



School Meals Coalition Newsletter

2025

Highlights from the School Meals Coalition Global Summit 18-19 September - Fortaleza, Brazil



Left to right: Mr. Evandro Leitão, Mayor – Municipality of Fortaleza, Brazil; H.E. Mr. Thani Mohamed-Soilihi, Minister Delegate – Francophonie and International Partnerships, France; H.E. Mr. Ville Tavio, Minister – Ministry for Foreign Trade and Development, Finland; Mr. Elmano de Freitas, Governor – State of Ceará, Brazil; H.E. Mr. Geraldo Alckmin, Vice President of the Republic & Minister of Development, Industry, Trade and Services, Brazil; Ms. Cindy McCain, Executive Director – World Food Programme; H.E. Mr. Camilo Sobreira de Santana, Minister of Education, Brazil; Ms. Fernanda Pacobahyba, President – National Fund for Educational Development, Brazil; H.E. Mr. Wellington Dias, Minister of Social Development and Fight against Hunger of Brazil; Ms. Renata Silveira Carvalho, Chief Auditor – Specialized Unit for Education, Sports, Culture, and Human Rights, Federal Court of Accounts, Brazil.

Read the Summit outcomes statement [here](#)

On 18–19 September, Brazil hosted the Second School Meals Coalition Global Summit, convening about 80 governments and around 60 partners under the high patronage of President Lula da Silva. Co-chaired by Brazil, Finland and France, the Summit marked a shift in the past two years: school meals are now central to national strategies for education, nutrition and economic resilience.

Brazil's Vice-President, His Excellency Mr. Geraldo Alckmin: "We know that well-fed children mean good health. We must support good public policies so that children can develop. There is no better choice than choosing children, education and health through school meals."

👉 [Watch all the speeches](#) from government leaders and partners. Access [all photos](#).



Latest evidence released at the summit

- New edition of the [State of School Feeding Worldwide](#): 466 million children reached (+80 million in 4 years); USD 84 billion invested (99% domestic).
- The [School Meals Coalition Global Database](#): Featuring new elements introduced by the [Data and Monitoring Initiative](#) to make data more accessible, transparent and actionable for policymakers and partners.
- [The Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition](#) (a global network of 1,200 experts from 124 countries) [Global Evidence Brief](#): School meals improve learning, shape lifelong habits and deliver high returns on investment.
- University College London (UCL) Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (Mazzucato & Doyle): [A Mission Oriented Approach to School Meals](#): An Opportunity for Cross Departmental and Multi-Sector Industrial Strategy: School meals as a lever for innovation, sustainability and inclusive growth.
- World Vision [Child-led Research](#): More than 1,200 children across 13 countries share how school meals shape their futures.
- [Civil Society Organization \(CSO\) Network for School Meals progress report](#) highlights how CSOs are scaling impact - from direct delivery to policy co-design - with governments, donors and partners.

Members and partners are encouraged to apply this evidence to inform policy, strengthen implementation, and advance school meals as a driver of sustainable development.

Finland's Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, His Excellency Mr. Ville Tavio: "As we acknowledge our achievements, we must also remember that the

work is not finished. Too many children still go to school hungry; too many families still struggle to put food on their tables and too many governments still lack the resources to reach every child in need.”



Major milestones announced at the Summit

Include:

- **Expanded membership:** [23 new member states](#) and regional bodies and [46 partners](#) joined the Coalition in the last two years. This brings the total to 111 members and over 140 partners across the globe. Members joining at the summit: [Paraguay](#) and [Saint Kitts and Nevis](#); and new partners: [Institute of Development Studies](#) and the [World Diabetes Foundation](#).
- **New commitments:** Over 40 governments made [new national commitments](#), in the last two years, bringing the total to 66.
- **Governments reporting progress:** About 50 governments shared [Voluntary National Reviews](#) ahead of the Summit outlining progress, challenges, and support needs. These reviews highlight member states' accountability and achievements.
- **City leadership in action:** The Coalition's [Cities Feeding the Future Initiative](#) continues to gain momentum, with a majority of the 330 mayors who have signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact now actively engaged in transforming urban food systems through the initiative. Most recently, the city of Fortaleza officially joined both the Coalition's Initiative and [the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact](#), reinforcing its leadership in sustainable urban nutrition.
- **Sustainable financing support:** The Coalition's [Sustainable Financing Initiative](#) moves from developing strategies to actively supporting governments in implementation.
- **Global research fuelling policy change:** The [4th Annual Statement of the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition](#) draws on the Consortium's Global Academy network of over 1,200 experts across 120 countries, offering insights to guide decision-making and accelerate progress.
- **Civil Society Organization (CSO) Network for School Meals:** Endorsement of [new Joint Commitments](#) and practical examples of innovation in delivery, advocacy and school meals implementation.

France's Minister Delegate, Francophonie and International Partnership, His Excellency Mr. Thani Mohamed-Soilihi: "School meals are a key public fight because they are about children — our shared future. Our collective responsibility is clear: to reinforce our commitments and accelerate the impact of our programmes to reach the Coalition's 2030 goals."



Elevating Indigenous perspectives: A Call for Cultural Inclusion in School Meals



At this year's Summit, members and partners united around a powerful call from Indigenous Peoples for culturally grounded school meal programmes. The Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition took centre stage, urging action to integrate traditional foods, uphold Indigenous participation, and champion environmental stewardship in nutrition initiatives.

Chair of the Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition and of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Ms. Aluki Kotierk: "Indigenous food systems are not only culturally vital, they are also more sustainable and regenerative. Our traditions teach us balance. For example, when the first caribou comes by, you do not hunt it. When the first narwhals or belugas appear, you wait for the next round. When we collect eggs in spring, we are told never to take them all. These teachings are about living with nature, not against it. We are part of nature, and nature is part of us."



Children's voices leading the conversation

Future Leaders call for bold investments, quality school meals

At the Global Summit, children did not just attend - they had a strong voice. In a key session, they shared their child-led research and called on global leaders to make bold, lasting investments in school meals. Children from around the world are urging governments and partners to listen, invest and act. Their message is clear: school meals change lives. Listen to how these young leaders are shaping the future of school meals and learn more about the multisectoral benefits of school meals.



Davila, 14-year-old from Fortaleza: “I am not speaking for myself but for children around the world. School meals are very important, because they help us to learn. I would like to appeal to all leaders to improve our school meals. Please listen to us.”



We Would Like to Hear from You!

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to be on our regular mailing list, please [visit this link](#). If you would like to join the School Meals Coalition, you can find the Declaration of Commitment for governments or the Declaration of Support for partners [here](#).



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