

Fortaleza Statement - Second School Meals Coalition Global Summit **19 September 2025**

The [Second School Meals Coalition Global Summit](#) was held in Fortaleza on 18 and 19 September 2025, hosted under the high patronage of the President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The Summit brought together around 80 Coalition member states, over 30 at Minister level, and about 60 partner organizations, to take stock of progress and mobilize further action.

This year's Summit showcased the unprecedented progress achieved. In just four years, the Coalition has emerged as one of the most successful multisectoral initiatives in recent times. From 46 governments in 2021 to 111 governments today, it has reinforced a growing global commitment and catalyzed government leadership on one common goal: ensuring that every child receives a healthy, nutritious meal in school by 2030. About 150 partner organizations have also joined to support governments in meeting their national commitments.

Despite global challenges, progress is possible for future generations. Co-chaired by Brazil, France and Finland, the Coalition is a testament to what is achievable when countries unite around a shared vision. According to the new edition of the [State of School Feeding Worldwide report](#), presented at the Summit, school meal programmes are a growing public investment in education, nutrition, health, and sustainable food systems. These programmes now reach 466 million children globally - an 80 million increase in the last four years. In Africa alone, 20 million more children now receive school meals. The annual global investment in these programmes has now reached USD 84 billion, with 99% of it being funded domestically.

The two-day Summit enabled leaders from member states, regional bodies, UN organizations, international financial institutions, philanthropies, NGOs, research organizations, representatives of cities and municipalities, indigenous leaders, food systems coalitions and others to connect and shape the future of school meals globally.

Guided by the [priorities](#) established by the Coalition Taskforce in 2024, the Summit in Fortaleza showcased progress made towards objectives outlined in the [first Global Summit in 2023](#). It also underscored how governments and partners have invested in school meal programmes as a powerful policy lever to galvanize global action on some of the key challenges of our time. The Summit provided a platform to take stock of progress, nurture collaborations and mobilize commitments for the next two years.

Session announcements featured governments and partner commitments to scaling up and leveraging school meal programmes as drivers of sustainable food systems transformation; country successes in securing sustainable financing for school meals; an investment case for school programmes through documented best practices and estimated cross-sectoral returns in the global south; highlights from child-led research amplifying children's voices and lived experiences in the programme design and implementation; formal Civil Society Organization (CSO) Network endorsement of new Joint Commitments to the Global Summit outlining strategic priorities and a two-to-three year roadmap; new partnership models to strengthen, scale, and sustain these transformations. School meals were also positioned as instruments for food system reform, climate change mitigation and adaptation and as shock-responsive safety-nets, inspiring increased financing from across several sectors.

Summary of the main Summit outcomes

- **The School Meals Coalition welcomed 23 new member states and regional bodies, and 46 partners.**

23 new members and regional bodies have joined the School Meals Coalition since the 2023 Global Summit held in Paris. The new member states are: Belize, Djibouti, Georgia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Slovenia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Uruguay, Yemen, and regional bodies like the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

- **Leaders witnessed the launch of the latest edition of the State of School Feeding Worldwide report and the School Meals Coalition Global Database.**

The biennial [State of School Feeding Worldwide Report](#) by the World Food Programme (WFP), launched on 10 September and presented at the Summit, provided a global overview of school meal programmes, highlighting their scale, coverage, and cross-sectoral impact. It reported an unprecedented 466 million children reach, underscoring the programmes' effectiveness, role in tackling societal challenges and the need for sustained investment, especially in low-income and fragile contexts. The Coalition's Data and Monitoring Initiative also launched an updated [School Meals Coalition Global Database](#), where data on school meals is accessible to a wide range of stakeholders worldwide. This is a significant step towards establishing the database as a trusted global public good, strengthening monitoring and accountability in school meal programmes.

- **Over 40 governments submitted new national commitments, marking a major milestone in global efforts to scale up school meals.**

These new commitments brought the total to 66 to date. Member states: Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, Cuba, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Finland, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Congo, Republic of Korea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Slovenia, Somalia, Suriname, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine and Yemen.

- **About 50 governments shared Voluntary National Reviews, reflecting member states' accountability and progress in advancing school meals commitments.**

Before the Summit, a Voluntary National Review was used to compile updates from member states on national commitments they have made to the Coalition to date. It focused on progress over the past two years, challenges faced, and support needed.

The Voluntary National Review Summary document is a record of the remarkable achievements and progress made by member states and was showcased at the Summit through a booklet, on the [Coalition's website](#) as well as through a country gallery at the venue in Fortaleza.

- **The Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition presented evidence on the growing recognition of school meals as an essential investment in human capital and future generations and presented its 4th annual research statement to guide country investments.**

The Consortium will continue to collaborate directly with all the Coalition member states to help enhance the efficiency of their national programmes, for example by co-creating value-for-money

assessments and case studies, and will also analyze this evidence to identify good practices that can guide decisions.

- **The Cities Feeding the Future Initiative of the School Meals Coalition highlighted mayors' efforts and commitment.**

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, leading the Cities Feeding the Future Initiative, demonstrated once again how cities are key players in improving school meals programmes worldwide, with more than 60% of them directly managing the system. Key highlights include the presentation of a new cohort of Champion Mayors committed to placing school meals at the heart of their political agenda; the contribution to the School Meals Coalition's Global Database and to the State of School Feeding Worldwide report, providing for the first time an urban perspective. The city of Fortaleza joined the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and the initiative, demonstrating growing city-level commitment to improving school meal delivery through innovative, locally driven partnerships.

- **Following high demand for support and work with 13 countries, the Coalition's Sustainable Financing Initiative announced its intention to extend its support to countries from a focus on developing financing strategies to accompanying governments to implement those plans.**

- **The 'School Meals in Our Words: Choosing our future,' child-led research was launched by World Vision and partners.**

The new research by World Vision and partners intends to elevate children's voices and lived experiences in the design and implementation of school meal programmes. This participatory approach reinforces the Coalition's commitment to child-centered policy development and evidence-based programming.

- **The Civil Society Organization (CSO) Network presented a progress report and endorsed new joint commitments to strengthen inclusive, government-led school meal programmes.**

The School Meals Civil Society Network played a central role in advancing the Summit's agenda to strengthen inclusive, government-led school meal programmes. As part of the [Civil Society Call-to-Action](#) first issued at the inaugural Global School Meals Coalition Summit in Paris in 2023, civil society partners presented a detailed progress report to document how civil society actors have supported governments in expanding and improving school meal programmes through multisectoral collaboration, policy advocacy, technical assistance, and community engagement. The CSO Steering Group and Network formally endorsed a new set of Joint Commitments to the Global Summit with strategic priorities for the next two to three years.

- **The Summit enabled collaborative efforts of members and partners with a call from Indigenous Peoples for culturally appropriate approaches to school meal programmes.**

Governments presented partnership models demonstrating how collaboration is expanding and improving school meal delivery. United Nations agencies and international coalitions also shared how they are aligning global strategies with national priorities to build sustainable, inclusive school meal systems, including initiatives from the UN Food Systems Summit +4 (UNFSS+4) Stocktake, which took place in Addis, Ethiopia in July. The insights shared by government leaders at UNFSS+4 helped inspire other governments and partners make new commitments to unlock sustainable investments for home-grown school meals, which were brought forward to the School Meals' Coalition Global Summit this year. The session also amplified the voice of the Indigenous People's Food Systems Coalition, issuing a call for culturally appropriate approaches that incorporate Indigenous Peoples' foods and traditions, ensure Indigenous participation, and

promote care for the environment.

What is next for the School Meals Coalition:

- Governments and partners will adopt and integrate school meals into their policies and decision-making processes, recognizing them as a key social and economic imperative. This includes creating momentum towards reaching 150 million more children by 2030, supporting the [Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty](#), as well as building on progress made around the Nutrition for Growth Summit held in Paris earlier this year.
- Central to the success of the Coalition is collective learning and sharing. The Coalition Initiatives will continue to engage and advise governments and partners to address the bottlenecks in school meals policy, programming and implementation and to encourage the sharing of lessons learned. This includes a renewed commitment to focus on research; financing and increase investment; and technical assistance to support country efforts.
- The Summit highlighted the evolving role of International Financial Institutions in supporting school meal programmes through investments in education, nutrition, and human capital. These can provide critical support to help governments overcome fiscal constraints and scale sustainable school meal programmes, including home-grown models. Working closely with these institutions and exploring innovative financing solutions will help unlock the full potential of promising initiatives.
- The Coalition provides a platform for building momentum and mobilization among governments and partners locally, including with civil society organizations and others who can bring expertise and operational support. For instance, regional networks such as the Sustainable School Feeding Network (RAES), which brings together and advances innovative, nationally-led and environmentally-friendly school feeding programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Coalition remains committed to engaging new strategic partners to catalyze change around school meals.
- The Coalition will leverage current external advocacy and communications success to continue positioning school meals - including its cross-sectoral benefits - and the Coalition, on key regional and global policy agendas and platforms, including the African Union, G7, G20, UN General Assembly and UN climate talks (COP31) in 2026.
- WFP will continue to host the Secretariat of the School Meals Coalition, supported by the co-chairs and its members.
- The next Coalition's Task Force Ministerial Meeting will take place in 2026 and the third Coalition Global Summit will happen in 2027.

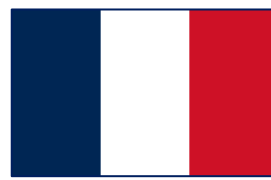
Co-Chairs of the School Meals Coalition



Brazil



Finland



France