

Second Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition

18 & 19 September 2025, Fortaleza, Brazil

Concept note, updated 15 September 2025

The School Meals Coalition was launched in September 2021 during the United Nations Food System Summit, to ensure all children have access to healthy nutritious meals in school by 2030. Brazil, under the leadership of its President HE. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva joined Finland and France as a co-chair in October 2023, at the [first Global Summit of the Coalition](#) hosted by France in Paris.

The Coalition was established under the shared conviction that school meal programmes can transform education and food systems and meaningfully contribute to economic, social and environmental progress. Since its creation, it has grown into one of the most successful multistakeholder initiatives of recent times. Membership has more than doubled, to 109 countries in July 2025 – representing more than 65% of the world’s population. The Coalition also has a strong regional dimension, with 5 regional bodies and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) among its members. With close to 150 partner organizations, they have come together to establish, improve and scale-up school meals programmes in countries all over the world.

Thanks to this momentum, there has been a sea change in the level of political will and country action around school meals. By 2022, the investment in these programmes have increased by USD 5 billion, to USD 48 billion, reaching 418 million children, compared to 388 million before the pandemic. Low-income countries increased by 15% their domestic budget allocation to school meals.¹ New data signals this increasing trend has continued despite fiscal constraints: in Africa for instance, an estimated 87 million children now benefit from school meal programmes. This is 20 million more children than in 2022.

The most significant demonstration of the new landscape for school meals is at the country level, where almost half of the 109 member countries have submitted ambitious commitments detailing how they will scale and improve their school meal programmes. At the regional level, the Coalition is enabling meaningful exchanges of best practices and new networks of support. At the global level, the Coalition has established a platform to advocate for healthy and nutritious school meals as a multi-sector, evidence-based solution, gaining visibility at key international forums such as the United Nations Climate Change Conferences- COPs; the G7; the G20; the African Day of School feeding; and the UN High-Level Political Forum.

The Coalition’s ways of working are also transforming the landscape, promoting a new systemic model of effective multistakeholder partnerships, multisectoral approaches and multilevel action. By adopting a systemic approach to tackle school meal challenges, the Coalition has created an environment that fosters collaboration among existing networks of partners, including governments, civil society, academia, coalitions, international financial institutions, UN organizations, municipalities, and parliamentarians.

A landmark example is the connection with the Global Alliance Against Poverty and Hunger, which was launched at the G20 summit in 2024 by the Brazil presidency to drive support for country-led, large-scale,

¹ WFP. 2022. State of School Feeding Worldwide 2022. Rome, World Food Programme.

and proven programmes, such as home-grown school meals, to tackle hunger, poverty and inequality worldwide. Aiming to reach 150 million more children by 2030, 14 governments and 11 partners pledged to double school meal coverage in low-income and lower-middle-income countries.

Four multi-partner initiatives of the Coalition support governments and address areas that had been previous bottlenecks in scaling and improving school meal programmes: the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition, the Sustainable Financing Initiative, the Data and Monitoring Initiative, and Cities Feeding the Future. These initiatives support countries by conducting case studies, analyses and value-for-money studies; developing financing plans and strategies; enabling peer-to-peer learning; and providing global public goods such as the School Meals Coalition Database.

School meals act as a gateway to a healthy, prosperous and just future. They can support goals in education, food security, nutrition, health, and social protection. When linked to local procurement, they can boost local economies, transform food systems, protect biodiversity and contribute to climate action. They drive economic development and wellbeing, social equity, and intergenerational fairness.

Moving ahead: the priorities of the School Meals Coalition

These programmes are truly multisectoral investments to support future generations, strengthen food systems and foster sustainable development in all its dimensions - social, economic, and environmental - across the world. However, millions of children are still missing out of what is, for many, the only nutritious meal in a day. The School Meals Coalition Global Task Force² defined six priorities to move the Coalition to the next level during its second ministerial meeting, held in Nairobi on October 29, 2024:³

1. Make school meals a political and fiscal priority globally and expand access to sustainable finance
2. Move from commitments to action at country level, and encourage countries to accelerate the scale and quality of their programmes
3. Strengthen evidence for better decision making and more cost-efficient programmes
4. Measure results and report on progress of the Coalition
5. Empower cities and municipalities to make progress
6. Prioritize high-level participation in the next Global Meeting of the Coalition in Brazil in 2025 and support additional gatherings to support advocacy

The goals and expectations for the ministerial meeting

Hosted under the high patronage of the President of Brazil, the second School Meals Coalition Global Summit will gather the Member States of the School Meals Coalition at the Ministerial level. Partner organizations of the Coalition will also be attending at the principal level.

² The Task Force of the School Meals Coalition is the decision-making body of the Coalition and determines the overall strategic direction, sets priorities, provides leadership to the work of the Secretariat and the initiatives, and leads on political advocacy and positioning. It meets at the Ministerial level every two years. The first Ministerial meeting of the Task Force was held in Helsinki in October 2022.

³ See the 2nd [School Meals Coalition Task Force Meeting Outcome Statement](#) for more details on the priorities and outcomes of the Task Force Meeting.

The two-day summit will therefore enable leaders from member states, regional bodies and forums, UN organizations, international financial institutions and philanthropies, NGOs, research organizations, as well as representatives of cities and municipalities, indigenous leaders, youth, food systems coalitions, and other participants to connect and shape the futures of school meals globally.

Guided by the priorities established by the Taskforce of the Coalition, the two-day Summit will showcase the progress made towards the Coalition objectives since the first Global Summit and will underscore how governments and partners are investing in school meal programmes as a powerful policy that can help galvanize global action on some of the key challenges of our time. It will provide a platform to launch new initiatives, nurture collaborations, and further the mobilization and commitments for the next two years.

Overarching objectives of the Summit:

1. **Mobilize action:** mobilize country decision makers and partners to invest in school meals as a key social and economic imperative and create momentum towards a global goal of reaching an additional 150 million children. Position healthy and nutritious school meals as a policy that can help galvanize global action across sectors.
2. **Take stock of progress since the last summit in 2023:** share new knowledge and evidence on what works by spotlighting progress on country commitments and launching knowledge products, including the new edition of the flagship report State of School Feeding.
3. **Expand partnerships and networks:** Provide an opportunity for countries and partners to connect, share experiences and kick start new collaborations. Enable partnerships and networks that can help to expand action.
4. **Prepare for the future:** Provide a space for innovation, including the connection to the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

Transportation and interpretation in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish will be provided for the activities related to the summit.

Draft agenda, updated 15 September

Day 1	Thursday 18 September
7:30 - 08:45	Arrival of participants, registration and welcome coffee Participants get seated
08:45 – 10:15	High-Level Opening Session with Vice-President and Minister Geraldo Alckmin
10:15 – 12:15	Session 1: Showcasing progress - School Meals Coalition Secretariat The session will spotlight progress on country commitments since the first Global Summit in 2023, as well as new commitments announced by countries, and will welcome new members to the Coalition. It will launch the new edition of the State of School Feeding Worldwide report
12:15 – 14:15	Lunch at full-time high schools: exclusively for state ministers Lunch & networking at the Convention Center for other guests
14:15 – 15:30	Session 2: Using what works: stronger evidence for decision makers - School Meals Coalition Secretariat This session will feature a dialogue between Ministers and the network created by the Research Consortium, that highlights how research has been translated into better policies and programmes
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:20	Session 3: Matching ambition with sustainable financing strategies - School Meals Coalition Secretariat This session will engage ministers of finance and international financial institutions to showcase innovative financial mechanisms and partnerships
17:20 – 17:30	Wrap up of the day - School Meals Coalition Secretariat Transfer to the Cultural Event venue (organised for all participants)
From 18:30	Cultural event for all participants
Day 2	Friday 19 September
09:00 – 10:30	Session 4: Preparing for the future: school meals and sustainable food systems - School Meals Coalition Secretariat The session will bring out how countries are using innovative approaches to catalyze food systems transformation through environmentally friendly approaches, paving the way to COP 30
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 – 12:00	Session 5: School Meals as Strategic Safety Nets: Building Resilience and Human Capital - School Meals Coalition Secretariat This session will showcase impressive commitments from governments who have utilized school meals as a social protection mechanism and made them an integral part of their national efforts to support communities and children in a variety of contexts
12:00-12:45	Session 6: The power of cities and municipalities: driving innovation and accountability at local levels - School Meals Coalition Secretariat This session will be led by champion Mayors who will showcase how they are driving innovation at the local level.
12:45 – 14:30	Lunch

14:30 – 15:45	Session 7: Partnering for Impact: Governments and Partners advancing school meals for every child - School Meals Coalition Secretariat The session will showcase existing and new efforts to expand partner support and collaborations with governments to achieve the Coalition goals, including a report by Civil Society Organizations on the Call to Action launched at the First Global Summit in 2023.
15:45 – 16:30	Next steps and closing
Day 3	Saturday 20 September (optional)
Morning	Field Visit