

Country	Republic of Korea						
Population	9,335,734						
Title of practice	Safeguarding the Food of Future Generations						
Subtitle	Seoul's Nutrition Centres for Childcare Facilities: Safeguarding the Food of Future Generations						
MUFPP Recommended Action	7. Promote sustainable diets (healthy, safe, culturally appropriate, environmentally friendly and rights- based) through relevant education, health promotion and communication programmes, with special attention to schools, care centres, markets and the media. – SUSTAINABLE DIETS AND NUTRITION						
Starting year	2011	Ending year (if any)				☐ already submitted in the past	
Actors and stakeholders' involvement	Municipal departments	Other public institutions	NGOs CSOs	Research centres	Private sectors	International organizations	Other
	2	26	2				4,980
Budget	Municipal budget: €3,900,859						
Brief description	In 2011, the Seoul Metropolitan Government launched the Nutrition Centers for Childcare Facilities, a pioneering initiative to ensure every young child in Seoul receives quality meals, regardless of their childcare setting. Established under the Special Act on the Safety Management of Children's Dietary Life, the program supports small daycare centres and kindergartens serving fewer than 100 children and without an in-house nutritionist. As of 2024, all 25 districts operate a centre, with a total of 25 citywide. These centres serve 4,980 facilities, covering 99% of all eligible sites. The centres provide: • On-site visits by professional nutritionists • Age-appropriate meal plans and standardized recipes • Hygiene and nutrition training for staff • Nutrition newsletters for families • Hands-on education for children, like puppet shows and activities In 2024, the centres made 33,094 visits and held 43,744 programs, reaching 188,333 participants. The program ensures that young children in Seoul—home to 15.5% of the nation's child population—receive quality meals at small childcare facilities often overlooked by regulations. Seoul invests over 20% more than other local governments, making it the most well-funded program of its kind. It also creates jobs for licensed nutritionists, especially women. University partnerships have led to a 0.1% reduction in meal salinity, healthier eating habits, and higher parental satisfaction.						
Innovation	To improve food safety and nutrition in small childcare facilities without in-house nutritionists, the Nutrition Centers for Childcare Facilities has adopted a publicly-led, integrated management model focused on young children's nutrition and hygiene. This approach addresses the limitations of privately operated facilities and establishes a structured model of public intervention with several key innovations: • A city-led model operated in partnership with universities, ensuring both public accountability and professional expertise • Standardized and digitalized resources—customized meal plans, recipes, and educational materials via web and mobile platforms • A nationally integrated system, developed with the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, operates under a standardized framework with clear performance indicators • A prevention-focused approach emphasizing regular visits and education						

	Promoting healthier eating habits by reducing salt intake and enhancing nutrition education involving families This system is widely recognized as a leading solution—not only narrowing the quality gap in children's meal services but also addressing broader food system challenges. It promotes child health equity, helps prevent foodborne illness, and encourages healthier eating through low-sodium, low-sugar diets and greater vegetable intake. At the same time, it supports local food use and cuts food waste, making it a comprehensive, forward-thinking public health model.
Impact	The program supports 4,980 small childcare facilities in Seoul, reaching 99% of eligible sites and serving around 150,000 children under age 6. In 2024, 188,333 participants took part in education programs, with 43,744 nutrition sessions and 33,094 on-site visits. 1) Social Impact 1.1. Child Health & Hygiene: - Healthier eating habits and reduced nutritional imbalance - Vegetable intake increased (81.7% → 87.9%) - Greater adoption of low-sodium diets - More frequent handwashing and hygienic meal prep - Improved food safety knowledge among kitchen staff - Seoul's foodborne illness rate in childcare facilities is under half the national average (0.05 cases per 100,000 children) 1.2. Empowerment & Education: - Over 90% of 342 staff are women, supporting employment opportunities - Training provided to cooks, childcare staff, and parents 1.3. Family Engagement: - Increased parental trust in meal quality - More support for healthy eating at home 2) Environmental Impact - Reduced food waste and better resource use via standardized menus - Increased use of local produce - Enhanced awareness of public health and hygiene environment in local communities 3) Economic Impact - Free provision of nutritionist services to small facilities; each centre supports an average of 199 sites, reducing staffing costs - Lower overall spending through reduced healthcare and foodborne illness-related expenses - Improved administrative efficiency through integrated central-local operations
Inclusion	As home to 15.5% of the nation's child population, Seoul faces diverse local needs. To promote nutrition equity and sustainability, the city implements a multi-layered approach through the Nutrition Centres for Childcare Facilities, designed with inclusivity and integration at its core. 1. Equal Access for All The program offers free services regardless of income, location, or facility size. Over 85% of participating centres are small-scale, low-resource sites. With centres in all 25 districts, services are delivered evenly across the city. 2. Collaborative Governance The program is built on public-private-academic cooperation. The city funds the program, while universities oversee daily operations. Field experts deliver hands-on guidance, and participating facilities engage closely—creating a well-coordinated and effective system. 3. Stakeholder Engagement Cooks, childcare staff, and parents are directly involved in training and education. This inclusive model strengthens implementation and builds a shared culture of nutrition and hygiene. 4. Comprehensive Scope

	Aligned with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), the program spans food education, hygiene management, and promotion of local food use—delivering a truly holistic approach. 5. Support for Vulnerable Groups Tailored services are offered for children in vulnerable settings, including those with disabilities and from multicultural families—ensuring no child is left behind.
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