SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)
School year: 2020–2021
• School Breakfast Program (Programa de Desayunos Escolares)

Lead Agency: Ministry of Health, National System for the Comprehensive Development of Families (El Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de las Familias – SNDIF)

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

100%

BUDGET
Total: USD 455,437,283
Government:* USD 455,437,283
International donors**: USD 0
Private sector: USD 0
Other donors: USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture

* International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.
** The government budget includes allocations from both the national and regional governments.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Some schools in Mexico have electricity, piped and clean water, flush toilets, and dedicated eating spaces; very few have kitchens. School kitchens have diverse characteristics across Mexico, alternately with open or closed cooking areas and using charcoal/wood stoves or gas or electric stoves. Many kitchens have electricity and refrigeration.

SPECIAL NOTES
Population and enrollment numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report.

The Global Survey of School Meal Programs is the property of GCNF and is protected by copyright. It may not be reproduced or distributed without prior written consent. Contact: info@gcnf.org ©2019. The Global Child Nutrition Foundation. All rights reserved.

GCNF is a non-political, non-profit entity. Funding for the 2019 and 2021 surveys is provided, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture; agreement number FX18TA-10960G002.
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:
- Grains/cereals, dairy products

Micronutrients:
- Zinc, folic acid, riboflavin, calcium, vitamin D

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At least 37 nutritionists are engaged in school feeding in Mexico. Food items produced in school gardens are consumed by the students, and efforts to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity include nutritional requirements for the School Breakfast Program, food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education.

STUDIES CONDUCTED

The SNDIF, in collaboration with the Center for Research on Policies, Population, and Health of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), coordinates the nutritional surveillance system called the “Evaluation of Nutritional Status.” Information is collected on the weight, height, and eating habits of primary and secondary school children and adolescents in the national educational system. Information is available at: https://datos.cipps.unam.mx/SNDIFdb. This data source shows that beneficiaries of the School Breakfast Program have experienced notable progress in weight-for-age (an indicator of malnutrition), with an even larger impact seen among girls. In that that beneficiaries of the School Breakfast Program have received remuneration for their work either in cash or in kind. Cooks in the program are predominantly women; however, few receive remuneration for their work either in cash or in kind. The tendering process to secure contracts for the program is competitive, with preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies. Cooking in the program is predominantly women; however, few receive remuneration for their work either in cash or in kind.

RESEARCH NEEDED

Prevalence of anemia and other biochemical markers; Impact of food guidance on behavior change (e.g., food choices) among schoolchildren.

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*
- Cooks and food preparers
- Transports
- 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
- No response

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

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Farms of all sizes provide eggs, poultry, and vegetables for the School Breakfast Program, and the private sector is engaged in food trading, processing, and transport. The tendering process to secure contracts for the program is competitive, with preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies. Food packagers and handlers

CONTACTS: MEXICO

Agency: Ministry of Health, National System for the Comprehensive Development of Families (El Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de las Familias – SNDIF)
Website: https://www.gob.mx/difnacional

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Among the successes related to school feeding in Mexico, the School Breakfast Program is mandated to offer 25% of daily nutritional requirements. Nutrition standards have been established for hot and cold school breakfasts, prioritizing the inclusion of fresh fruit and vegetables and limiting foods high in sugar or fat. Results of the Nutritional Status Assessment demonstrate that the School Breakfast Program has a positive impact on indicators of malnutrition, particularly among girls. The current administration (2018–2024) aims for a complete transition to hot school breakfasts by 2024. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed this transition as food supplies have been provided as take-home rations rather than in-school meals. In the 2020–2021 school year, the budget for the School Breakfast Program was not considered adequate, and two states stopped operating the School Breakfast Program.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Schools in Mexico were closed but operating remotely for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the social food assistance programs of the DIF National System continued to operate. In response to the pandemic, the School Breakfast Program has shifted its beneficiary population to include not only schoolchildren, but also their families, and shifted from providing in-school meals to providing take-home rations on a monthly or bimonthly basis that were prepared by the students’ families at home. Beginning in May 2020 and with assistance from UNICEF, families with children or adolescents in the municipalities most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic received food baskets and/or pantry cards. As a result of this project, 30,000 grocery shopping cards and 2,000 baskets were delivered to the municipalities of Tijuana and Mexicali in Baja California; Nezahualcóyotl, State of Mexico; and Center, Tabasco, and Benito Juárez, Quintana Roo. Mexico was also affected by an earthquake in Oaxaca in June 2020.
SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM
PROGRAMA DE DESAYUNOS ESCOLARES

Lead implementer(s): National and State Systems for the Comprehensive Development of Families (SNDIF y Sistemas Estatales para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia – SEDIF)

OBJECTIVES:
• To meet nutritional and/or health goals

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

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:
• 5 times per week for in-school meals; monthly for take-home rations
• During the school year

TARGETING:
Geographic (targeted based on indicators of poverty and marginalization)

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 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>0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>6,518,168</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,518,168</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

- Grains, cereals*
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products*
- Eggs
- Meat
- Fortified
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Dairy milk
- Tea
- Water
- Other beverage: Atole

FOOD SOURCES:

- 100% Purchased (domestic)
- 0% In-kind (domestic)
- 0% Purchased (foreign)
- 0% In-kind (foreign)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The School Breakfast Program began in 1929, and in 2020–2021, the program operated in 96,634 public schools. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program provided take-home rations (delivered to students’ homes) or meals to be picked up at school and eaten at home in the 2020–2021 school year. Parents voluntarily provide donations in-kind to support/complement school breakfasts. This in-kind support (which is usually comprised of fresh fruits) is not mandatory; rather, it depends on each school and the organization of each Parent Committee.