



COMMITMENT DOCUMENT

School Meals Coalition

Nutrition, Health and Education for Every Child

Commitment Document for Finland

Finland expresses its strong support for school meal programmes as a policy lever to drive and strengthen human capital, social and economic growth and sustainable food systems.

We are convinced that this programme is a systemic solution that helps combat child hunger and poverty; supports child nutrition, learning, long-term well-being and health equity; strengthens food systems and local economies; and promotes gender equality by keeping girls in school.

We believe school meals programmes are about much more than food in school. They help to improve and diversify children's diets, teach children how to eat better and support national and local markets and food systems by using locally grown food where possible, improving opportunities for smallholder farmers and local catering businesses, many led by women.

At a time in which world leaders are having to tackle several crises as once, such as the education, the food and the climate crisis, school meals should be positioned as a central, cross-cutting intervention that will contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

Finland as a proud member of the School Meals Coalition announces the following commitments towards its goals:

1. Finland's Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Mr Ville Tavio will act as the School Meals Coalition Champion and the co-chair of the School Meals Coalition. In these roles, Minister Tavio will provide high-level advocacy work to generate interest and resources towards school meals. Finland will also advocate for school meals at the diplomatic level in various international forums.
2. In 2021 Finland doubled its support to WFP's school meals programmes and in 2022, Finland contributed with an additional US\$1.1 million to school meals activities. In 2023, Finland will again contribute with a total of 3 million euros towards WFP's school meals programmes, and we will continue to support WFP's activities in this regard.
3. Finland leads the School Meals Coalition member state taskforce and the strategic coordination of activities for the Coalition. Finland also co-chairs the Working Group of the Coalition. Finland has joined the Coalition's Sustainable Financing Initiative and the Research Consortium. We will continue our active engagement in several different fora to advance the work and goals of the Coalition.





4. Finland provided a contribution of 400 000 euros in 2020 to the work of the Coalition secretariat. A further financial contribution of 500 000 euros to the secretariat was done in 2022. Finland also provided a JPO for the WFP School Feeding Programme, with the contract extending to 2024.
5. Finland commits to implement school meals procurement criteria that include environmentally friendly cultivation methods, food safety, nutrition as well as animal welfare and health aspects. In addition, it is encouraged to involve pupils to participate in the planning, implementation and assessment of school meals.
6. Finland will continue to provide technical expertise for countries wishing to develop their school meals programmes. To facilitate this, we have developed a website with information on the Finnish school meals system and connections to Finnish stakeholders: <https://www.educationfinland.fi/schoolmeals>.

Helsinki, 13 December 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ville Tavio", is positioned above the printed name.

Ville Tavio
Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of Finland