SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020
- School Feeding Program (Programa de Alimentación Escolar)

Lead Agency: Ministry of Education

NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition
- Food safety
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...
- Yes
- No
- No response

INFRASTRUCTURE

All schools in Guatemala have flush toilets, most have kitchens, some have electricity, piped water, and clean water, and very few have dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias. The school kitchens have either charcoal/wood stoves or gas stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture lists Global Communities as receiving support from the McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in 2021 for school feeding activities in Guatemala.
NUTRITION
School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:

- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Objective to meet nutritional goals
- Objective to reduce obesity

Food items fortified/biofortified:
- Salt, sugar

Micronutrients:
- Vitamin A, iodine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
At least ten nutritionists are involved in school feeding in Guatemala. Some fortified food items are provided in accordance with the National Law of Food Fortification, and nutritional requirements for food baskets are applied to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity. Foods produced in school gardens are consumed by the students.

STUDIES CONDUCTED
Technical diagnosis of the school feeding program (2019);
A study of the height and weight of schoolchildren (2019)

RESEARCH NEEDED
An evaluation of changes in the eating behavior of schoolchildren.

CONTACTS: GUATEMALA
Agency: Ministry of Education
Website: https://www.mineduc.gob.gt/portal/index.asp

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
Jobs created by school feeding programs*
- Cooks and food preparers
- Transporters
- Off-site processors
- Food packagers and handlers
- Monitoring
- Food service management
- Safety and quality inspectors
- Other

*If blank, no response was provided.

Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...
- Yes
- No
- No response

Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...
- Yes
- No
- No response

There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...
- Women
- Other groups
- Youth
- No response

There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...
- Yes
- No
- No response

Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?
- Yes
- No
- There are no food banks in this country.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Funds are transferred to Parents’ Organizations that, in turn, purchase food to be prepared in the schools. Competitive procedures are followed to procure the food, with preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies. Specifically, family farmers accredited by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food are prioritized. Most of the cooks in the program are women—often students’ mothers—who generally work on a volunteer basis. The involvement of Parents’ Organizations ensures that the program is community-led.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES
Among the recent successes related to school feeding in Guatemala, the School Feeding Law was issued, which effectively institutionalized the School Feeding Program. Reforms to the law brought an increase in budget per student and the level of coverage. The program is overseen by an inter-institutional school feeding commission. Working through Parents’ Organizations allows for the execution of funds at the local (decentralized) level, and there are mechanisms and tools that facilitate the design of school menus with cultural relevance. However, some challenges remain. There is need for a budget for the improvement of infrastructure and equipment in school kitchens, and a need to hire more personnel to provide guidance for the Parents’ Organizations. In addition, it remains a challenge to link family farming with the School Feeding Program.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC
For much of 2020, schools in Guatemala were closed but operating remotely. In response to the crisis, the number of children reached by the program increased. However, due to limited storage options, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a reduction in the diversity of food for the School Feeding Program. The pandemic also prompted a shift in modality from in-school meals/snacks to take-home rations that have been provided to students or their parents to pick up at school to prepare at home. In 2021, the school feeding law was modified to ensure that the School Feeding Program will be implemented even when classes are suspended or schools are closed due to an emergency. In the 2020–2021 school year, Guatemala was also affected by natural disasters.

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SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM
PROGRAMA DE ALIMENTACIÓN ESCOLAR

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education

OBJECTIVES:
• To meet educational goals
• To meet nutritional and/or health goals
• To meet agricultural goals

MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:
• In-school snacks
• Take-home rations

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
• 5 times per week for in-school snacks; variable frequency for take-home rations during the school year

TARGETING:
Universal

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020 SCHOOL YEAR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th># Students</th>
<th>% Girls</th>
<th>% Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>486,795</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>2,039,855</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,526,650</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:
- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Salt*
- Sugar*
- Dairy milk
- Atole (cornmeal drink)

FOOD SOURCES:
- 100% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 0% In-kind (foreign)

*fortified

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The Ministry of Education issues technical and administrative guidelines for the disbursement of funds at the local level through the Parents’ Organizations, which operate the School Feeding Program. The Ministry of Education through the Departmental Directorates of Education (with 26 directorates in the country) are in charge of budgeting the program. At the central level, the General Directorate of Community Participation and Support Services (DIGEPSA) and the Financial Administrative Directorate (DAFI) are responsible for requesting the budget from the Ministry of Public Finance.