



CFS	53
COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY	22 OCTOBER 2025
SIDE EVENTS	

Investing in the future:
Building partnerships and strengthening financing for healthier School Meals Programmes

ABSTRACT

School Meals Programmes are key strategies to address food insecurity and malnutrition, especially among school-age children and adolescents. Despite global investments of nearly USD 50 billion, challenges persist.

Recent estimates from SOFI 2025 show global hunger declined from 8.5% in 2023 to 8.2% in 2024, mainly due to progress in Asia and South America, while it continues to rise in Africa and Western Asia. Food insecurity also decreased gradually, reaching 28% of the global population in 2024, while the cost of a healthy diet rose by 3.7% in 2024, reaching 4.46 PPP dollars per person per day. Despite this increase, the number of people unable to afford such a diet dropped to 2.6 billion.

Obesity continues to rise worldwide, affecting 15.8% of adults in 2022, up from 12.1% in 2012. Child overweight remained stable globally at 5.5% in 2024, with LAC showing the highest levels and increases in both indicators.

Sustainable financing, knowledge and locally engaged partnerships are essential to ensure quality, inclusion, equity and long-term impact. For instance, the Sustainable School Feeding Network (RAES), led by Brazil-FAO cooperation,

supports 18 LAC countries to enhance their SFP through dialogue, policy development, nutrition standards and public procurement from family farming. While financing is one key component, knowledge and understanding of the enabling environment, nutrition, local food preferences and local partnership are also pivotal for scaling up these programmes.

The School Meals Coalition, with over 100 members, fosters global collaboration to ensure every child receives a healthy school meal by 2030. Its Sustainable Financing Initiative builds evidence and provides technical assistance to boost domestic investment.

Therefore this event aims at sharing best practices on financing and collaboration as well as discussing enabling environments with a child-centered approach. The dialogue will highlight how school meals can become a driver of agrifood resilience, and access to affordable healthy diets.

Register here and join us!





PROGRAMME

OPENING REMARKS

08:30 - 08:40



Máximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean a.i.



Paola Barbieri, Project Analyst, Trilateral South-South Cooperation with International Organizations, Brazilian Cooperation Agency

PANEL

08:40 - 09:00



Hellen Omondi, Head of Food Security, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, State Department of Agriculture of Kenya



Karine Santos, General Coordinator of Brazil's National School Feeding Program, National Fund for Educational Development



Ukraine Member Country (TBC)



Britta Ekman - Unit Manager, Sustainable Food Consumption, Swedish Food Agency

DIALOGUE AND QUESTIONS

09:00 - 09:25



Federico Spano, Policy officer of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty



Katarina Eriksson, Representative of Private sector mechanism



Maria Tadesse, Representative of Civil society

CLOSURE

09:25 - 09:35



Karin Höglund, Sweden Permanent Representative designated to FAO



María José Rojas, Head of the School Meals Coalition Secretariat, hosted by the UN World Food Programme (WFP)

Moderation:

Nancy Aburto, Deputy Director of FAO Food and Nutrition Division





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