School Meal Programs in Latin America & the Caribbean

**Coverage**
- 55% of primary and secondary school age children benefit from school feeding programs, a higher coverage rate than any other region.*
- 63 million children received some food through their schools.

Statistics reported here cover 23 of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, which together hold 80% of the population of the region.

**Countries with National Laws, Policies, or Standards Related to School Feeding**

- National School Feeding Policy: 74%
- Nutrition: 65%
- Health: 35%
- Agriculture: 30%
- Private Sector: 22%
- Food Safety: 57%

Dedicated Line Item in National Budgets

There is often a positive relationship between having a dedicated line item and the coverage of school feeding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Primary school age coverage</th>
<th>Secondary school age coverage</th>
<th>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Methods of Food Distribution (%) of programs**

- In-school meals: 71%
- Take-home rations: 58%
- In-school snacks: 29%
- Other: 4%

**Food Sources (%) of programs**

- Purchased (Domestic): 91%
- Purchased (Foreign): 41%
- In-kind (Domestic): 18%
- In-kind (Foreign): 9%

**Food Basket (%) of programs**

- Fruits: 90%
- Oil: 85%
- Meat: 85%
- Leafy Green Vegetables: 85%
- Sugar: 80%
- Roots/Tubers: 80%
- Other Vegetables: 80%
- Legumes/Cereals: 80%
- Grains/Cereals: 80%
- Dairy Products: 80%
- Eggs: 70%
- Fish: 70%
- Salt: 60%

**Involvement of Farms**

- 83% of programs engage farmers in school feeding programs, higher than in any other region* of the world.

**Examples:**

- In Brazil: 100% of food is procured domestically, with a minimum of 30% purchased from small-scale family farmers.
- In Guatemala: Family farmers are prioritized in food procurement.
- In Chile: Some school food must be purchased from peasant family farmers or other local producers, with the value ranging from 1.5%–4.25% across different territories.
- In Ecuador: At least 35% of school food must be purchased from vulnerable sectors of the population, and from micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises.
- In Saint Kitts and Nevis: At least 30% of school food must be purchased from vulnerable sectors of the population, and from micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises.

The analysis is based on the Global Survey of School Meal Programs database. See School Meal Programs Around the World: Results from the 2021 Global Survey of School Meal Programs. For more information, visit https://gcnf.org or contact info@gcnf.org.

*Comparative regions are Sub-Saharan Africa; South Asia, East Asia, & Pacific; Middle East & North Africa; Europe, Central Asia & North America.