



Welcome to our new members Djibouti, Uruguay, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Jordan. Our Coalition now includes 102 governments, three regional bodies and over 130 partners. Want to learn more about how the Coalition works and how to engage? Watch this [video](#).

We are excited to announce the launch of our newly enhanced [Coalition website](#)! As you explore our online updates, you'll notice improved usability and a wealth of resources, including the latest research and national commitments. [Let us know what you think!](#)



School Meals Coalition celebrates 100+ members milestone



(Left) Government officials, WFP and development partners celebrate Uruguay's joining the School Meals Coalition on the sidelines of the Regional Forum on School Meals for LAC in Mexico. (Right) Government officials and development partners celebrate Lao PDR's joining of the School Meals Coalition in Vientiane in September. Photos Credits: SMC/Mirna Noaman, WFP/Ildiko Hamos-Sohlo.

Uruguay became our 100th member government during the 10th School Meals Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) held last month in Mexico. Uruguay's announcement was followed by [Lao People's Democratic Republic](#), Djibouti and Jordan, which joined in early September. These new members further expand our Coalition's strength and global influence in promoting school meals. [Read the full story here.](#)



Ruy López Ridaura (left), Mexico's Undersecretary of Prevention and Health Promotion, addresses the 10th Regional School Meals Forum for LAC just before a panel discussion on the regional context moderated by Carmen Burbano de Lara, Director of School Meals and Social Protection at WFP and Director of the School Meals Coalition's Secretariat. Photos Credit: Government of Mexico.

Mexico hosts regional school meals forum for LAC

The Government of Mexico, a member of the School Meals Coalition, and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food Programme (WFP), co-organized the 10th Regional School Meals Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), in Mexico City in August. This significant event brought together representatives from LAC countries, including 20 members of the Coalition who took this opportunity to share insights on how Coalition partnerships are enhancing their school meal programmes. The Forum featured a session for children hosted by a special guest, the Sesame Street character “the Cookie Monster,” to promote the importance of school meals. A [video](#) was screened showcasing the perspectives of children from LAC on their school meal experiences.

In one of the key moments of the Forum, the Government of Mexico held a special session for Coalition members to discuss ways to strengthen collaboration and explore new partnerships that can enhance the delivery of school meals in the LAC region and globally. One strong outcome of the Forum was the Declaration of the member countries of the School Meals Coalition. Find their priorities [here](#).

Shifting from serving only industrialised cold breakfast meals to hot meals

Mexico is making a significant shift from providing only cold breakfast meals to serving hot meals in schools. The government started with 49 per cent of hot school breakfast meals being served against 51 per cent of cold meals. Today, 65 per cent of hot meals are reaching children. During the LAC Forum, Mexico hosted field visits to share its innovative approaches to school meals with other governments. The Honourable Dr Ruy López Ridaura, Undersecretary of Prevention and Health Promotion, outlined the government’s bold initiatives to protect children from the dangers of processed and ultra-processed foods. In a groundbreaking move, Mexico has passed regulations prohibiting the advertising of these harmful products in schools, following the Education and Health Law reform. Read the full interview [here](#).



Quote of the month

Find the quote of the month, which you can include in your communication and advocacy messages, including social media, supporting school meals.

“When I say that, I get emotional, it’s because hunger is not a natural thing. Hunger is something that requires political decision and as leaders we cannot only look — and all the time — at those who are close to us. We need to be able to take an X-ray and look at those who are far away, those who cannot get close to palaces, those who cannot get close to ministers. Programmes such as School Meals, Bolsa Família, and Food Acquisition allow healthy meals to reach the most vulnerable, encourage agricultural production and promote local development.”

President of Brazil, H.E. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, speaking in Rio de Janeiro, at the G20 Task Force Ministerial meeting in July, which [laid the foundation](#) for the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty. The official launch is scheduled in parallel with the G20 Leader’s Summit in November.

Connecting the School Meals Coalition with the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

Following the laying of the foundation of the Global Alliance, we have received numerous requests to explain its connection with the School Meals Coalition and to further describe what measures have been put in place to ensure that the two complement and synergise with each other.

The [Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty’s](#) overall goal is to mobilise partners in the fight against hunger, poverty, and inequality, serving as a “network of networks” that galvanises existing mechanisms, including the School Meals Coalition. The Coalition focuses on scaling sustainable school meal programmes to ensure every child has access to nutritious meals by 2030. Commitments (whether national, financial, or knowledge-based) towards school meal programmes from countries and other entities, will be recognised by both the Alliance and the Coalition to ensure alignment, avoid duplication, and guarantee consistency towards shared objectives. The Global Alliance, via its support and coordination team, will serve as a facilitator, connecting the Coalition membership with new prospective partners. The Coalition and its four initiatives will continue to act as the primary vehicle for providing school meal-specific support across the Alliance’s three pillars (national, financial, and knowledge). Countries and other entities are welcome to join both the Alliance and the Coalition for enhanced and impactful collaboration. Find more information about the Alliance [here](#).

T20 > School Meals: A Unique Strategy for Fighting Inequality, Poverty, and Hunger

This month, we spotlight the new T20 Policy Brief "[School Meals: A Unique Strategy for Fighting Inequality, Poverty, and Hunger and Achieving the SDGs](#)". It is developed as a part of a collaboration between Coalition partners, including the Rockefeller Foundation, Global Partnerships for Education, Sustainable Financing Initiative for School Health, Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition, Novo Nordisk, the World Food Programme and the WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger Brazil. The T20 brief provides compelling evidence-based policy advice on school meals to the G20 under the T20's Task Force on Fighting Inequalities, Poverty and Hunger. It emphasises the urgent need to scale up these programmes to tackle the intersecting poverty, hunger, poor health and education and climate change crises.



Featured voices

Finland: Under-Secretary of State for International Development, Mr Pasi Hellman, explains why putting money, technical support, innovation, and other investments in school meals is such a smart idea.

Benin: Vice President Mariam Chabi Talata supports women smallholder farmers in supplying 2,280 tonnes of rice for school meals, putting *over US\$2.3 million in their hands this year*.

We hope you have been inspired by efforts in school meals in Benin and Finland. Please amplify these voices on your digital platforms and [connect with us](#) to share what is happening in school meals in your country.



Upcoming engagement & initiatives

24-27 September > Research Consortium holds Annual Showcase

The Research Consortium's Annual Showcase will feature four engaging sessions over four days, presenting the latest evidence and insights on the evolving landscape of school meals. Want to explore the potential implications of emerging insights for both policy and practice in school meals? [Register now](#).

27 September > Promoting healthy diets through school meal interventions

Don't miss this hybrid conference discussing the findings of a study on school interventions that can promote nutritious diets of adolescents living in urban Africa, supported by the EU. [Register](#) to share your views on how school meal programmes can improve healthy diets, enhancing children's wellbeing and learning capacity, while stimulating local food production and economies.

25 September > Partnerships to Catalyse Action to End Poverty, Hunger and Malnutrition

Taking place on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly and the Summit of the Future, join us for a special event: "Partnerships to Catalyse Action to End Poverty, Hunger and Malnutrition." Building on the evidence from World Vision's Enough Campaign against child hunger and in support of the School Meals Coalition, this interactive discussion will highlight the impact of the global food crisis on children and advocate for the crucial role of partnerships in scaling up school meal programmes. This is co-hosted and in collaboration with World Vision International, G20, SDG2 Advocacy Hub, and Ação da Cidadania. Find more information [here](#).

7-11 October > 9th Africa Nutrition Conference

Are you attending the 9th Africa Nutrition Conference (ANC2024) in Cape Coast, Ghana? Don't miss the opportunity to hear from experts from the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition. They will share some insights on the role of school meals for driving nutrition security and health in Africa. For more information contact: Kate.Morris@lshtm.ac.uk

10-11 October > School meals for healthier and sustainable African cities

The Cities Feeding the Future Initiative of the School Meals Coalition, the City of Addis Ababa, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation will co-host the 6th Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Regional Forum in Addis Ababa on 10-11 October 2024. With the theme "School Meal Programmes for Healthier and Sustainable African Cities", participants, including mayors of various cities in Africa, will discuss the crucial role of local governments in implementing effective school meals. If interested in how the Cities Feeding the Future Initiative is transforming Cities' approach to school meals, contact mufpp.secretariat@comune.milano.it.

Mark your calendar

9-12 December> Global Child Nutrition Forum

In collaboration with the Government of Japan, the Global Child Nutrition Forum and International Child Nutrition Japan invite you to [register for the Global Child Nutrition Forum in Osaka, Japan](#), a technical-level meeting that supports the School Meals Coalition. The theme of the Forum is "School Meal Programmes in an Era of Food Systems

Transformation". The 2024 Global Survey of School Meal Programme results will be released alongside other research and innovations.



Event digest

Winners of the School Food Youth Advocates Contest

FAO and WFP have announced the School Food Youth Contest winners from seven countries: Eswatini, South Korea, Cameroon, Kazakhstan, Ghana, USA, and Uganda. The young advocates will promote upcoming initiatives advancing school meals at global, regional, and national events. You can find out more about these young advocates [here](#).

23-25 July > SADC Homegrown School Feeding Regional Meeting

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat, in collaboration with the AU, AUDA-NEPAD, WFP, UNICEF, and FAO, hosted a three-day regional workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa. Over 75 representatives from SADC member states and development partners discussed progress and experiences on home-grown school feeding programmes. If you are interested in further engagement with the SADC team, please contact ruusa.mushimba@wfp.org.

17-18 July > High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

If you missed the Ministerial Declaration issued at the conclusion of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, please find it [here](#). This significant outcome highlights Ministers' commitment to ending hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, advocating for the implementation of safe, nutritious, and efficient school meal programmes that provide healthy diets, as well as increasing agricultural production and promoting family farming.

23-26 July > The School Meals Summer School for ASEAN Cities

The Summer School, co-hosted by [Cities Feeding the Future Initiative](#) and partners, offered extensive guidance and practical tools to foster sustainable implementation of school meal programmes in 29 cities located in eight ASEAN countries. The Summer School presented an excellent opportunity for cities to reinforce knowledge sharing in the region. Find more information [here](#) and to inquire further, contact mufpp.secretariat@comune.milano.it.



Resources

ASEAN School Nutrition Guidelines

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat partnered with WFP and UNICEF to develop the Minimum Standards and Guidelines for the ASEAN School Nutrition Package. The [Guidelines](#) aim to support Member States in upholding every school-age child's right to safe, healthy, and adequate nutrition, targeting children aged 3-18 years. If you are interested in partnering with the ASEAN community, find out more about their external engagement [here](#) and contact them at public@asean.org.

20 years of Impact for a Food Systems Transformation Annual Report

In a world where three billion people cannot afford a healthy diet, HarvestPlus, a partner of the School Meals Coalition, is using biofortification methods to enrich school meals, providing healthy and affordable nutritious foods. Their [20 Years of Impact Report](#) documents interesting ways biofortification is being integrated into school meals in Asia and Africa as well as in food systems, collaborating with various partners. To learn more, contact m.hussain@harvestplus.solutions.

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. Please use the same email address if you would like to join the School Meals Coalition as a member or partner.