



School Meals Coalition Monthly Newsletter

March 2023



Happy International School Meals Day

March is officially “school meals month,” full of opportunities to highlight progress, share experiences, and launch new data and stories about the impact of school meal programmes.

The month kicked off with a celebration of the 8th Africa Day of School Feeding on March 1 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Riad, Morocco which followed a day of technical discussions hosted virtually on February 27. The following section includes a summary of key commitments that underscore strong political will toward advancing the Coalition’s agenda.

Today of course is International School Meals Day, which many Coalition stakeholders are celebrating and using to drive the agenda further. You can use this [social media toolkit](#) to spread the word.

And finally, an exciting announcement: the launch of the **State of School Feeding Worldwide 2022 Report** is confirmed for March 21 at the World Food Programme’s Headquarters in Rome. Join the Coalition and its leading governments for this important moment that sets the baseline of progress since the pandemic and the challenges ahead – you can register [here](#) to participate in person or view the event online.



Country spotlights

Africa Day of School Feeding (ADSF) reiterated the commitment of African leaders to Home-Grown School Feeding as an investment that generates positive outcomes in local communities and food systems at the same time it benefits children’s learning and overall well-being.

The ADSF was also used to present new data from the African Union Biennial Report on Home-Grown School Feeding in Africa, which will be launched later this month. You can find key data in [this presentation](#).

Ministers and Deputy Ministers joined the celebration with big announcements and commitments. Here are some highlights, with a full summary and recording to be shared next month:

- Ethiopia recently approved a national School Feeding Policy Framework, including a 10-year fully costed school feeding strategy. Currently the government has allocated US\$ 85 million to their national school meal programme, reaching 4.8 million children in around 15,000 schools. Their vision is to increase the coverage progressively to reach 33 million children by 2030.
- Lesotho announced they will be reviewing their national school feeding policy and increasing the national budget for school meals by 40% this year.
- Somalia shared its progress over the past year, including establishing decentralized school feeding units across all regions; work toward a National School Feeding Policy; and development of a working group that brings together key ministries to establish home-grown school feeding as a national priority.
- Malawi announced they will be scaling up their national programme, focusing on locally produced food and finding innovative measures for using school feeding programmes to address impacts of climate change. The government also announced they will join the Coalition, to learn from others and share experiences on how to create more sustainable, local, and highly scalable school feeding programmes.



Brazil joined the celebration in Addis Ababa as a long-standing supporter of the African Union on Home-Grown School Feeding. During their statement, they reiterated the importance of south-south cooperation as a tool to strengthen school feeding programmes and the need to share and exchange experiences and knowledge in order to improve the coverage and quality of school meals.

The main outcome of the ADSF is the yearly Communique, which called for “the promotion of knowledge and experience sharing on Africa’s school meals programme and Africa’s leadership in the School Meals Coalition at global events including the upcoming UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment in 2023, and at COP 28, towards strengthening agrifood systems in Africa.”

The Coalition also welcomed an exciting announcement made by the Minister of Education on behalf of the President of Niger at the recent Education Cannot Wait High-Level Financing Conference: that school feeding is a priority of the national Economic and Social Development Plan (2022-2026). The government’s vision for 2030 is to extend coverage of children by school feeding to reach 25% in 2026 and 50% in 2030.

The preparations for the Food Systems Stocktaking moment are also in full swing now. The first regional meeting took place in Niamey, Niger on 27 February. The Coalition and its achievements were presented by the Ambassador of France in Niger, as a good example of how member states are turning commitments into action. More regional meetings are in planning in the next weeks – let us know if you are participating in any of them and want to represent the Coalition.



Event digest

REPORT LAUNCH: **The State of School Feeding Worldwide 2022 Report**, on March 21 from 15:00-16:30 CET. Register [here](#).

WEBINAR: **A Measurement Maze: Defining School Meal Coverage**, a session geared toward understanding metrics of school feeding coverage and constructing and using indicators thoughtfully, hosted by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation on March 22 from 9:00-10:00 ET. Register [here](#).

TRAINING EVENT: **Small Farm-to-Fork Procurement**, co-hosted by the following EU-funded projects and initiatives: COACH, Buy Better Food Campaign, Ruralization and SchoolFood4Change, taking place in Brussels March 22-23 and focusing on how sustainable public procurement in schools may work as catalysts for food systems change. See the full agenda and register [here](#).



Resources and publications

[“Home-grown goodness: The African Day of School Feeding delivers,”](#) by the World Food Programme’s Elizabeth Bryant.

[“School Meals: What does the evidence tell us?”](#) Global Partnership for Education blog by Donald Bundy and Kate Morris, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.



How to get engaged

Join activity around International School Meals Day by following the Coalition’s twitter account (@SchoolMeals_) and highlighting the importance of school meals through your own channels.

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to be on our regular mailing list, please contact us at global.smcsecretariat@wfp.org. If you would like to join the School Meals Coalition, you can signal your interest in signing the Declaration of Commitment (as a government) or Declaration of Support through contacting the same email address.

Yours sincerely,

School Meals Coalition Secretariat

