

Zambia



Zambia joined the Coalition in February 2022 and submitted its commitment in September 2022 through the Ministry of Education around the following areas: Institutional framework, Programme design and coverage, Evidence and data generation, Advocacy and Partnerships.

Achievements

The Government has developed a five-year scale-up plan for the Home-Grown School Meals programme to cover all 116 districts, as outlined in the 8th National Development Plan. The programme has expanded from 70 to 106 districts since Zambia joined the Coalition and is currently reaching 4.6 million out of 6.6 million learners.

To integrate nutrition into the HGSM programme, the government has developed a diversification plan that promotes localized menus, supported by a local procurement strategy linking smallholder farmers to the programme.

The government also developed a HGSM strategy as a framework to guide multisectoral coordination at the district, provincial, and national levels including establishing School Health and Nutrition Directorate with dedicated staff responsible for overseeing effective programme implementation. The strategy is currently under review to address emerging issues, including those related to the programme's ongoing expansion.

A Food Tracking System is being piloted to support accountability and evidence-based decision-making and over the next five years, the government plans to develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to track school health and nutrition indicators.

To support South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the government has facilitated learning exchanges, including a visit by a Libyan government delegation to observe the design and implementation of Zambia's Home-Grown School Meals programme. In 2023, the government participated in a knowledge management exercise on good practices, facilitated by the WFP Abidjan Centre of Excellence, followed by a 2024 study on Home-Grown School Meals best practices conducted by Columbia University. It has also engaged in regional forums on school meals, both sharing and learning best practices.

Next steps

The government has made significant progress though gaps remain including inadequate funding and the need to further develop a robust monitoring and evaluation system, fully integrate smallholder farmers to operationalize a decentralized procurement system and strengthen infrastructure. It is looking forward to participating in Coalition initiatives such as the Technical Assistance Facility and the Sustainable Financing Initiative to enhance the quality and long-term sustainability of the programme.

Highlights

- Programme has expanded from 70 to 106 districts and is currently reaching 4.6 million out of 6.6 million learners coupled with increased yearly government budgetary allocation to the HGSM programme since 2022.
- Development of a diversification plan that promotes localized menus supported by a local procurement strategy linking smallholder farmers to the programme.
- Food Tracking System being piloted to support accountability and evidence-based decision-making.