The COVID-19 pandemic, declared by the WHO in March 2020, has serious consequences for the world as a whole, but it can particularly impact developing countries and vulnerable populations. To date, a total of over 5 million cases worldwide and more than 340 thousand deaths are associated with the disease. This data, however, still masks considerable underreporting, particularly for countries where there are no well-structured health systems and sound monitoring methods. This is the case for many African and Asian countries.

For WFP Brazil’s work, the pandemic and the need to impose social distancing measures brought two main challenges:
1. We have had to adapt all our operations to remote work; and
2. There have been massive school closures to contain the impacts of the pandemic, which means that countries need support in their transition to new and adapted models of feeding.

According to WFP data, nearly 370 million children in 197 countries are not receiving school meals.

In an effort to adapt their school feeding programmes to this new global context, countries have been resorting to four main alternatives to reach students and their families:
1. Providing cash transfers
2. Distributing food baskets
3. Distributing take-home rations
4. Distributing ready meals

We, at the WFP CoE Brazil, have been focused on: advocating for school feeding maintenance in partner countries, sharing best practices in these adapted models and forging partnerships to raise funds for food assistance in Brazil. As a part of this effort, we have two campaigns underway to assist food insecure populations, and have launched a series of publications and guidelines to assist countries in school feeding maintenance with COVID-19. These efforts were presented by our Country Director Daniel Balaban on the webinar “How do you make your alternative feeding modality sustainable and safe for the duration of the crisis?”, organized by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation. Below are currently published resources from the WFP CoE Brazil.

School Feeding & Social Protection in Brazil with the COVID-19 Pandemic

School feeding in times of COVID-19: What can Governments Do?

Implementing the Brazilian National School Feeding Programme During the COVID-19 Pandemic