

Guatemala

Guatemala joined the Coalition and submitted its [commitment](#) in September 2021 through the Ministry of Education around the following areas: Programme design and coverage, Evidence and data generation, Advocacy and Partnerships.

Achievements

Guatemala has expanded its school meals programme to reach 3.2 million children across all education levels, ranging from early childhood to high school. In 2024, 41% of schools implemented meals prepared and served on-site, while others used ration-based models developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure continued support. These models, designed by nutritionists and based on national nutritional criteria, helped maintain access to healthy food. The programme continues to build on these efforts, with growing emphasis on restoring hot, nutritious meals shown to positively impact student health and learning.

The country developed context-specific menus for all 22 departments, with 279 local and 10 national menu options (for preprimary and primary levels) designed by nutritionists and validated in schools. Guatemala has also strengthened interinstitutional coordination and updated its legal and regulatory frameworks, including the School Feeding Regulation.

Guatemala has increased its national investment in school meals, supported by an innovative tax-based financing mechanism. The programme prioritizes local procurement, with a target of sourcing up to 70% of food from family farming, contributing to rural development and food system resilience. Reflecting this commitment, the national budget for school meals has grown significantly, from USD 73 million in 2015 to USD 427 million projected by 2025.

Guatemala actively shares its experience through regional and international platforms and hosted delegations such as Belize to showcase its programme. In 2024–2025, over 5,700 schools received support for kitchen upgrades, and procurement of cooking utensils is underway.

Next steps

Guatemala is working to:

- Expand on-site meal preparation to all schools.
- Meet the 70% local procurement target from family farming.
- Improve school garden implementation.

Support is needed in:

- Infrastructure and equipment for food preparation.
- Peer learning on school meals and garden models.
- Implementation of water banks.

Highlights

- Reached 3.2 million children with school meals across all education levels.
- Developed 289 validated menus, for preprimary and primary levels, tailored to local diets across 22 departments.
- Supported more than 5,700 schools with kitchen upgrades and equipment procurement is underway.
- The menus and rations are designed in accordance with the legal requirement that 70% of the food be sourced from local family farming.