

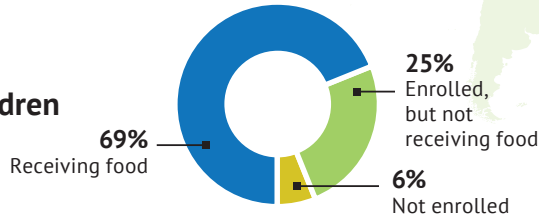


Dominican Republic

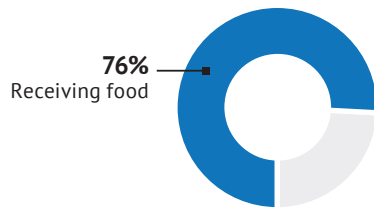


School Meal Coverage (2022)

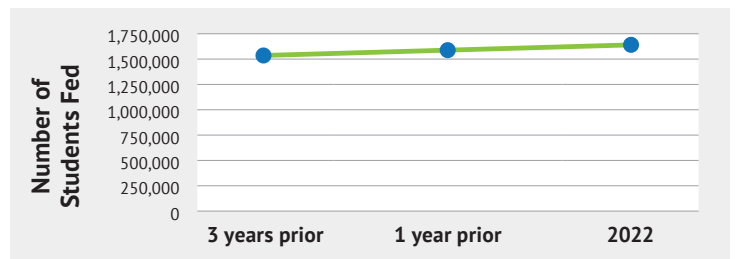
All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



Only Enrolled Primary Students



School Level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving Food
Preschool	573,405	349,861	65,932
Primary School	1,152,884	1,152,347	873,601
Secondary School	1,141,408	1,014,552	708,771
TOTAL	2,867,697	2,516,760	1,648,304



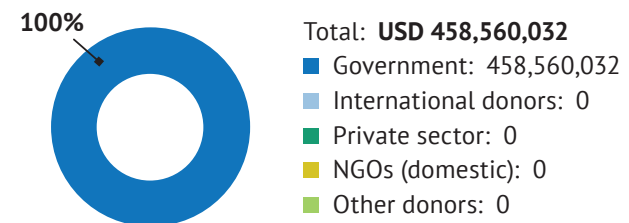
National Laws, Policies, and Standards

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition**
- Health
- Food safety**
- Smallholder farms
- Agriculture (apart from smallholders)
- Climate/environment policy
- Private sector involvement

The country had ...

- Inter-sectoral coordination committee for school feeding
- National system for monitoring school feeding**

Budget



- Line item in the national budget for school feeding**

School Foods and Beverages

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Whole grains <input type="checkbox"/> Refined/milled grains <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blended grain-based products <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legumes <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts and seeds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eggs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dairy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poultry and game meat <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Red meat <input type="checkbox"/> Processed meat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish and shellfish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deep orange vegetables and tubers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White roots and tubers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fruits <input type="checkbox"/> Dark green leafy vegetables <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cruciferous vegetables <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> Deep-fried foods <input type="checkbox"/> Sweets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liquid oils <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-solid and solid fats <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dairy milk <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt drink <input type="checkbox"/> 100% fruit juice <input type="checkbox"/> Other fruit drink <input type="checkbox"/> Tea <input type="checkbox"/> Other sugar-sweetened beverages | <p>Prohibited food items
None</p> <p>Food Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchased (domestic) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchased (foreign) <input type="checkbox"/> In-kind (domestic) <input type="checkbox"/> In-kind (foreign) |
|--|---|--|--|

Special Notes: Population numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report.

Nutrition

School feeding program(s) include/involve 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**

Limitations on food and beverage marketing...

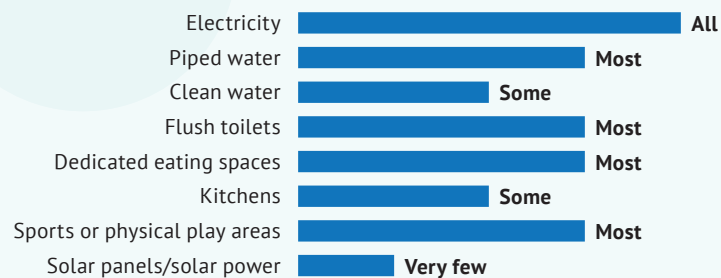
- On school grounds
- To school age children

Additional Information

During the 2022 school year, 16 nutritionists, employed by the national government, were engaged in the School Feeding Program. Milk products were fortified with iron, calcium, riboflavin, and vitamins A, B12, and D. Approaches to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity included nutritional requirements for food baskets, food and/or beverage restrictions on or near school grounds, food and nutrition education, and physical education. Very few foods served in the program were packaged or processed, and students' preferences were taken into account, with some substitutions to reflect regional tastes.

Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

Share of Schools with ...



Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **1,684**

- At least 100% paid
- 25-50% women

There was a focus on creating job opportunities for...

- Women**
- Youth**
- Other Groups**

Complementary Activities

- Handwashing with soap**
- Height measurement**
- Weight measurement**
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment**
- Eye testing/eyeglasses**
- Hearing testing/treatment**
- Dental cleaning/testing**
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification
- School gardens**

Complementary Education Programs

- Food and nutrition**
- Agriculture**
- Environment/climate/sustainability**
- Hygiene**
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education**
- Mental health

Additional Information

Food for the program was purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures in which food service was contracted with a purposeful focus on micro, small and medium-sized suppliers. These companies, in turn, purchased food from producers to prepare the school menus. The private sector was thus engaged in food trading and processing for the program. Cooks/caterers were paid by the national government and received special training in portions/measurements and food safety/hygiene. The community of parents and friends of the schools participated in the program through the School Food and Nutrition Committees, and medical societies were also involved to support technical decisions.

Environmental Sustainability

Targeted climate-friendly foods

- Yes No

Steps taken to limit food waste

- Sealed food storage
- Fumigation/pest control in storage area
- Use of hermetic bags or larger hermetic storage system
- Routine testing/monitoring of dry food storage
- Use of nearly-expired food
- Use of usable but “imperfect” commodities or produce
- Campaign to reduce how much food students throw away

Steps taken to limit package waste

- Re-use of bags/containers
- Recycling
- Use of compostable materials
- Use of “bulk serve” containers
- Prohibiting specific types of packaging

Additional Information

To reduce the use of firewood/charcoal as fuel, dishes that required less cooking were selected for the school menus. Local procurement was increased in an effort to reduce the distance between where school food was produced and the school. Produce from school gardens was either consumed by students or distributed to students’ families.

Emergencies

Experienced disruptions to school feeding due to emergencies

- Yes No

Strategies to address the impact of emergencies

- Seek alternative food sources or suppliers
- Changes in numbers of students fed
- Negotiate better prices with existing suppliers
- Establish alternative supply routes or transportation methods
- Source different or alternative food
- Release of food reserves
- Increase funding or budget allocation for school feeding
- Collaborate with local producers or suppliers to reduce dependence on global supply chains
- Changes in delivery method
- Changes in feeding modality
- Changes in feeding frequency
- No particular strategy was used

Additional Information

During the 2022 school year, the School Feeding Program did not have a plan in place to mitigate the impact of emergencies, though the program was affected by a natural disaster, extreme food price inflation, and teachers’ strike. These emergencies resulted in slightly decreased accessibility (availability and affordability) of food for the program, with a significant increase in the cost of purchasing food. Specifically, climate events in 2022 affected the production of banana, potato, and cassava. In addition, the closure of the border with Haiti impacted trade in some livestock products such as chicken and eggs, with a consequence that these foods were offered more frequently on the school lunch menu. Despite these emergencies, all schools remained open, and there were no interruptions to school feeding operations.

Successes and Challenges

Successes

1. Improvement of nutritional quality: In the last five years, school menus have been improved, sugar consumption has been reduced, and fruits have been included in the menu, eliminating nectars.
2. Increased coverage: New initiatives have been enacted to include pre-school students (children from 3 to 5 years old) and adult level (PREPARA) students, as well as the inclusion of students from the 14-24 program.
3. Expansion of supervision capacity: There has been an expansion of supervision and control personnel of participating suppliers, with improved monitoring of food along the supply chain.
4. Inclusion of new initiatives: These initiatives include the Gastronomic Laboratory at SEDE-INABIE and five Rainwater Collection and Use Systems.

5. Strategic alliances to strengthen the School Feeding Program: This includes the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the World Development Program Food (WFP).

Challenges

1. Financial sustainability of the program.
2. Inclusion of new products, such as fruits, on a national scale.
3. Use and consumption of drinking water.
4. Physical spaces for food preparation and consumption in the school environment.
5. There was some concern about faithful compliance with school menus, as suppliers could deliver food that was not included or that did not comply with the established technical sheet.

School Feeding Program

(Programa de Alimentación Escolar – PAE)

Management

- Lead implementer(s): National Institute of Student Welfare, decentralized body of the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic (Instituto Nacional de Bienestar Estudiantil - INABIE - órgano descentralizado del Ministerio de Educación de la República Dominicana - MINERD)
- The national government managed the program (Centralized decision-making).
- National government procured the food

How Many Students Received Food

School Level	# of Students	% Girls	% Boys
Preschool	65,932	–	–
Primary School	873,601	–	–
Secondary School	708,771	–	–
TOTAL	1,648,304	–	–

Foods and Beverages

- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Eggs
- Dairy
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- White roots and tubers
- Fruits
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Liquid oils
- Semi-solid and solid fats
- Salt
- Dairy milk

Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
- Local food sourcing
- Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
- Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
- Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures
- Effort is made to reduce food miles

Objectives

- To meet educational goals
- To reduce hunger
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity
- To meet agricultural goals

Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals
- In-school snacks

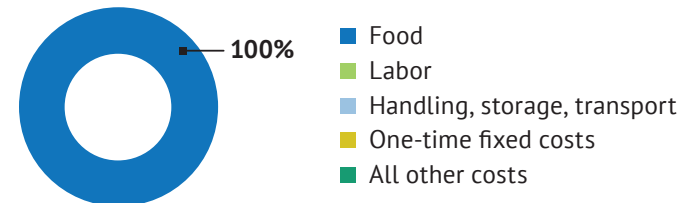
Frequency and Duration

- 7 times per week
- During the school year

Targeting

- Targeting based on school type and grade level

Expenses



Food Sources

92% Purchased (domestic) 0% In-kind (domestic)
8% Purchased (foreign) 0% In-kind (foreign)

Additional Information

Large-scale school feeding began in the Dominican Republic in 1997 with a breakfast program that expanded in 2013 to include other modalities (lunch and in-school snacks). In the 2022 school year, the program reached 6,025 public schools. The National Council for Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (CONASSAN) was responsible for the National Plan for Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security. This Council aims to: 1) Design public policies necessary for the country to produce sufficient food in a sustainable manner and with equitable distribution; and 2) Consolidate and strengthen the Dominican Social Protection System to guarantee the right to food and nutrition of the population, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable and with priority to children, pregnant or lactating women, and the elderly.

The Global Survey of School Meal Programs® collects data from government sources and is funded, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture. Contact info@gcnf.org for more information.

Citation: Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF). 2024. Global Survey of School Meal Programs Country Report, Dominican Republic. <https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>