



XIX<sup>th</sup>  
**GLOBAL CHILD  
NUTRITION FORUM**  
• MONTREAL 2017 •

global child nutrition  
FOUNDATION



## The XIX Global Child Nutrition Forum

Bridge to Sustainable Development through School Meal Programs:  
Engaging Local, National, Regional, and Global Communities

### Communiqué

The nineteenth Forum was organized by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation in partnership with the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger, and the Breakfast Club of Canada, with support from partners, experts from governments and non-government organizations, UN agencies, civil society, academics, researchers, private sector, media and other organizations.

The Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) brought together 250 participants (60 per cent women) from 59 countries, including 1 First Lady, 1 Deputy Prime Minister, 5 Ministers and 2 Vice-Ministers, members of parliaments and representatives from the African Union. The Forum gathered government representatives, practitioners and community members from national, provincial and municipal levels, including sectors such as education, agriculture, health, social protection, planning and finance.

The present Communiqué recalls the theme of the XVIII Forum, which was “Building powerful and durable national school meal programs”.

The Forum acknowledges that school meal programs contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 17<sup>1</sup>, and emphasizes the need for such programs to be linked to international, continental and national development agendas, including the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

The Forum acknowledges the need for multi-sectoral approaches and efforts by government and non-government organizations, development partners, UN agencies, civil society, academics, researchers, private sector, media and other organizations.

The Forum praises the African Union for launching the Implementation Cluster on School Feeding under its Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and acknowledges the importance of global and regional networks such as the Pan-African Network for School Feeding and Nutrition; the MENA Regional Initiative on School Meals and Social Protection; the Latin America and Caribbean, South Asian, and South-East Asian School Feeding networks; and the global Scaling Up Nutrition network. The Forum further underlines the importance and invaluable evidence brought by studies such as the *African Union Study on Sustainable School Feeding in Africa based on local production (Home-Grown School Feeding, or HGSF)*, the *WFP study on Nutrition-sensitive School Meal Programs in Latin America* and other relevant studies.

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<sup>1</sup> SDGs 1: No Poverty; 2: Zero Hunger; 3: Good Health and Well-Being; 4: Education; 5: Gender Equality; 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; 10: Reduce Inequalities; 17: Partnerships for the Goals. For more information see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>



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The nineteenth Global Child Nutrition Forum **recognizes** that:

1. Governments should consider food as a basic human right;
2. Governments are called upon to play a key role to ensure this right;
3. Strong political will, leadership and ownership from governments are required to assure food and nutrition security to all children, adolescents and youth<sup>2</sup> and for integrated and sustainable school meal programs;
4. School meal programs should be integrated in the national development agendas as well as in national legal frameworks, policies and programs such as education, food and nutrition security, social protection, health, nutrition and agriculture;
5. School meal programs promote gender equity and equality;
6. School meal programs and child, adolescent and youth nutrition should be incorporated into and become a priority in national budgets;
7. Innovative financing strategies are needed to support school meal programs;
8. Adequate and transparent institutional capacity and accountability are required among governments and implementing partners at all levels for effective delivery of school meal programs;
9. Integrated and sustainable school meal programs, especially home-grown school meals, are a sound investment in human capital. They are an effective way of providing food and nutrition to children, adolescents and youth, with multiple benefits in education, health, poverty reduction, community and socioeconomic development;
10. A strong multi-sectoral approach, coordination and good governance are needed to ensure accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of school meal programs;
11. Public-Private Partnerships have great potential and responsibility to strengthen the school meal programs;
12. Early Childhood Development through Pre-Primary schools should be included in the design of school meal programs;
13. School meal programs should incorporate food and nutrition education;
14. School meal programs are more effective when they are evidence-based and able to continuously translate knowledge into implementation;
15. Effective knowledge-sharing platforms through local, regional and global cross-learning exchange programs and media are of utmost importance to strengthen school meal programs;
16. South-South cooperation is an effective means to strengthen school meal programs;
17. It is important to give special attention to school meal programs in conflict and post conflict contexts.

The Forum **recommends** that:

1. Governments develop or improve existing legal frameworks for social and human capital investment and social responsibility from the private sector for school meal programs;

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>, United Nations definition of Youth



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2. Participants be champions and advocate for the implementation of school meal programs;
3. Governments integrate school meal programs into national policies, strategies and plans;
4. Gender considerations should be mainstreamed in the design and implementation of school meal programs;
5. National budgets provide sufficient resources to school meal programs;
6. School meal program actors and partners identify entry points of interest to develop a nutrition-sensitive approach to effectively address the nutrition needs of the target population;
7. School meal programs adopt climate-smart and environmentally-friendly practices and strategies for long-term sustainability;
8. Robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that provide regular feedback loops be developed and implemented;
9. Stakeholders develop communication and media strategies as part of the implementation of school meal programs;
10. Communication and coordination among partners take place through existing national, regional and global networks;
11. Special attention be paid to school meal programs in countries in conflict and post conflict;
12. The participating countries translate the recommendations of this communique into action plans, as appropriate and relevant in their respective country contexts, and report on their progress in next year's Forum.