

School Meal Programs in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific

Based on the results of the 2024 Global Survey of School Meal Programs ©

The **Global Survey of School Meal Programs ©** aims to strengthen the work of the global school meal network by developing a comprehensive description of all the core aspects of large-scale school meal programs around the world.

The **Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF)** is committed to helping governments build national programs that provide nutritious, locally-sourced meals for all children.

School Meals in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific at a Glance

- 180.1 million children** were fed by school meals. **34%** of primary school-age children were fed and **13%** of secondary school-age children were fed.
- 79%** of countries had a national school feeding policy.
- \$14.5 billion USD** was allocated to school meal programs. **74%** of countries had a national budget line item dedicated to school feeding.
- 96%** of countries purchased at least some food from domestic sources.

School Meal Programs in Action

- In **Cambodia**, families and communities contributed to building kitchens and storage rooms for school canteens.
- **Bhutan** utilized open-bid procedures to engage small-scale farmers in food procurement and also provided them with forward contracts.
- In **New Zealand**, the school meal program maintained a purposeful focus on creating jobs or income-generating opportunities for Iwi and Hapūū (Indigenous Māori tribes)
- In **Japan**, procurement is conducted at a local level allowing for the support of small-scale farmers and strengthening of the local economy.

Ensuring Healthy Diets & Food Systems

92% of programs had an **objective to meet nutritional and/or health goals**. On average, school meal programs in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific served foods from **8 healthy food categories**, compared to the **global average of 6.8 healthy food categories**.

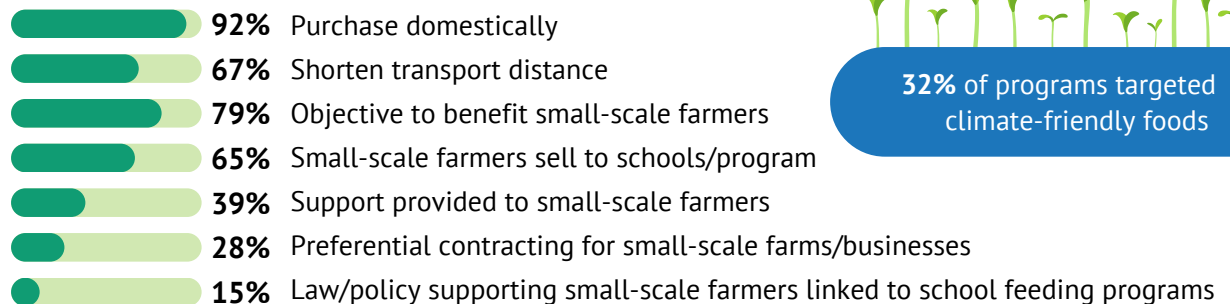
Program Approaches to Prevent or Mitigate Overweight/Obesity

- 76%** of programs incorporated food and nutrition education
- 60%** of programs incorporated health education
- 52%** of programs had nutritional requirements for food baskets

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) Indicators

HGSF enhances food diversity and strengthens local food systems.

54% of programs in South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific **exhibited 4 or more HGSF indicators**, compared to the **global average of 47%**.



%= Share of programs



32% of programs targeted climate-friendly foods

Data collected through the 2024 Global Survey of School Meal Programs© on the school year beginning in 2022. For more information, visit www.gcnf.org.

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