

Media Statement

Feed Our Kids movement believes in centralising services to efficiently feed our kids amid budget strains

At Feed Our Kids, we believe that one of the most effective solutions to the pressing budget challenges that Minister Gwarube recently revealed is through centralising services, and the proposed centralised school feeding system could be the solution. We strongly believe that a centralised system will provide us with the ability to negotiate better pricing, streamline operations, and significantly reduce the reliance on intermediaries, which is often a major driver of unnecessary costs.

The current decentralised model creates inefficiencies that lead to exaggerated expenses, diverting critical resources away from our children who need them most. By shifting to a centralised approach, we believe that every rand will go further in supporting the mission to feed and care for children.

The urgency of addressing these inefficiencies has been highlighted by the recent remarks of KwaZulu-Natal MEC Siphso Hlomuka, who spoke about the severe funding crisis impacting the education sector. His statement brings to light the fact that the financial strain affecting schools has real-world consequences.

Many of our provinces are struggling to cover their fixed costs, pay suppliers on time, and provide the necessary resources for learners. These challenges are not confined to one region or department; they are being felt nationwide, and without significant changes to the way budgets are managed, we are afraid the situation will only worsen.

At Feed Our Kids, we understand that hunger is not just a matter of resource availability but also about how those resources are managed. Centralising services allows for greater oversight and accountability, ensuring that funds are not wasted on unnecessary administrative layers or redundant processes. This approach would enable us to stretch the little money the department has, ensuring that we continue to provide meals and essential services to children in need, even as financial pressures grow. In an environment where operational costs are increasing in various provinces, centralisation offers a sustainable path forward.

MEC Hlomuka also raised some serious concerns about the inability to meet critical obligations like paying municipal bills or procuring learning materials serve as a stark reminder of the broader systemic issues. Unfortunately, these budget shortfalls are not isolated to education; they reflect a wider crisis that could compromise the provision of other essential services, including feeding schemes for vulnerable children.

The current system, with its layers of a broken system, leaves us ill-equipped to navigate these financial storms. By centralising we can mitigate these risks and ensure that services like school feeding programmes are protected.

Additionally, the ongoing debate surrounding the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill, particularly in Gauteng, adds another layer of complexity to the management of resources in the education sector.



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It is crucial that we focus on finding practical solutions to ensure the wellbeing of our children is prioritised. Ensuring that they are fed, educated, and cared for should always be the bottom line, and this requires a more efficient system of managing resources.

Ultimately, we must recognise that education and feeding schemes are intricately linked. Without proper nourishment, children cannot learn effectively, and without learning, they cannot break the cycle of poverty. A centralised approach is key to addressing both the financial and logistical challenges we face. By eliminating inefficiencies and focusing on cost-saving measures, we can continue to provide the essential services that support our children's growth, development, and future success. Together, we can make a lasting impact and secure a better future for the children we serve.

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