program will be effective, for its accountability and transparency, and proactive. The SFP needs to be monitored and evaluated for effectiveness, to ensure objectives are being met, and that an appropriate nutritional standard is maintained. In the same way, full-bodied analysis and informed advice on costing, implementation modalities, choice of rations, and local procurement solutions enable governments to choose the most adequate options for preparing, budgeting, and implementing the school feeding programs.

2. The government has to do more to link the community and the SFP. Other than that, it is not possible to succeed only at the expense of the government. For the effectiveness and sustainability of SFP, public demand at the community level, participation, and ownership by parents, teachers, and the local community is essential. Public engagement allows for the better, more durable achievement of project goals and more effective use of community assets. When the community is involved in a program, they have ownership of it and the decision-making process, which is a key to successful project outcome, even if not all individuals necessarily agree with the outcome. Besides this, community members can provide new ideas on a program that has yet to be considered. Moreover, local community involvement helps to get more perspectives. (WFP, 2009) Stated that, it is a crucially important element of sustainability as the continuity of demand for a program, particularly public demand at the community level, participation, and ownership by parents, teachers, and the local community increases the



potential sustainability of school feeding programs. Similarly, the school management committee and other concerned stakeholders should support the feeding program by starting income-generating activities to raise funds to supplement the funds issued by the government towards the school feeding program.

3. Taking temporary solutions in order to reduce water and dining problems. Such as: prepare a tanker that can hold a large amount of water and fill this tanker by water trucks or when water is available (temporary and short-term solution). Similarly, it is better to build a tent and solve the problem. Schools and their respective stakeholders should be able to drill wells of or launch tap water (permanent but long-term solution).

4. Establishing an effective coordination framework at the country level is a priority to ensure the SFP and transitioning from only city government support to national and public ownership (support) and get the right support at the right time.

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## Appendix I

List of selected schools, the number of beneficiary and non-beneficiary students in 2019 academic year

	Name of the school	No of beneficiary students	No of non-beneficiary students	No of food supply mothers
1	Arabsa	5368	809	96
2	Goro	5246	0	83
3	Bole Gerji	3520	49	73
4	Woregenu	2211	0	56
5	Meles Fere	824	0	21
6	Hidassie	1785	142	14



## Appendix II

### Observation checklist

**School name**----- **date**-----

1. Serving of food according to the menu-----  
-----
2. The issue of dining halls-----  
-----
3. The issue of water and sanitation-----  
-----
4. The issue of electricity supply-----  
-----
5. The issue of trained human resources-----  
-----
6. The issue of cooking facilities, water and electric supplies and -----  
-----
7. The issue of kitchen utensils-----  
-----
8. The coordination at the city, sub city, Woreda and school level-----  
-----
9. Other observed issues-----  
-----

## **Appendix III**

### **List of interview questions**

A Question used to collect information from teachers, students, parents, educational experts and other concerned stakeholders. This interview question is provided by YirgaAlemu, a Social Anthropology masters student in Addis Ababa University. The analysis of this questioner will be used to collect data towards School Feeding Program participants in Bole sub city and enable the researcher to recommend on the improvement of the program. Thank you in advance for filling / interviewing the scale.

#### **General Instruction**

1. Please fill/ respond to the interview by considering the current situation and reality in your school/institution.
2. No need of writing the interviewee's name on the questioner.
3. As much possible please write your answer clearly and exactly.
  1. How often do you eat during the day?
  2. Do you eat enough breakfast when you come to school?
  3. When you come to school, how often do you have lunch? Is it enough in amount and nutrient?
  4. When you have lunch, do you eat alongside or in front of with your friends? If not, where do you eat?
  5. Do you eat enough super when you come home from school? Will you eat dinner?
  6. Do you feel hungry inside or out of school? What would you do to ease the hunger?
  7. Which factors do you think affect children's learning?
  8. Do you think we have equal access to education, health, physical development, etc. with children who have enough food?
  9. Do you come to school regularly? Why don't you come?
  10. Do you arrive on time? If not, why not?
  11. What work do you do to earn a living?
  12. What behaviours are displayed by students who don't have no/less food?

13. What problems were facing you following have no/less food? How solved these problems?
14. Are these poor children learning by struggling with hunger, or they give up and stop learning? Or what methods have they used to alleviate their hunger?
15. What challenges do you face before you become a beneficiary of the school feeding program?
16. What are the criteria used to determine the students that ought to benefit from school feeding program?
17. Before the school feeding program how was the enrolment and dropout rate in your school?
18. What were the experiences of your child have no /less food?
19. What benefits have you gained from eating in school?
20. Do you think the SFP has solved our problems? How?

***The responses of state and NGOs***

1. Is the feeding processed according to the menu?
2. When preparing food, it is important to use energy-efficient cooking as much as possible?
3. How nutrition: energy and heat boosting, immune-supplement should be provided in a timely manner?
4. Is the amount of food that schools provide for children should be age-appropriate and adequate?
5. Different due to health problems students who need special health appropriate food and provide medical evidence for their problem should receive affordable means per student's budget?
6. Since the scheme is successful, it is possible to properly maintain the health and hygiene of food dispensaries. Did all mothers who cooks food for children should submit medical evidence to the school where they work?
7. Mothers who prepare food and children who eat this food must keep it clean. For this, adequate sanitation facilities, adequate water and hand washing are required. Otherwise, children can be exposed to a variety of diseases. How far these fulfil?
8. What are your sources of livelihood?

9. What is your perception towards SFP and its importance? Are you willing your children to join the school feeding?
10. Do you think that SFP benefit children's and parents? How?
11. Do you think that SFP will benefit you and your children? If yes, briefly explain what you benefited from school feeding program which is implementing in your school.
12. Does the program relieve the short term hunger? What the program helped parents or guardians to send their children to school?
13. Does the program reduce the burden of parents and guardians shoulder? By what?
14. What are the outputs of the program? Explain briefly how the school feeding program is effective.
15. Does the program increased school attendance, enrolment and lowered dropout rates? How has the school feeding program impacted on enrolment and retention rates in the school?
16. How is the collaboration of the government, NGOs, and the community in implementing the program?
17. The coordination of the program with other sectors with Ministry of Education, ministry of health, ministry of agriculture, ministry of women and children, and others?
18. How is the involvement of the community to support SFP? How are the awareness and its commitment?
19. Does the SFP have a committee? What are its roles?
20. Is there a balance between demand and supply? Are the number of beneficiaries and the service balanced in terms of cost, logistics, financing, and other services (cookers ---)?
21. The proper distributions of the food items allocated for the schools
22. Are the schools following the official ration scale?
23. It is important to design accountability measures in to the program. What activities are done dealing with accountability, monitoring and preventing corruption?

### ***Challenges and sustainability***

1. What challenges does the school face in the management of the school feeding
2. How is the rise of price challenging the SFP? How is the inflation Rate is constraining the program?
3. What are the obstacles in implementing SFP?

4. What is the support of stakeholders? What is your contribution in assisting the school?
5. What risks are facing in implementing the program?
6. The sustainability of the program in terms of:
  - a. The issue of logistics and food preparation
  - b. The running cost and issue of financing/donors. Is there a reliable source of funding?
  - c. The issue of man power. Are there enough trained professionals in running the program?
  - d. Structuring the participation of stakeholders for the sustainability of SFP

## Appendix IV

### List of participants in the interview

Order	Name of participant	Position	Sex	Remarks
1	W/o Meti Tamrat	Expert at AA education Bureau	F	She is the leader of SFP group at AA Education Bureau level and has detail information since the establishments to present.
2	Ato Bekele Tamrat,	expert at Bole Sub City Education Office	M	He is team leader at Sub city level and has more information about the experiences of poor children, the response concerned bodies, and challenges to SFP.
3	W/o Fasika	Expert at at Bole Sub City Education Office	F	She is the member of the team at Sub city level and has more information about the experiences of poor children, the response concerned bodies, and challenges to SFP.
4	Ato Belay	Was an expert At Yenat Weg		He was an expert at Yenat Weg Charitable Association.
5	Ato Deboch	School director	M	He knows more about the experiences of poor students and the challenges of the SFP.
6	Ato Ayalew	School director	M	He has detail information both the previous SFP and the current one.
7	W/o Tigist	School director	F	She worked for 18 years in public schools and knows more the experiences of poor children and the on-going of the present SFP.
8	W/o Lemlem	School director		She knows more about the experiences of poor students and the challenges of the SFP.
9	Ato Dereje	School director		He knows about the previous SFP.
10	Meseret	Teacher		He has worked being a teacher for over 9 years. She clearly remembers her student's hunger and anxiety.
11	Hdush	Teacher	M	He has taught for over 15 years. He remembers the students' hunger and misery well.
12	Ahmed	Teacher	M	He was a student at Bole Gerji school. He remembers well the struggles he faced as a student and the solutions he took. Now he teaches in this school.
13	Bontu	Teacher	F	She has worked as a teacher for over 12 years. She clearly remembers her student's hunger and anxiety. As she began to speak, I could see in my conscience the inspiration of the children's hunger.
14	Nardos	Teacher		She remembered the coping mechanisms of food insecure school children.
15		Teacher	F	She has taught in various public schools for 11

	Kidist			years. She shared her lunch with students who didn't have lunch. As she narrated the experiences of her student's hunger and lack of food, I felt as if I was there.
16	Tihras	Teacher		She remembered the experiences of food insecure school children.
17	Mekuria	Teacher		He has taught for over 14 years. He remembers the students' hunger and misery well.
18	Aselefech	Teacher	F	She has taught for over 15 years. He remembers the students' hunger and misery well.
19	Tangut	Teacher	F	She has taught in various public schools for 16 years. She shared her lunch with students who didn't have lunch.
20	W/o Zinash	Parent	F	A woman who was un able to feed her children due to low-income and inflation.
21	W/o Selam	Parent	F	A mother who was unable to meet her children's nutritional needs due to low incomes and high cost of living.
22	Ato Mesfin	Parent	M	A parent is working as a school guard and was unable to cover his children's expense. A happy parent by the start of the program.
23	W/o Abeba	Parent	F	A mother who was unable to meet her children's nutritional needs due to low incomes and high cost of living.
24	Ato Temesgen	Parent	M	His job is retailing on the street. He teaches his two children at Bole Gerji.
25	W/o Askale	Parent		A mother who was un able to feed her children due to low-income and inflation.
26	W/o Yordanos	Parent		A woman who had a house maid.
27	Nesru	Student	M	He had the support of his friends, and teachers in addition to supplication.as a result; He was a ashamed and embarrassed.
28	Demewoz	student	M	He is an orphan and had been receiving his daily food by serving others.
29	Tamrat	Student	M	A student whose mother lives in begging and often brings empty lunch box. Even he couldn't eat a proper supper and dinner when returning from school.
30	Beza	Student	F	She has no parents. She leads her life and her younger sister's life by making coffee.
31	Ashu	Student	M	A student who was worried about food.
32	Solomon	Student		A boy who was suffered due to hunger.