



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

EDUCATION CAPACITY STATEMENT

Food for the Hungry (FH) implements a wide range of education interventions that impact children during their first nine years of life. It is our goal to help children reach their God-given potential through these targeted interventions that not only bring holistic development to children in the first five years of life, but also cognitive gains for improved literacy and numeracy, as they begin their educational path in the first three years of primary school.

THE CHALLENGE

Around 617 million – or six out of ten – children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age do not achieve minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.¹ This is a learning crisis. Low levels of learning also disproportionately affect children from poor households. This has lifelong effects on the individuals themselves, but also contributes to the downward spiral of poverty in communities. If strong foundational skills such as literacy and mathematics are not acquired early in life, research shows these children tend to fall further and further behind over time.²



THE CHALLENGE (CONTINUED)

Education lifts people out of poverty and enables children to reach their God-given potential. Cognitive health and emotional development during the formative years of life translates into school success: a reduction in grade repetition, increased academic gains, increased salaries upon graduation, and, most importantly, escape from poverty. Interventions within the first five years is noted as the most strategic, cost-effective, efficient and influential intervention in changing the course of a child's academic career.³ If all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading and numeracy skills, poverty would be reduced by 12 percent.⁴ Furthermore, every additional year of schooling raises lifetime personal earnings by 10%.⁵

THE RESPONSE

FH partners with caregivers, teachers and the community to support their children throughout their education. FH programs support a holistic, integrated approach, promoting evidence-based interventions that improve child learning.

EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING THREE AREAS:

ENGAGING CAREGIVERS

Effective parenting and caregiver support is critical to a child's development. Working through community volunteers in bi-monthly meetings, caregivers practice child stimulation and emerging literacy and numeracy with children in the first five years of life. In addition, FH works with caregivers and parents to decrease and mitigate toxic stress, which hinders development.

INCREASING TEACHER CAPACITY

Teacher quality is the most important school-based factor in student achievement.⁶ In

collaboration with the Ministry of Education, FH's interventions include increasing teacher capacities in numeracy and literacy, and classroom practices that help children to achieve grade level benchmarks.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY ACTORS

FH engages with the community to increase positive out-of-school learning opportunities to augment what is done in the home and school. This includes working with churches and community leaders to increase opportunities for learning, as well as community learning spaces and materials to increase academic outcomes.



ABOUT FH

Food for the Hungry (FH) has been working since 1971 to provide relief and development programs in 18 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Focusing on education; health and nutrition; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); livelihoods; and disaster risk reduction, FH believes in holistic methods to address poverty, honoring the people it serves by inviting them to contribute to the process. FH employs a human-centered model for all of its development programming in order to influence norms and behaviors and create an enabling environment for results within all of these sectors.

KEY EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Early Childhood Development

Children develop within an environment of relationships. These relationships affect virtually all aspects of development—intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and behavioral—and their quality and stability in the early years lay the foundation that supports a wide range of later outcomes.⁷ FH's early childhood programs are integrated and holistic. FH trains parents, caregivers and community members to care for children from pregnancy through their first six years of life. Training focuses on early stimulation, emergent literacy and numeracy, responsive caregiving, health and nutrition, WASH, and social-emotional skills for young children.

Literacy and Numeracy

FH conducts cascade groups with caregivers to encourage parent understanding and build their capacity to support their children's early grade success. Modules focus on helping parents understand the learning goals of their children at each age, how to support their children in learning after school, and promoting engagement with their children's school. FH also works in partnership with Ministries of Education to train teachers in grades 1-3 on effective literacy and mathematics instruction. FH creates teacher learning circles and professional development groups to support continuous professional development and improve collaboration amongst teachers.

Girls' Education

FH has been supporting girls' education in South Sudan through a DFID grant since April 2013. This project is developing effective partnerships between the government of South Sudan and local organizations to deliver a community-based school improvement program, which includes cash transfers to girls and their families; capitation grants to schools; and provision of practical support to schools, teachers and education managers to improve the quality of education.



**“KEEP HOLD OF INSTRUCTION; DO NOT LET GO; GUARD HER,
FOR SHE IS YOUR LIFE.” - PROVERBS 4:13**



Adult Literacy

FH supports adult literacy projects in countries such as Bangladesh and DRC, linking literacy training with livelihoods activities. Projects support second-chance literacy learning opportunities, income-generating activities and positive behavior changes through community learning groups. These projects also provide increased access to reading materials through community libraries.

Teaching and Learning Methods

FH ensures appropriate learning materials and books are available for children in our country programs in a language they speak and understand. Together with community leaders and actors, FH creates community libraries,

ensuring access to high quality children's books. FH also works to increase ownership of children's books in homes. Recently, FH staff translated 458 children's books from the Global Digital Library into 10 languages across five countries, for use in its education programs.

Education in Emergencies (EiE)

FH supports children's educational and psychosocial needs in the aftermath of emergencies. FH has experience implementing EiE projects, including Child Friendly Spaces, in refugee camps and natural disaster-affected communities in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. FH also collaborated on the creation of an Education in Emergencies toolkit, which focuses on psychosocial support and child protection in emergencies.

Education in Emergencies: Mozambique

FH is responding in Mozambique to the damage done to education systems from Cyclones Idai and Kenneth. Working with UNICEF and Education Cannot Wait, FH is rebuilding safe and healthy school environments through rehabilitation of schools and WASH infrastructure in order to get children back to school. Through this project, FH is directly supporting 17,846 students between the ages of 6 and 11 years with school supply kits, and 272 teachers with materials and recreation kits. Teachers and school administrators are receiving specialized training to be able to care for their students well and ensure they receive the psychosocial support they need as they return to school. Back to school awareness messages are disseminated to caregivers through cascade groups at the community level.



Education Assessments

FH conducts rigorous education assessments to guide and inform its program design. For children in the age group of 3.5 to 6.5 years old, FH uses the International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) to assess children's early learning and development. For children 7 to 15 years of age, FH uses a Citizen-Led Assessment to assess key literacy and numeracy skills such as phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, fluency, as well as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Finally, FH conducts caregiver surveys to assess caregiver engagement and influence in their children's development and education, as well as the home and community learning environment.



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