

World Vision

ENOUGH



Ghana:

**Our meals,
our voice**



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What's this about?

World Vision is leading the *School Meals Child-led Research* initiative, a unique effort that ensures children's voices are at the centre of shaping school meals programmes. Across 13 countries, children took the lead in asking questions, gathering stories, and sharing what matters most to them about school meals. They explored critical root causes, gaps and potential solutions, always through the lens of their lived experiences in schools.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys. The data collected by child researchers was analysed thematically, reflecting the priorities and perspectives of their peers.

In Ghana, this child-led research is part of World Vision's ENOUGH campaign, which amplifies children's voices in national, regional and global advocacy efforts. By listening to children and learning directly from their experiences, this initiative highlights not only the challenges faced by children in Ghana, but also their aspirations for a future where every child can thrive and enjoy nutritious meals at school.

Who we are

We are child researchers from Ghana who wanted to find out what our classmates really think about the meals we eat at school every day. We did this research because **school meals are a big part of our lives** - they affect how we learn, how we feel, and how we grow.

Seventy-four students, aged 9 to 17, took part in our research. Some said they like the food at school, others don't. But, like us, they all believe that **school meals are important and that students should have a say in how they're planned and served.**



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What we found

When we asked students to rate the school meals they receive, most said they were just okay or not very good. One student said, **"The food is sometimes not nice at all, and they give us small portions."** Some students said they liked the food, but even then, they often had suggestions for how it could be improved - like making the meals less oily or more balanced.

We also heard from students who have stopped eating the meals altogether. One told us, "I stopped eating the food because it always gives me stomach pain." Others said they throw away part of their food because they don't like it. Some said the food is not served hot enough or it doesn't taste fresh.

Cleanliness was another issue. Some students said the food is prepared and served in places that are not always clean. Others said the food vendors use bare hands or don't wash the plates well. There were also complaints about flies landing on the food and utensils not being washed properly.

When students were asked whether school meals help with their learning, the answers were mixed. Some said yes - that eating at school helps them concentrate. Others said that school meals don't make much of a difference, mainly because **the portions are often too small or the food isn't filling.**

What students want

Students said they want **school meals to be healthier, tastier, and served in clean, respectful ways.** Many of the students said the meals should have more vegetables, less oil, and better variety. Some want more traditional Ghanaian dishes, while others just want something different from the same meal every day.

Hygiene is very important. The people who prepare and serve the food should wash their hands, wear gloves, and keep the environment clean. Plates, bowls, and utensils should be washed well, and food should be covered to keep flies away.

Students also want **school meals to be served in ways that feel respectful.** Some said that food is handed out too quickly or unfairly. One student said, "They just throw the food on the plate like we don't matter." Students want food to be given to them with care - not just quickly handed out.

Many also said that no one asks what they think about the meals they eat every day. They believe that **students should be included in decisions about school meals** - from what's on the menu to how it's served.



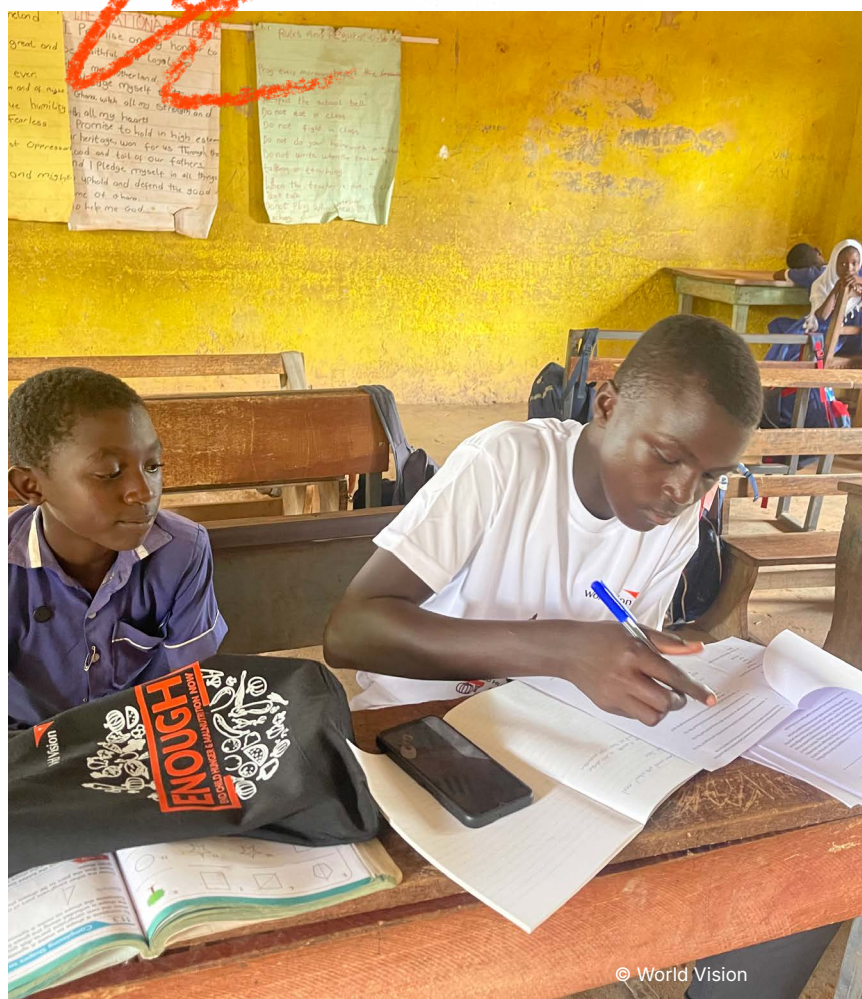
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What we hope for

We know school meals can make a real difference - especially for children whose families struggle to afford food. A good meal at school can give students like us energy, help us concentrate and make us feel like we matter. But when meals are small, unhealthy, or badly prepared, it makes school harder.

We want school meals that are safe, tasty, and served with care. We want the people who cook and serve our food to be supported and trained. We want to be asked what we think - and for our opinions to be taken seriously. **If adults listen to us, we can help make school meals better for everyone.**

Our voice matters. Our school meals matter. Our future matters.

- Child researchers from Ghana

Acknowledgements

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For more information about World Vision's School Meals, visit the [ENOUGH School Meals](#) page.

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CHILD AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING

World Vision ensured the safe and ethical participation of girls, boys adhering to World Vision's Safeguarding policy and protocols on data collection and World Vision's Code of Conduct.

Data collectors were trained on how to conduct interviews in an ethical and safe manner. Children were oriented on the possibility of withdrawing from the interview process at any moment. Informed consent was obtained for all photographs included in this report.

