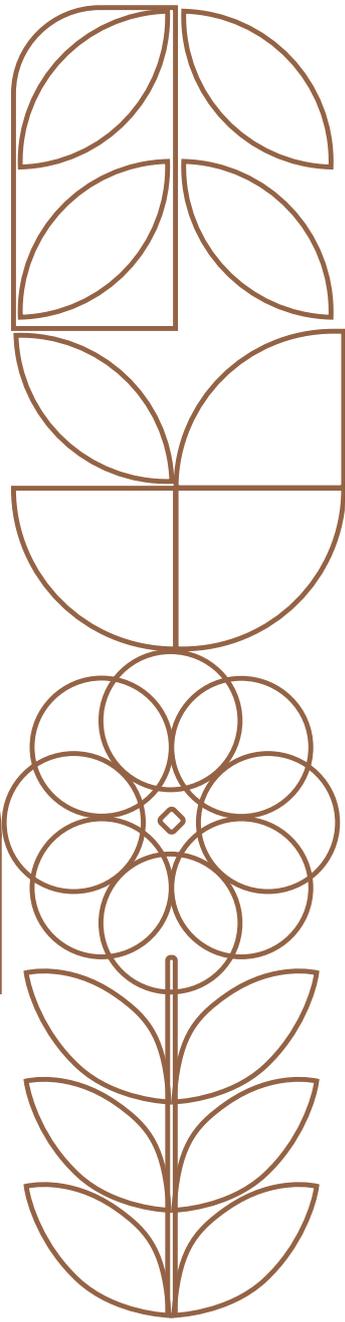
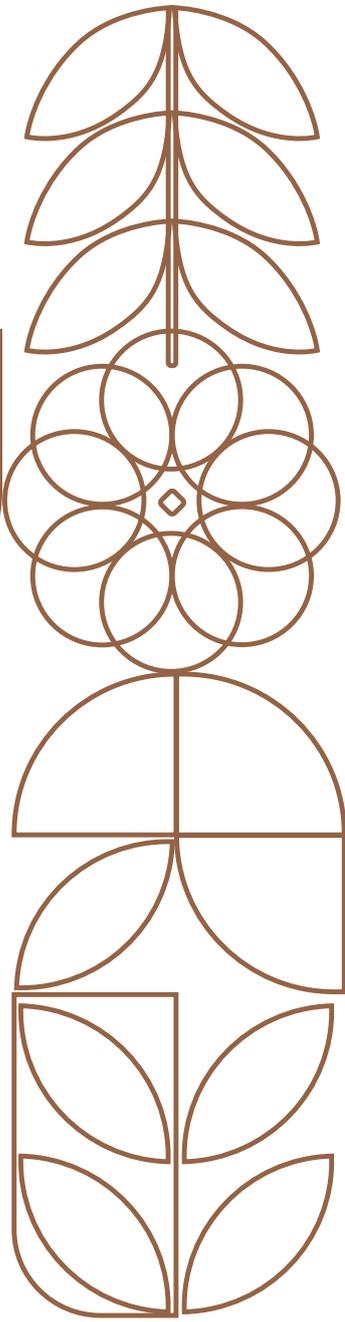
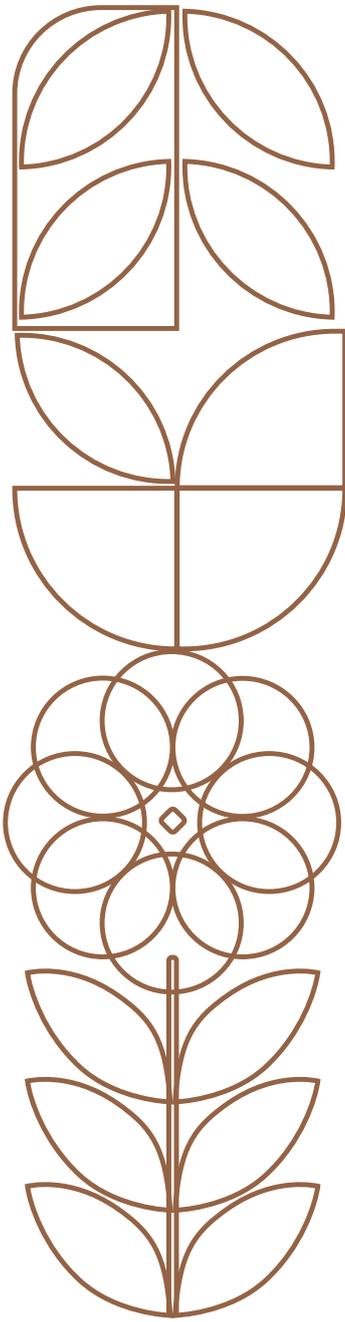


Seeds for **Tomorrow**

# Social Control in Brazil's School Feeding Programme





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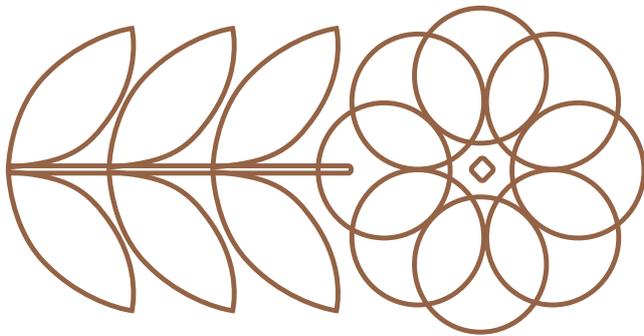
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# Introduction

Promoting food and nutrition security and strengthening family farming are major challenges for sustainable development in the Republic of Congo. In a context marked by growing food demand and the need to promote local production, effective public policies and strategic initiatives are essential to ensure small producers' access to markets and improve the nutrition of the population.

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-scale producers into institutional markets are challenges for **food 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.

This manual is intended for public sector managers and employees to learn how the School Feeding Council (CAE) works and its role in the oversight and social control of Brazil's National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). The publication explains how monitoring and social participation promote transparency, community empowerment, democratic management, efficient use of resources and continuous improvement of the programme.

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

**Enjoy reading!**



# What is oversight?

The oversight of any public programme consists of ensuring it is implemented in accordance with current legislation, with standards of appropriate and transparent use of resources, and with the quality of services it provides.

Oversight differs from monitoring and evaluation in its objectives: while monitoring and evaluation are based on periodic and systematic analyses of programme results with the goal of improving the programme, oversight aims to verify that the programme is being implemented in accordance with established standards.



**Monitoring and evaluation**  
Analyses results and impacts;  
collects information for  
improvement



**Oversight**  
Verifies that implementation  
complies with current standards.



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# 2

## Oversight through social participation in public policies in Brazil

In Brazil, overseeing policies is a responsibility of both the public sector, as the main actor implementing these policies, and civil society. The public sector exercises this oversight through the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Federal Court of Auditors, and other bodies; civil society participates through mechanisms of social engagement and monitoring.

The 1988 Constitution, which enshrined the involvement of society in public affairs, guaranteed the process of social participation and established official bodies to gather opinions from the population and identify its interests and expectations. In short, **it created conducive conditions for effective social participation.**

Social participation has become such a central element of Brazilian democracy that, in 2014, a decree was enacted to establish the National Policy for Social Participation (PNPS) and the National System for Social Participation (SNPS). These mechanisms aim to encourage social involvement in the development, implementation and monitoring of public policies by ensuring the existence of permanent spaces for dialogue.

Formal and informal spaces have thus been created to promote exchange between the government and Brazilian society. These include public policy management councils, social control councils, national conferences, public consultations or hearings, forums or round tables, mediation mechanisms, and tools that enable the dissemination of information in real time via the Internet such as web portals, websites and social networks.

Social participation, public policies, government programmes, public management councils and social control are therefore closely linked concepts. Brazil now has several national councils dedicated to public policy management and social control.

# 3

## National School Feeding Programme (PNAE)



The National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) is a Brazilian government initiative that aims to contribute to students' growth, biopsychosocial development, learning, academic performance, and promotion of healthy eating habits through food and nutrition education and the provision of meals that meet their nutritional needs during the school period.

Managed by the National Fund for Education Development (FNDE), an autonomous body of the Ministry of Education, the programme sets nutritional guidelines for school meals and promotes support for sustainable development. The law mandates that at least 30% of the funds transferred by the federal government to states and municipalities for the national school feeding programme must be used to purchase food directly from family farmers.

## Responsible organisations

- 1 National Fund for Education Development (FNDE)**

Responsible for the national management of PNAE. FNDE transfers complementary federal funds to states, municipalities, and federal schools for school meals.
- 2 Executing entities (state and municipal education secretariats and federal schools)**

Responsible for implementing the programme, they manage the financial resources they receive from FNDE and contribute to the programme with their own resources.
- 3 School Feeding Councils (CAE)**

Supervise the implementation of the PNAE at the local level, monitor food purchases (including those from family farmers), ensure that adequate and nutritious menus are served as planned to students, and report to FNDE about the executing entities' accountability.
- 4 Management Committee**

The Management Committee was re-established to develop specific inter-ministerial actions to qualify and increase the percentage of food purchased directly from family farmers in order to meet the requirements of the school feeding menu. It brings together members from various ministries and government agencies, such as FNDE, the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Family Farming, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply, the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and the Fight against Hunger, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples, the Ministry of Racial Equality and the National Supply Company, among others.
- 5 Advisory Group**

A collegiate body that supports the improvement of the partnership between school feeding and family farming. It is composed of representatives from civil society, such as farmers' associations, extractivists, quilombolas, indigenous peoples, cooperatives and school feeding advisers.



# 4

## Social participation in the PNAE

Social participation is a mechanism for **society to monitor and influence government policy actions**, whether to verify the quality of implementation, monitor results or stimulate public policy.

In Brazil, the National School Feeding Programme institutionalizes social participation in the School Feeding Council (CAE), which plays a fundamental role in overseeing and ensuring transparency in the implementation of the programme.

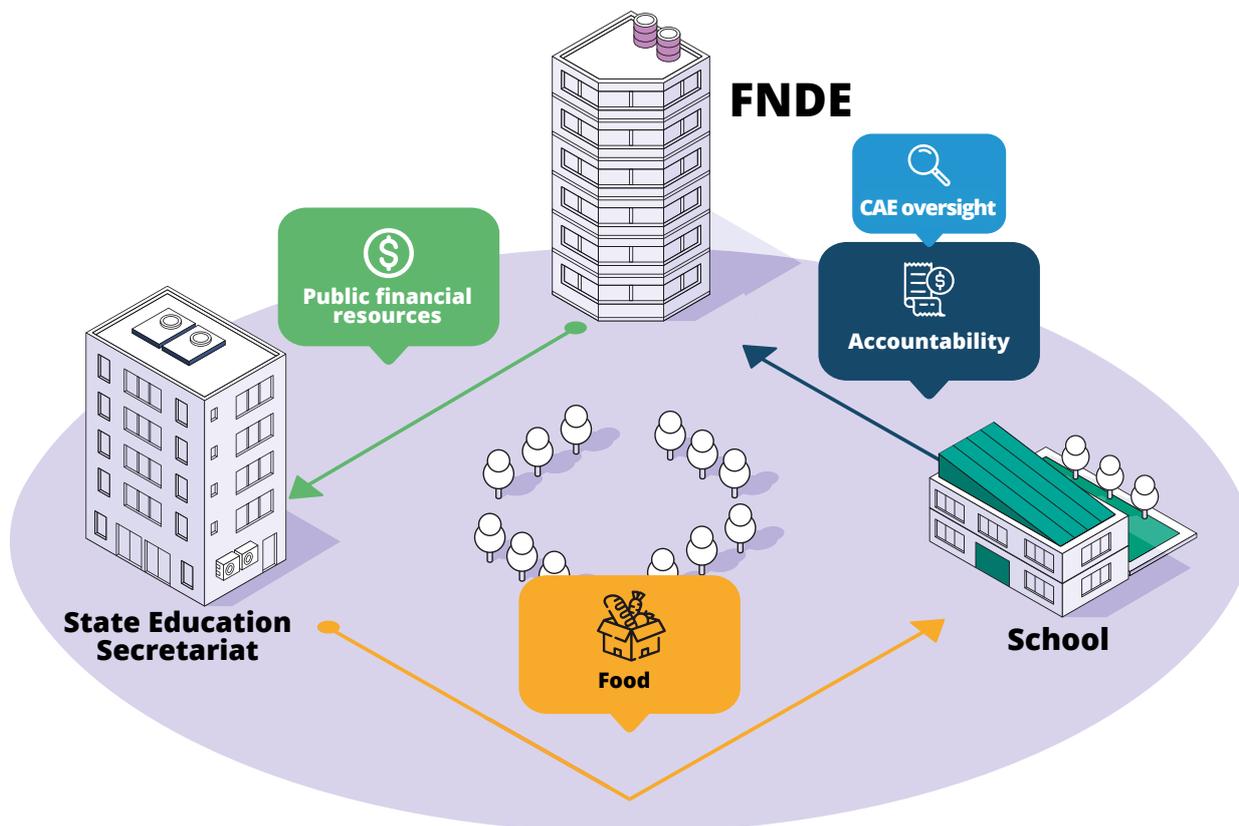
### What are School Feeding Councils?

School Feeding Councils (CAEs) were created in 1994 as part of the decentralisation of the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). With the transfer of programme implementation to states and municipalities – now called executing entities – management began to move closer to communities. This new configuration encouraged the participation of local actors and required social control mechanisms, which led to the creation of CAEs. CAEs are permanent, deliberative, and consultative collegiate oversight bodies. Each state, municipality and federal district has its own CAE. This council is responsible for overseeing the use of FNDE funding and the implementation of the PNAE within its jurisdiction.

In addition to overseeing the programme's financial aspects, CAEs monitor various aspects of PNAE's implementation throughout the school year, such as the quality of food offered to students, hygiene and sanitation conditions in schools, and links with other actors such as family farmers and local producers.

CAEs are so important that states, municipalities, and the Federal District only receive school feeding funds if a CAE is in place in the territory under their jurisdiction. Each state or municipality must have its own council. The absence or inactivity of the CAE can lead to FNDE suspending financial transfers.

### Scope of activities of the CAE



### CAE responsibilities in the context of their work



**Monitor and oversee the use of funds and PNAE implementation**

For example: visiting schools; monitoring the procurement process for school meals (biddings and public calls); analysing management documents (tenders for public procurement, menus, account reports).



**Analyse the PNAE management monitoring report**

For example: accessing relevant systems and analysing the Executing Entity's report on programme implementation (management report); discussing the report at a specific meeting attended by at least two-thirds of CAE full members; requesting additional information from management, if necessary.



**Issue a conclusive opinion**

For example: analyse the reports, check invoices and bank statements of payments for the purchase of school meals; issue a final opinion in specific systems (minimum 2 or 3 members present).



### **Report any irregularities to FNDE and other control bodies**

For example: report or denounce any irregularities found in the implementation of PNAE.



### **Provide information on PNAE implementation at FNDE's request**

For example: write reports on school visits; record minutes about decisions and guidelines adopted in CAE meetings.



### **Draft internal regulations (mandatory document)**

For example: validate rules at a specific meeting attended by at least two or three CAE members; draft or update internal rules



### **Prepare the action plan (mandatory document)**

For example: draw up the annual action plan before the start of the school year, set out the actions and costs; send the plan to the Executing Entity (EEx) to ensure that proposed actions are executed and the budget is planned.

## **Digital platform**

Social participation in the PNAE is not limited to the CAE. In addition to this council, the community also has ePNAE, an application developed to enable parents, students, teachers, nutritionists, and members of society to monitor and evaluate the quality of food offered in public schools.

ePNAE provides a wealth of essential information to ensure transparency. Through the platform, users can browse a map of their municipality, check their school or a school of interest, evaluate the food offered at a school, and add comments and photos to support the evaluation.

In addition, users have access to data such as reports from the executing entity, details about schools, the nutritionist in charge, and training conducted for the local School Feeding Council (CAE).



## CAE composition

Each CAE is composed of at least **seven full members and their alternates, totalling 14 members**, including executive power representatives, students, parents, education workers/ students, and civil organisations. The CAE composition establishes participation of at least:



2 representatives of education workers' and teachers' organisations



2 representatives of parents and/or guardians of students enrolled in the EEx's school network



1 representative appointed by the executive branch of the relevant federal entity



2 representatives appointed by civil society organisations (such as social movements, trade unions, associations, professional associations, etc.)



The work of the CAE is considered an unpaid public service (**CAE representatives are volunteers**), as it is the responsibility of CAE members to exercise social control and guarantee students' right to adequate and healthy school meals.

The voluntary and unpaid nature of the CAE can be a challenge for community involvement. However, as social participation in the programme is **a fundamental step towards citizenship, it is essential to encourage this participation.**

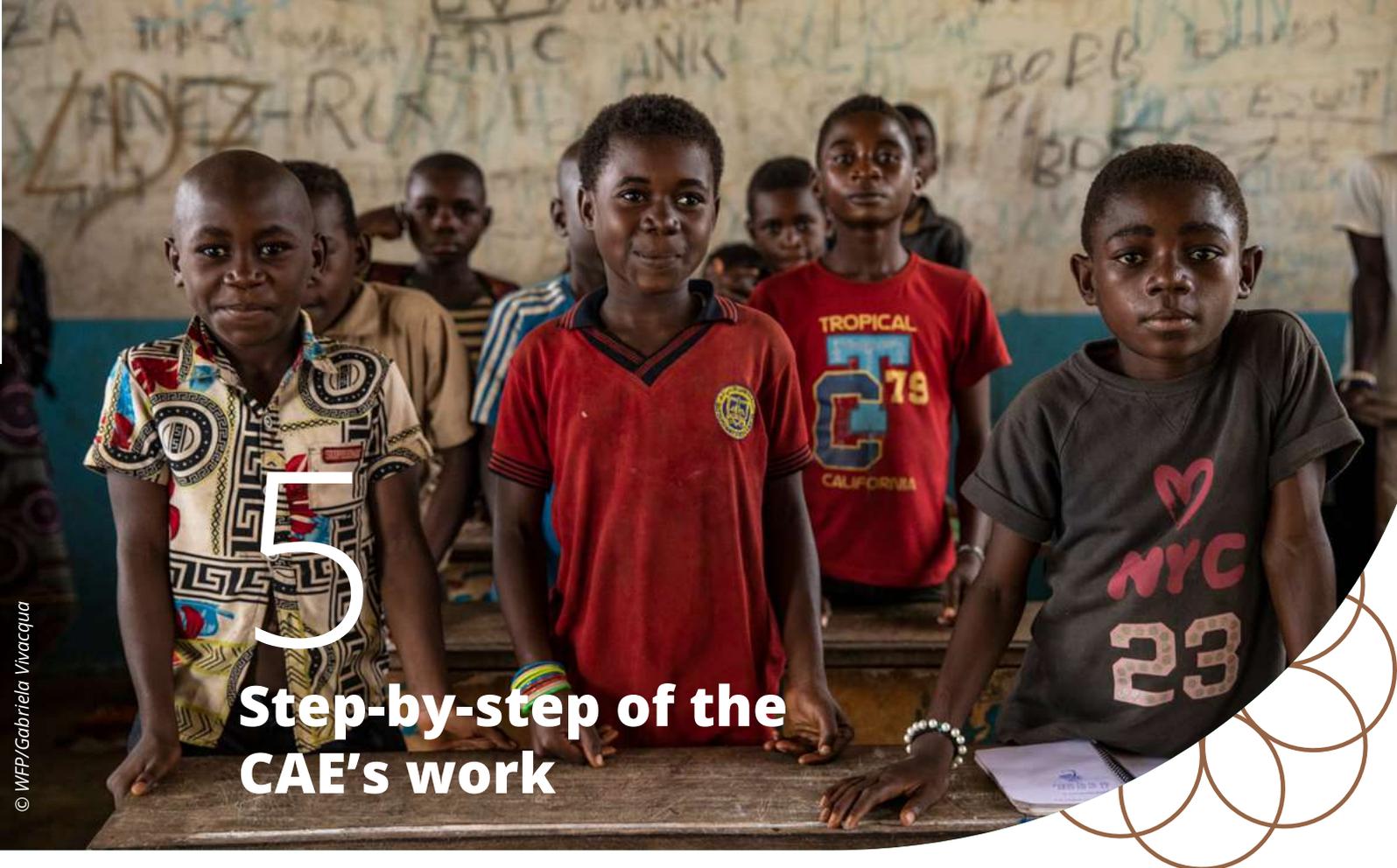
Municipalities can adopt non-monetary strategies to value and engage council members. In Brazil, FNDE established the CAE Award, which recognises councils that stand out for their performance and commitment.

Executing entities are required to provide the necessary infrastructure and equipment for the CAE to work. For example:

- 1 Provide rooms for meetings.
- 2 Provide transportation for school inspections and for regular or extraordinary meetings.
- 3 Provide means to prepare visit reports and render accounts (e.g. computer).
- 4 Provide human and financial resources to execute activities in accordance with the council's powers and responsibilities as indicated in the CAE action plan.

In addition, executing entities, in partnership with FNDE, must provide training for advisers (council members) on the implementation of the PNAE and publicise the CAE's activities through official EEx communication channels.





## Step-by-step of the CAE's work

A number of steps must be completed for the CAE to work:



### Step 1 Elect CAE members

The election of CAE members must follow democratic selection procedures and is held every four years, which is the council's term of office.

To do this, the municipality, state or federal district must mobilise organisations to send representatives of:

- Trade unions or teachers' associations
- Parent councils or boards of governors
- Student organisations
- Civil society organisations with an interest in food security, school feeding or rural development issues

The representative of the executive branch and his or her alternate must be appointed by the manager, with priority given to civil servants working in education or food and nutrition security. The guidelines also recommend that CAEs of executing entities whose school networks include Indigenous or Quilombola students include a representative of these communities among their members.



## Step 2 Develop action plan

The action plan is the document that establishes actions the CAE will execute during the school year as part of its role in implementing the PNAE at the local level.

The action plan is a simple document, but it must contain at least the following elements:

- Plan of activities for monitoring programme implementation: school visits, meeting dates, procedures for monitoring food supply processes, table for monitoring the receipt of food products, among other activities the council deems important.
- Schedule of activities to determine school visit days and council meeting dates.
- The person(s) responsible for activities
- Expenditure plan for the expenses necessary to carry out their duties, such as the cost of purchasing a computer, transport costs for visiting schools, etc.



## Step 3 Regular meetings

The frequency of CAE meetings must be specified in the action plan. The chairperson organises the agenda for each meeting. The EEx is responsible for supporting the CAE's work by providing a meeting place, filing cabinets, computer equipment, transportation for meetings and school visits, human resources for the CAE secretariat, and financial resources.

It is essential for the CAE to have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with the various actors involved in the programme in order to better understand how the PNAE works within the executing entity and to contribute to improving its implementation.

Interaction with nutritionists, rural technicians and managers enables the board to closely monitor actions, identify challenges and work together to continuously improve school meals.



#### Step 4 **School visits**

The CAE must monitor the programme's implementation by conducting visits to schools. These visits are essential to verify whether the food purchased is used in the preparation of school meals, whether it is of adequate quality, and whether meals are prepared and served under appropriate conditions.



As the CAE is made up of community members, they are not expected to have in-depth technical knowledge of food and nutrition, agricultural processes or other specialised subjects. This is why it is essential that the programme's legislation is clear about what needs to be monitored. In addition, the CAE must be able to rely on the support of other programme stakeholders, such as nutritionists, to dispel doubts and provide information and advice on specific issues.

In Brazil, the FNDE regularly organises training for the councils, either directly or with support from food and nutrition collaboration centres (CECANEs).

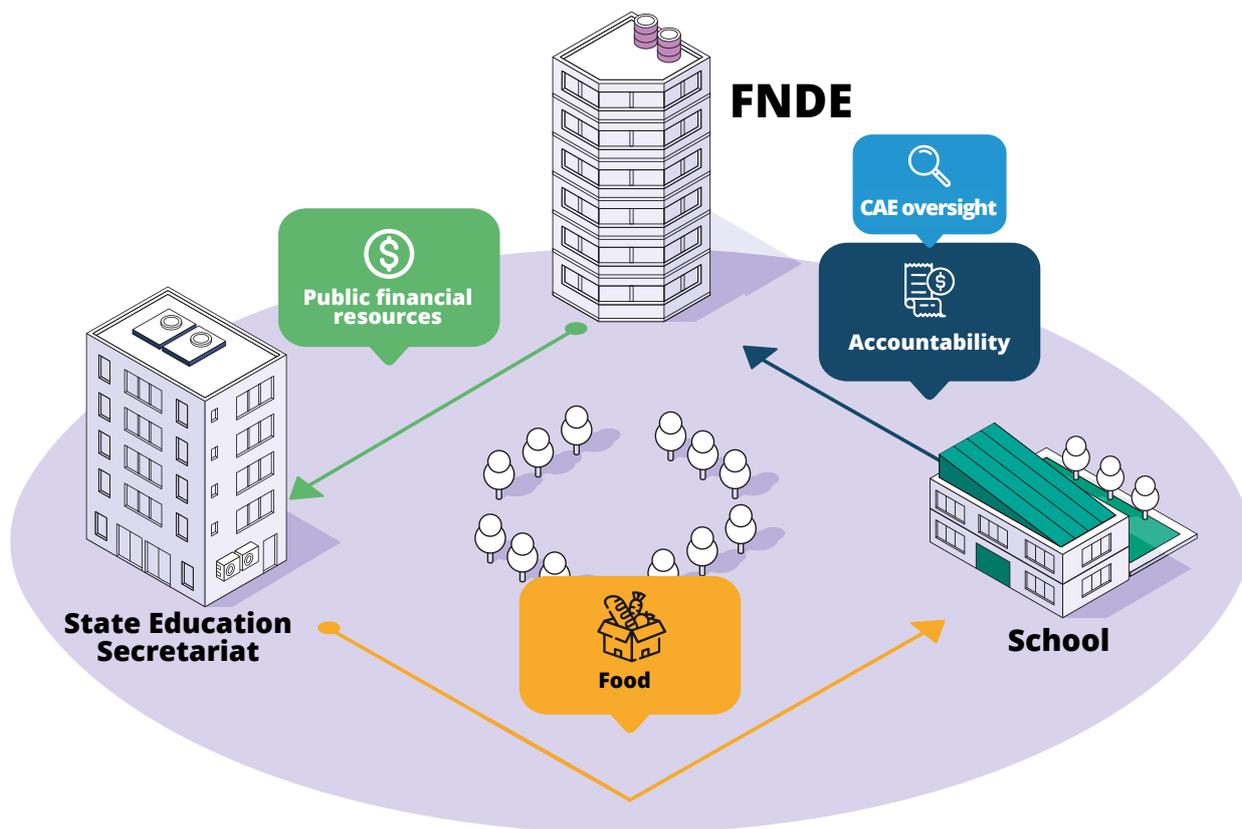
During their visits to schools, CAE advisers must observe the following points:

- Compliance with the menus established by the nutritionist
- School meal provision: meal preparation and distribution
- Food storage
- Hygiene conditions
- Food and nutrition education initiatives

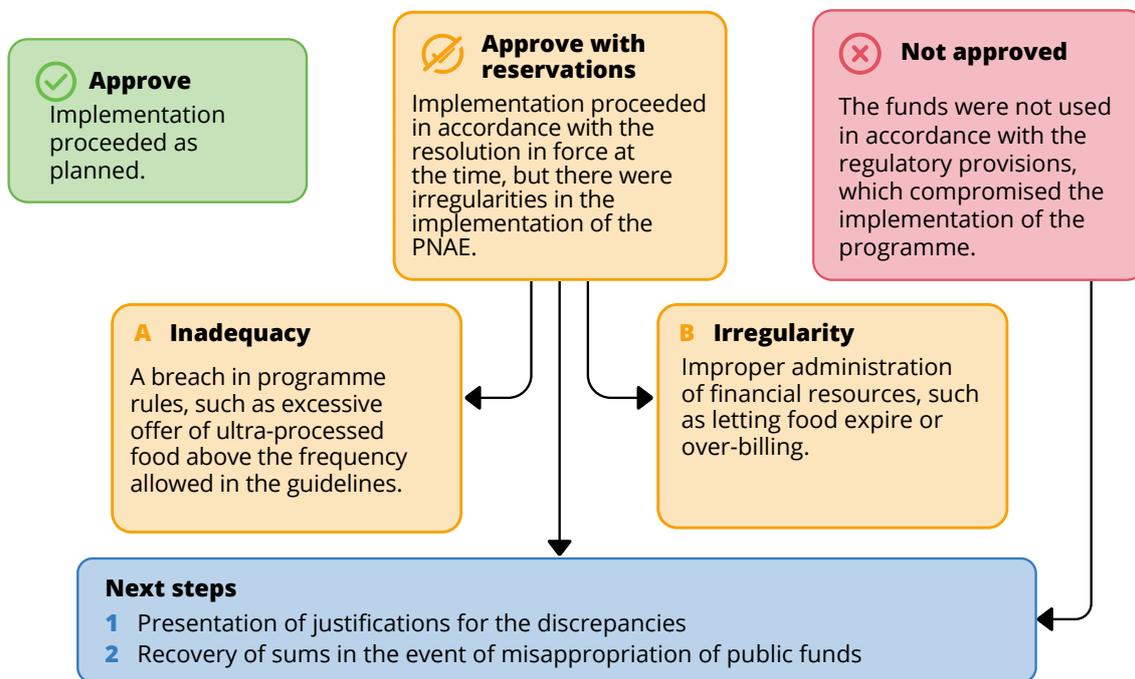


#### Step 5 **Accountability analysis**

The CAE must organise a specific meeting with at least two-thirds of the full members to review accounts and formulate a conclusive opinion.



Once the local manager enters the PNAE financial execution information into the FNDE system, the CAE will have access to the accountability information through a specific platform. Then, it must analyse it and issue its position, which can be one of three types:



The deadline for submitting justifications or paying dues is 30 days. If no rectification is made within this period, the transfer of PNAE funds is suspended until the issue is resolved.

## 6 Conclusion

The School Feeding Council (CAE) plays an essential role in the governance and transparency of the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), ensuring that the resources allocated to school meals are used efficiently and in accordance with the legislation in force.

Its activities include monitoring the financial and operational implementation of the programme, promoting social control, and encouraging active participation of communities in improving the quality of school meals.

The Brazilian experience shows that a structured council with trained and committed members can contribute significantly to optimising public procurement processes; strengthening synergies between managers, nutritionists and family farmers; and ensuring that the food served in schools is healthy, appropriate, and high quality. In addition, regular monitoring and rigorous analysis of accounts make it possible to identify potential weaknesses and gradually improve the implementation of the programme.

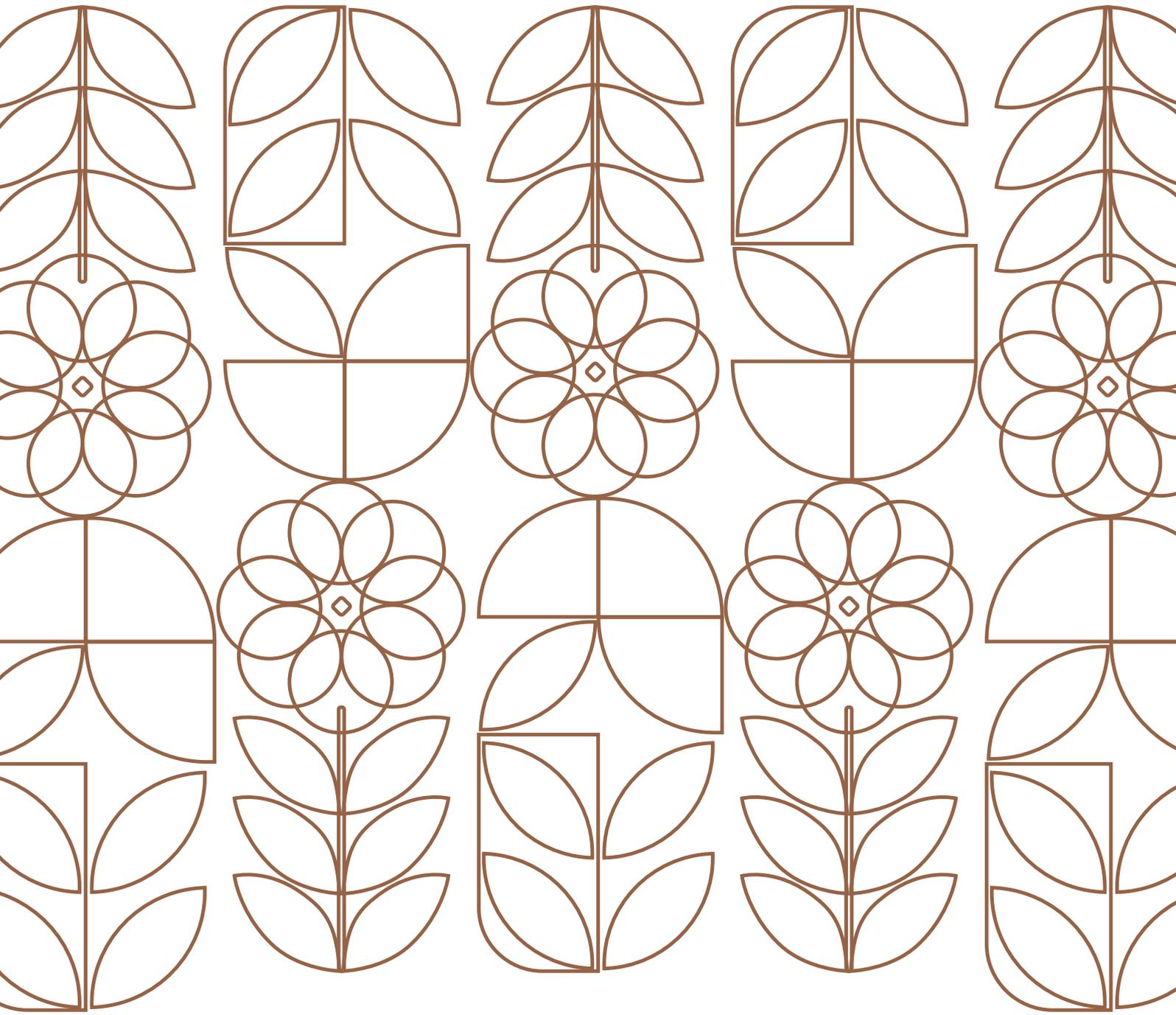
By sharing this model, this manual aims to support the Republic of Congo's efforts to structure social control and participation mechanisms as part of the project **Enhancing family farmers' access to local markets in the Republic of Congo**, implemented within the framework of South-South Cooperation and financed by the IBSA Fund.

Strengthening local institutions and adopting social control practices contribute to the construction of a sustainable school feeding system, promoting food security, development of family farming, and well-being for the children and adolescents who benefit from the programme.

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