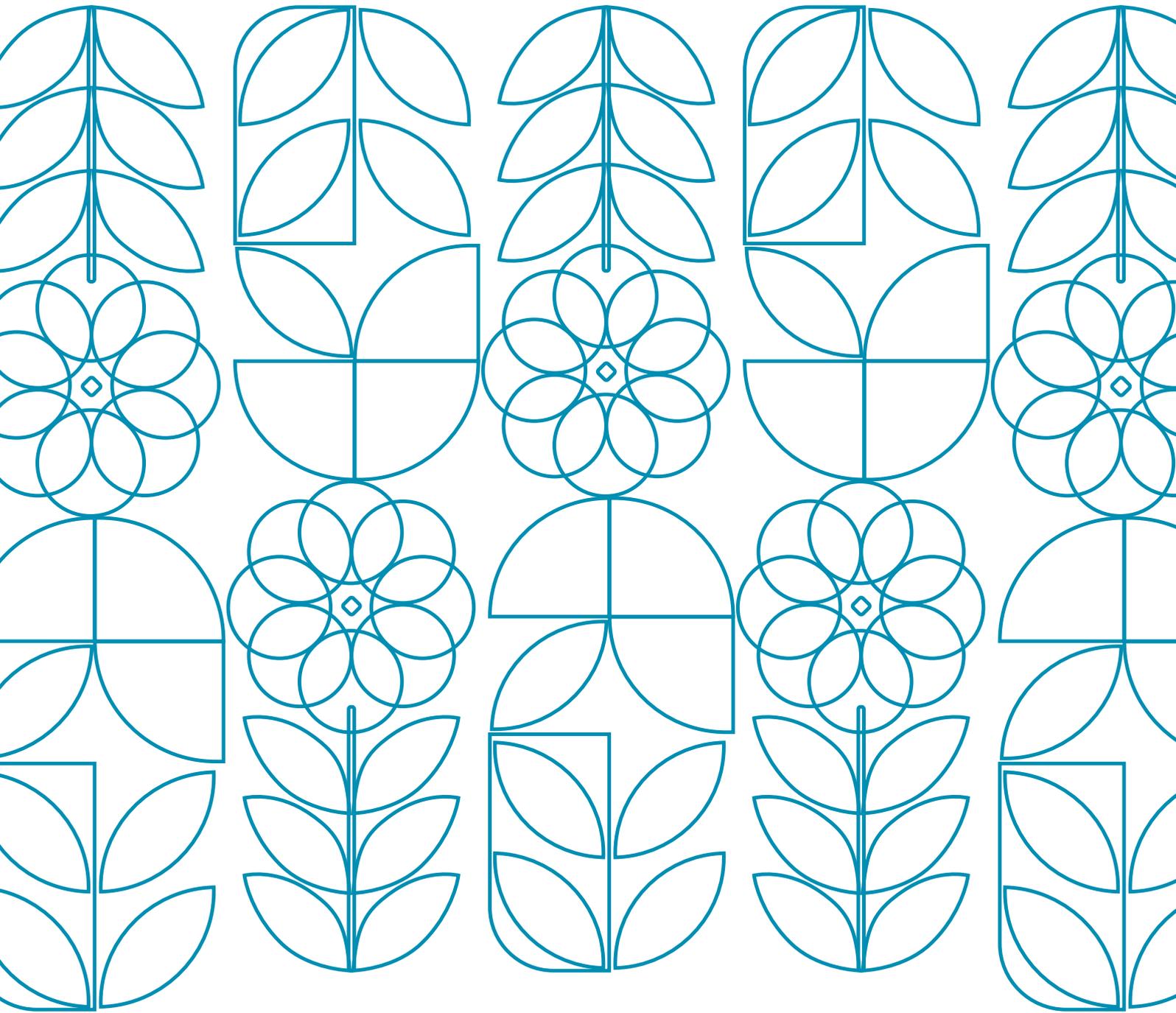


Seeds for **Tomorrow**

Monitoring and Evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme





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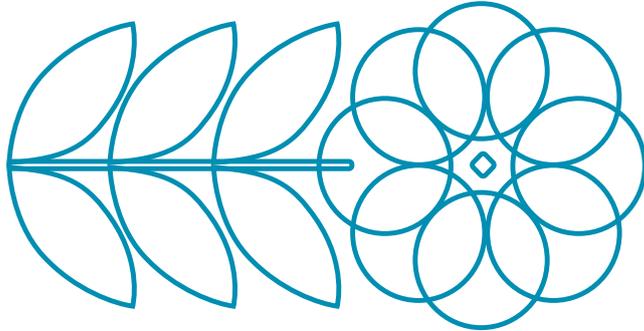
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Index

Introduction	5
1 What is Monitoring and Evaluation?	6
2 Monitoring and Evaluation in the PNAE	7
3 The PNAE Logical Framework	9
Activities	10
Results	10
Impacts	11
4 Mapping and selection of indicators	13
Indicators	13
Sources of verification	14
Assumptions	14
5 Conclusion	16
6 Bibliography	16

Introduction

Ensuring food and nutrition security and strengthening family farming are key challenges for sustainable development in the Republic of Congo. As food demand rises and the need to promote local production becomes more urgent, effective public policies and strategic initiatives are crucial to expand small farmers' market access and enhance community nutrition.

The project ***“Enhancing family farmers’ access to local markets in the Republic of Congo through South-South Cooperation”*** is a joint effort between the India, Brazil and South Africa Fund to Fight Hunger and Poverty (IBSA Fund), the governments of the Republic of Congo and Brazil, and the World Food Programme (WFP) **to support the implementation of home-grown school feeding in the Republic of Congo.**

Strengthening family farming and integrating small producers into institutional markets are challenges for **food and nutritional security and rural development in the Republic of Congo.** To support this process, the Congolese government has identified the need to learn from and adapt the successful experiences of other countries, such as Brazil, where robust public policies have stimulated the productive inclusion of family farmers and the provision of social programmes such as school meals.

This series of manuals is intended to inform decision-makers and public sector officials about the main Brazilian agricultural policies aimed at family farming, including institutional purchasing mechanisms, access to rural credit, technical assistance and agricultural research. It provides a detailed overview of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system of the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), managed by the National Fund for Education Development (FNDE), an autonomous body linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC).

By sharing these lessons, this material aims to contribute to the development of effective strategies in the Republic of Congo, to strengthen institutions and promote policies that improve family farmers' access to local markets.

Enjoy reading!



1

What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

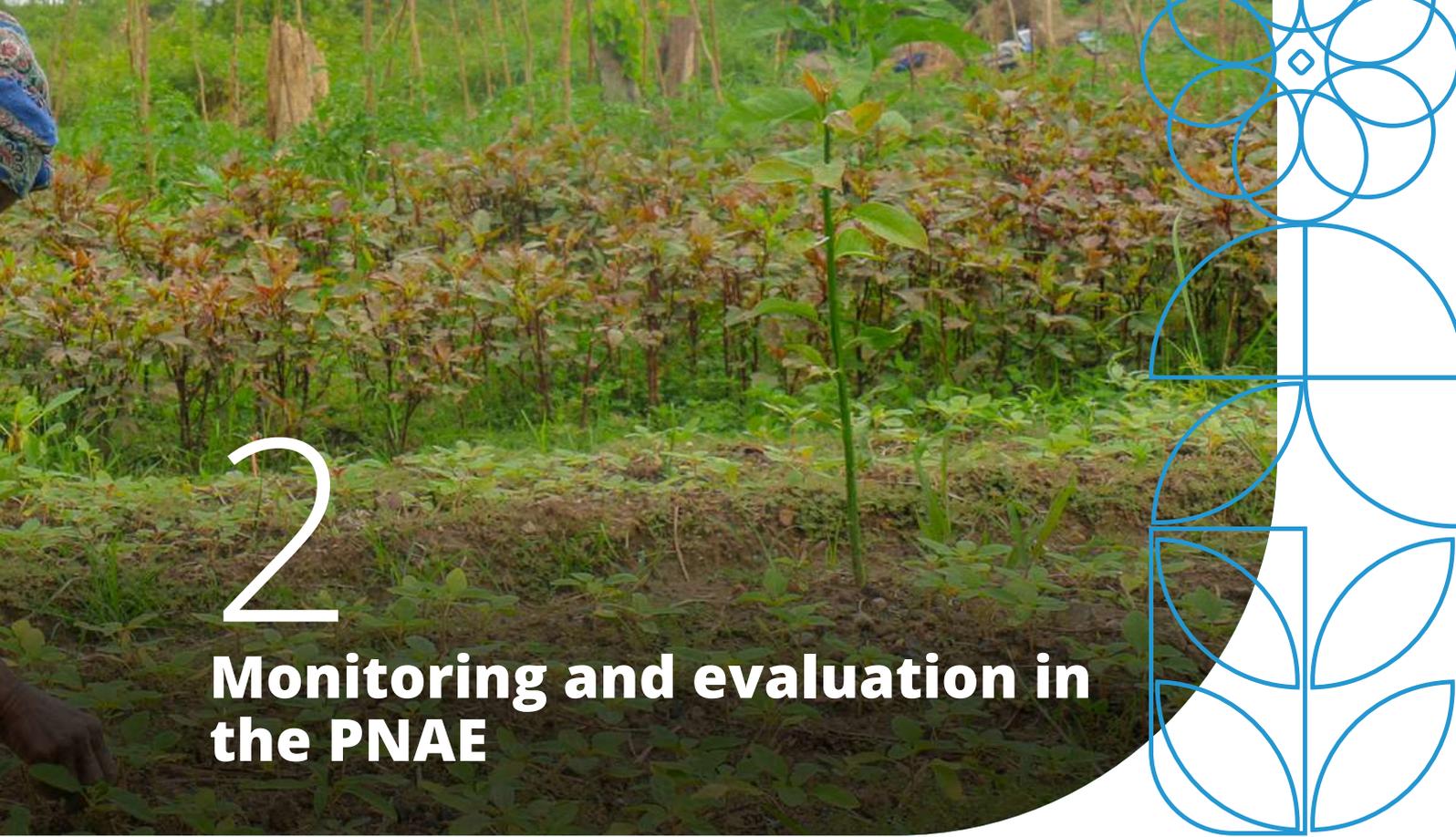
Monitoring and evaluation are fundamental to policy effectiveness, as they make it possible to track their implementation, measure their impact, and adjust strategies to better serve the population. While monitoring aims to help managers control key processes and decision-making to promote timely corrective actions without compromising the desired outcome, evaluation judges aspects of the intervention in relation to a benchmark or parameter.

Together, monitoring and evaluation ensure evidence-based decision-making, **enable resources to be allocated efficiently, increase transparency and accountability, and allow shortcomings to be corrected and continuous improvement to take place.**

They also contribute to the sustainability of policies, facilitate their continuity and expansion, and enable learning and replication of good practices.

In the case of school feeding programmes, a strong monitoring and evaluation system ensures the proper use of resources, the nutritional quality of meals and the monitoring of impacts on health and school performance (FAO & WFP, 2018).

When these programmes are structured around local production, the monitoring process makes it possible to assess not only the effects on education, nutrition and social protection, but also the impact on the local economy, ensuring that small farmers have access to a stable market and that their families and communities benefit from the nutritional and productive results generated by the initiative.



2

Monitoring and evaluation in the PNAE

The National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) is rooted in the early 1940s. In the following decade, the School Meals Campaign (Campanha de Merenda Escolar – CME), linked to the Ministry of Education and supported by international organisations such as the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), had a charity-like nature and aimed to meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable students. The National School Feeding Campaign (Campanha Nacional de Alimentação Escolar – CNAE), launched in 1965, introduced full meals and incentives for local food production.

The 1988 Federal Constitution guaranteed the right to school meals and extended social participation, which was reinforced in 1994 by the institutionalization of the School Feeding Councils (Conselho de Alimentação Escolar – CAE), responsible for supervising and monitoring local implementation of the PNAE. In the same year, the decentralization of resources to States, Federal District and municipalities was secured, and since 1998 these transfers have occurred without the need for agreements or similar instruments.

In 2006, the **presence of nutritionists** with technical responsibility over PNAE menus became mandatory, which has considerably improved the programme’s quality.

Another step in PNAE’s development was consolidated by law 11,947/2009, which stipulates that at least 30% of FNDE financial resources must be invested in the purchase of family farming products. In addition, this legislation also guaranteed coverage for the entire public basic education network and included food and nutrition education (FNE) in school curricula. This set of actions has consolidated PNAE as a global benchmark for inclusive and sustainable school feeding policies.

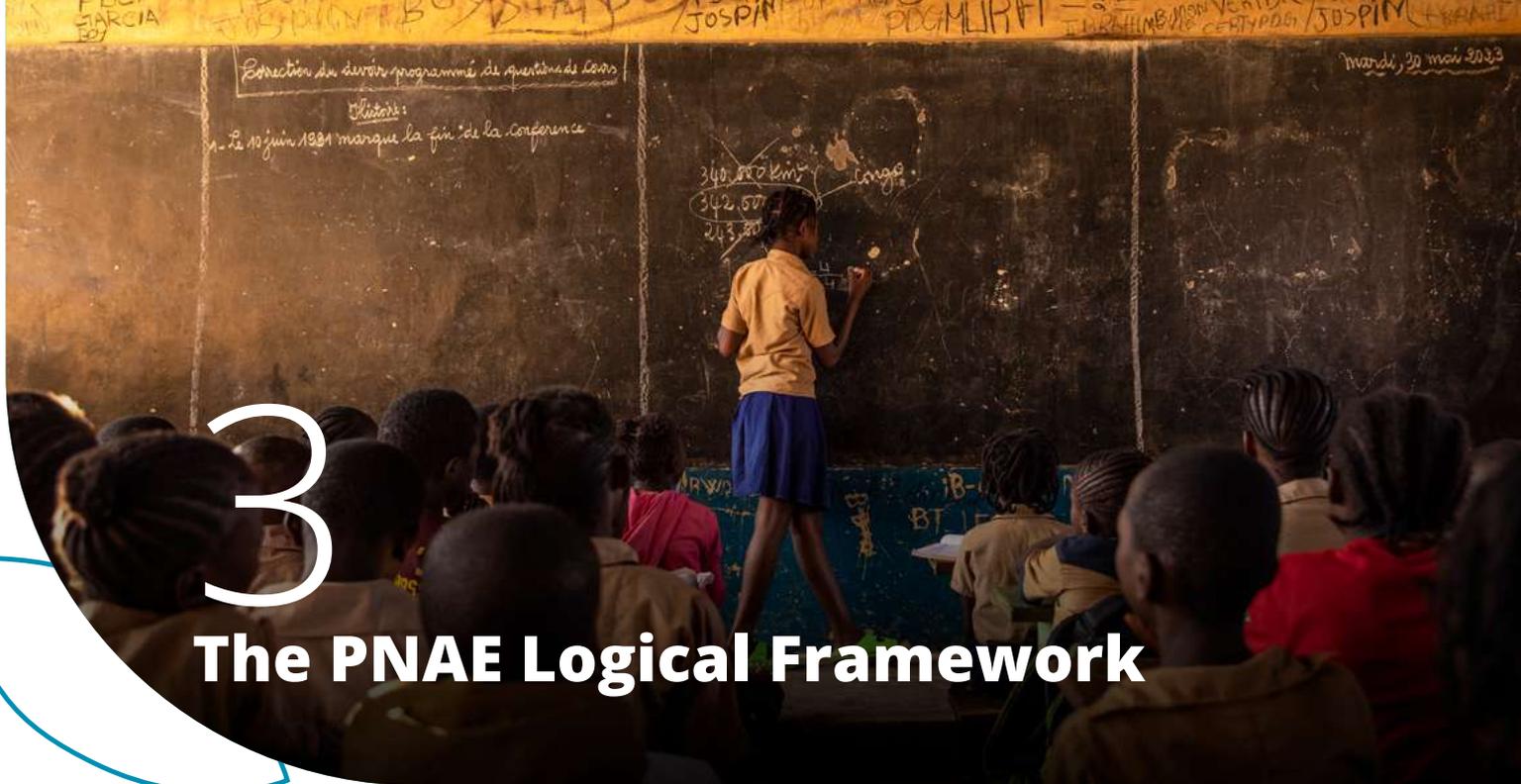
More recently, the federal government passed legislation that prioritises formal and informal groups of women family farmers when purchasing food for PNAE. It also reduced the limit on processed and ultra-processed foods in state schools.

In order to guarantee the operation of a programme as vast as PNAE, the FNDE (which is responsible for the complementary transfer of financial resources from the federal government to the programme's executing entities (States, Federal District, municipalities and federal schools) has developed a monitoring and evaluation structure adapted to the programme's needs.

To achieve this, FNDE uses two types of instruments:

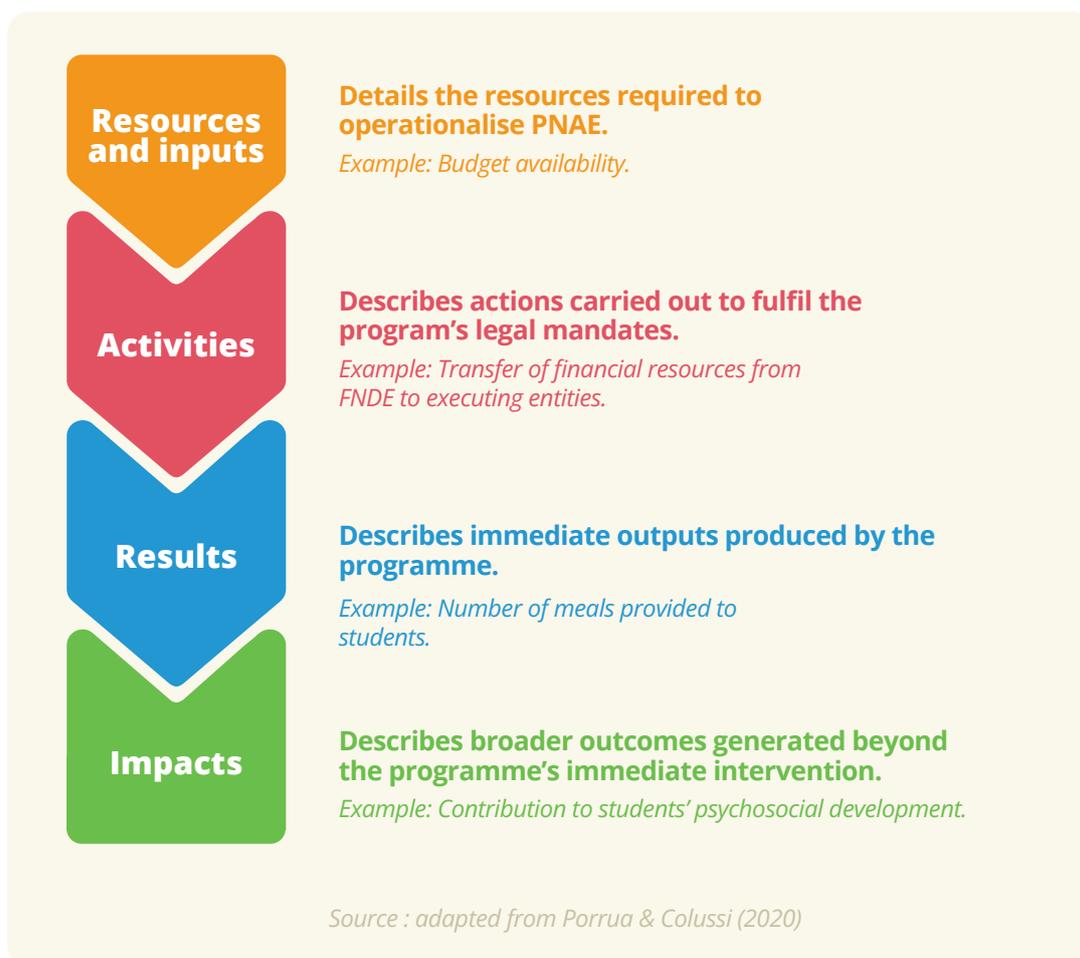
- 1 Logical framework**, which defines the steps to be taken to solve the problem: identify inputs, processes and activities to define results and impacts.
- 2 Mapping and selection of indicators** to measure progress in programme implementation.





The PNAE Logical Framework

The logical framework of the PNAE is made up of resources and inputs, activities, results and impacts. Each of these aspects is explained in the section below.



Resources and inputs

The inputs of a school feeding programme such as PNAE are the resources needed to implement it, including:



Financial, in the form of a budget available to buy food;



Physical, through provision of equipment, materials and facilities for food preparation; and



Human resources, by hiring and training specialist professionals, such as nutritionists and cooks, who are needed to plan and prepare meals.

Activities

Activities are actions and services carried out during PNAE's operationalisation. These activities may be:

- 1 Direct activities**, which directly affect PNAE beneficiaries, such as food preparation and food and nutrition education (FNE) activities; and
- 2 Indirect activities**, necessary to ensure that PNAE is implemented as planned, such as training cooks, management tasks and provision of facilities.

Inputs must correspond to the performance of each activity. For example, the purchase of food and kitchen equipment are necessary inputs to prepare meals that will be served to students.

Results

PNAE results are the short-term changes observed in the target audience (students) as a result of school feeding, such as a **reduction in school dropouts, an increase in school attendance, improved school performance**, etc.

In general, results must be observable and measurable, as they represent the direct effects of the intervention on beneficiaries. The definition of preliminary results and, above all, quantitative targets for school meals is essential for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.

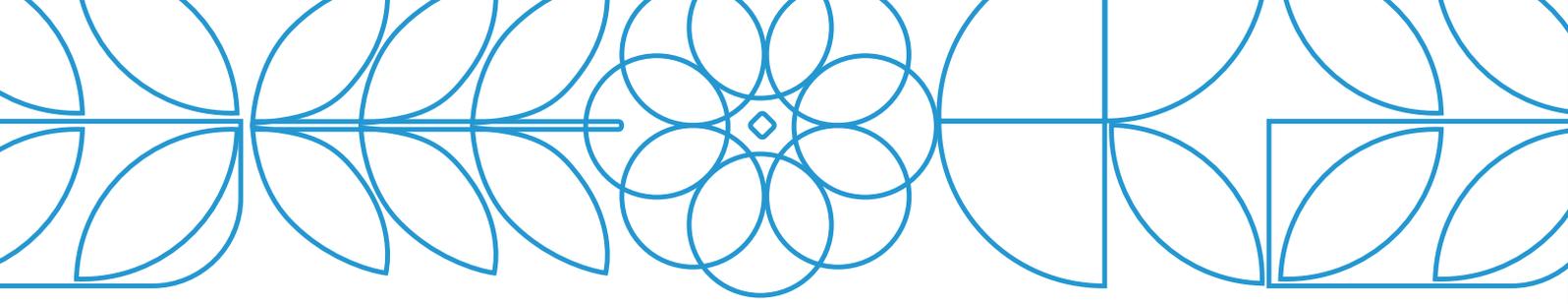
Impact

PNAE's impact is the long-term changes promoted for school feeding beneficiaries, such as improved psychosocial development and development of healthy eating habits. These are PNAE's "results of the results", i.e. the consequences of results directly attributed to school feeding.

The table below presents an extract from the PNAE logical framework for two dimensions:

- 1 Organisational dimension**, which includes the part of the logical framework relating to FNDE's resources.
- 2 Technical-operational dimension**, which includes the part of the logical framework relating to executing entities' tasks.





	Resources and supplies	Activities	Results	Impacts
Organisational dimension	<p>Providing financial resources</p> <hr/> <p>Providing technical advice</p> <hr/> <p>Establishing general rules of execution</p> <hr/> <p>Promoting human resources training</p> <hr/> <p>Promoting coordination between federal bodies</p>	<p>Providing resources</p> <hr/> <p>Checking notices received (e.g. CAE)</p> <hr/> <p>Drawing up monitoring and evaluation protocols</p> <hr/> <p>Promoting training courses for professionals</p> <hr/> <p>Promoting meetings between organisations at federal level</p>	<p>Universal service</p> <hr/> <p>Supported executing entities</p> <hr/> <p>Qualified professionals</p> <hr/> <p>Strengthened food and nutrition security policies</p>	<p>Increased biopsychosocial development of students</p> <hr/> <p>Improved school results</p> <hr/> <p>Promoted food and nutrition security</p>
Technical dimension	<p>Providing resources and contributions (also for the CAE)</p> <hr/> <p>Planning to buy products from family farming</p>	<p>Equipping kitchens</p> <hr/> <p>Training school cooks</p> <hr/> <p>Equipping CAEs</p> <hr/> <p>Mapping production</p> <hr/> <p>Drawing up public calls for the purchase of family farming products</p>	<p>Menus adapted to local eating habits</p> <hr/> <p>Meeting nutritional requirements on menus</p>	



4

Mapping and selection of indicators

Once the logical framework is finalised, the next step is to map and select indicators to measure PNAE results. These indicators are defined for each stage of the logical framework, along with their sources of verification and the assumptions required for measurement.

Indicators

Identifying indicators is crucial to achieving monitoring and evaluation objectives. They must meet SMART criteria:

S **Specific:** the indicator must be limited to what it is supposed to represent. Broad and generic indicators should be avoided.

M **Measurable:** something that can be measured and scaled, such as data, whether a value or an occurrence.

A **Achievable:** the indicator must be expressed in terms of data within the organisation's reach and possible to obtain given the resources available (human, material, financial, technological).

R **Relevant:** the indicator must relate to the problem, to the stage in the monitoring process (resources and inputs, activities, results, impacts) and be sufficiently representative of what it aims to express.

T **Time-bound:** the indicator must provide information at the right time and on a regular basis, without interruption.

Sources of verification

Verification sources are documents used to confirm logical framework indicators. Sources of verification may include:

- 1** Central registries (e.g. financial transfers from the federal government to school feeding executing execution);
- 2** Spreadsheets recording the input and output of foodstuffs, which monitor school supplies; and
- 3** Surveys and interviews with farmers and schools to assess the economic and operational impact of the programme.

Assumptions

Assumptions are conditions that must remain favourable for the programme to achieve its objectives. These are factors which, although not directly under control of the programme management, influence its implementation and results.

In the case of a school meals programme based on local purchases, here are a few hypotheses:

- 1 Local production capacity:** local agriculture can supply food in sufficient quantity and quality;
- 2 Logistics infrastructure:** adequate transport and storage conditions are in place to avoid waste and ensure timely deliveries;
- 3 Government support and ongoing funding:** financial resources are made available in a timely manner for the purchase of food; and
- 4 Buy-in from suppliers and schools:** farmers are actively involved in public procurement and schools are ready to receive and use food as planned.

The table below gives an extract of indicators used for PNAE. It is recommended to establish indicators and their sources of verification and assumptions for each of the 4 aspects of the logical framework presented above (inputs and resources, activities, results and impacts).

The table below focuses on a few indicators for each of the four sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimensions	Indicator name	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Resources and supplies	Amount of budget used to purchase kitchen equipment <hr/> Budget used for training school cooks <hr/> Amount of budget used to purchase equipment for the CAE	Executing entity's financial report	Budget availability within executing entities
Activities	Quantity of kitchen equipment purchased <hr/> Number of cooks trained <hr/> Type and quantity of equipment made available to the CAE	Reports from executing entities and reports of visits to executing entities <hr/> Reports from executing entities <hr/> Reports from executing entities and reports of visits to executing entities	Budget available from executing entities <hr/> Availability of qualified training staff <hr/> Availability of materials
Results	Number of menus prepared each year	Reports from executing entities and reports of visits to executing entities.	Presence of a nutritionist in the executing entity
Impacts	Food and nutritional security	Specific survey to collect data on the food and nutritional security of school children	Availability of budget and qualified staff to carry out the research

The logical framework and indicator framework tables present the main components of PNAE's monitoring and evaluation strategy. This strategy is based on theoretical methods used in monitoring and evaluation of policies throughout the world.

The strategy presented can be used and adapted to monitor and evaluate other school feeding programmes based on local food purchases.

5 Conclusion

The implementation of a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is essential to ensure transparency, effectiveness, and continuous improvement of school feeding policies. The PNAE demonstrates that a structured model, based on clear indicators, audit mechanisms and social participation, can guarantee sound management of resources, increase the positive impact on student nutrition, and strengthen family farming.

This manual presented the main components of PNAE 's monitoring and evaluation system, including the logical framework and definition of indicators. These elements make it possible to monitor the programme's implementation programme at different levels, from planning activities to evaluating their social and economic impact.

For the Republic of Congo, adapting these tools can represent a step forward in structuring school feeding policies based on local purchases. Building institutional capacity, adopting monitoring indicators, and liaising government, civil society and productive sector are some of the factors the contribute to the sustainability and expansion of school feeding in the country.

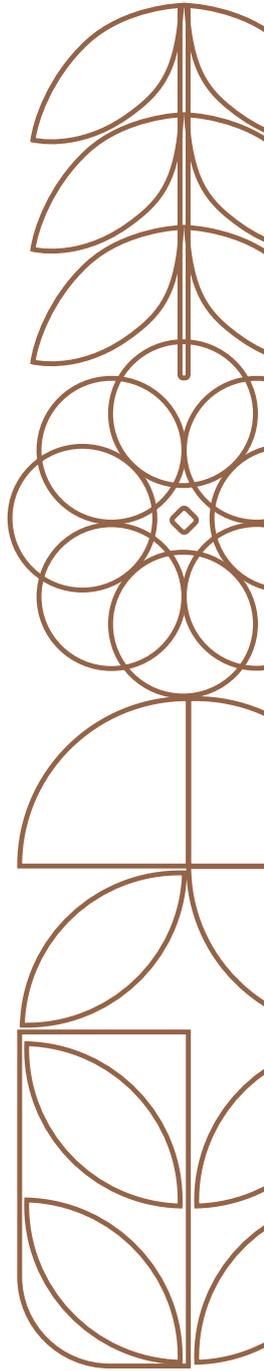
The aim of this manual is to serve as a technical resource to support managers and public decision-makers, helping them to build a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable school meals system.

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