

Photo: WFP/ Ana Mascarenhas



World Food Programme
Centre of Excellence
against Hunger

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Annual Report 2025

Centre of Excellence against Hunger

April 2026

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Dear Reader,

What happens when Brazilian knowledge joins forces with the resilience of nations around the world? The result is a historic 2025 for the WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger.

The fight against hunger is not measured by numbers alone, but through exchanges, culture, and solutions tailored to the realities of each territory. In 2025, the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil demonstrated that technical cooperation is, above all, a bridge between knowledge systems.

More than a record of activities, this report is a testament to the power of technical cooperation. Here, you will find not only technical data but also the stories of missions in São Tomé and Príncipe and the Congo, where sustainable technology met local production. You will witness the sparkle in the eyes of traditional Brazilian communities through the Escola de Sabores (School of Flavors) project, showing that school meals are a cultural heritage.

From the 2nd Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition in Fortaleza — which positioned Brazil as the epicenter of this global agenda — to the launch of InovaSAN and AlimentaLAB, we have shown that innovation and South-South cooperation are the most powerful tools we have against food insecurity.

Throughout this year, the Centre has established itself as a living laboratory of solutions:

We innovated with AlimentaLAB to identify technologies from the Global South.

We strengthened family farming, transforming realities in the field through regenerative agriculture in Benin.

We led global dialogues that turned public policies into tangible hope.

We gave voice and stage to school cooks from quilombola, riverine, and indigenous communities through the Escola de Sabores (School of Flavors) initiative.

We welcomed participants from across the world — from South Africa to Pakistan — to help shape the future of School Feeding.

What follows is an invitation to understand how strong partnerships can create lasting pathways toward food security.

I invite you to explore these pages to see how we are building food systems that are, above all, inclusive and sustainable.

Happy reading, and join us on this journey.



Daniel Balaban

Director of the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger Brazil

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

An additional



5.000 tonnes

of dry food were produced and sold by **25 family farmer cooperatives** under the Beyond Cotton Project in Benin.



250 activities

aimed at strengthening **smallholder farmers** were carried out over the **58 months** of implementation of the Beyond Cotton Project in Mozambique, concluded in 2025.



100% of the activities

under the Seeds for Tomorrow Project in the **Republic of Congo**, were successfully completed. The initiative reestablished school feeding on the government's high-level agenda.



32 school gardens

were established by WFP in Benin as part of the **Beyond Cotton Project** Benin.



20% increase

in Instagram post reach (**from 470,007 to 565,340**).

Photo: Freepik

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTNER WITH THE **WFP CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE?**

Are you part of WFP?

Explore our support offerings in school feeding and family farming at <https://centrodeexcelencia.org.br/intercambios-virtuais>
Complete the form and get in touch with us.

Do you represent a Government, Civil Society Organization, or Private Company?

Contact us at brazil.centroofexcellence@wfp.org
Or visit the [Partnerships](#) section on our website to learn more.



Photo: WFP/Derrick Botchway

school meals

The partnership between the WFP Centre of Excellence and the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE), through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), achieved significant milestones in 2025. Brazil hosted the most prominent international event on school feeding, the 2nd Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition, held in Fortaleza (CE), with participation from authorities representing 80 countries, all reaffirming their commitment to this agenda.

Another highlight was the production of the reality show *Escola de Sabores* (School of Flavors), broadcast by BandTV, which brought together school meal providers from indigenous, quilombola, and riverine communities. The program showcased a Brazil from north to south, demonstrating the reach of the National School Feeding Programme, always respecting the diverse cultures and dietary habits of the country.

Discover these and other experiences of the Centre of Excellence in this field throughout 2025.

2nd GLOBAL SUMMIT OF THE SCHOOL MEALS COALITION

The WFP Centre of Excellence participated in the world's largest event on school feeding, the [2nd Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition](#), organizada em conjunto com o Secretariado da Coalizão para a Alimentação Escolar, o Ministério da Educação, o FNDE e a ABC, com apoio do Governo do Estado do Ceará.

School Meals Coalition

The School Meals Coalition is an initiative led by its member states, launched in 2021 at the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

The Coalition aims to ensure that every child in the world receives a healthy meal at school by 2030. The World Food Programme (WFP) serves as the Secretariat of the Coalition.

Held on 18–19 September 2025 in Fortaleza (CE), the event brought together around 80 member states of the Coalition to discuss the expansion and strengthening of school feeding programs. Among the attendees were the [Vice President of Brazil and the WFP Executive Director](#).

The Centre of Excellence supported the coordination of discussion sessions throughout the two days and contributed to facilitating bilateral meetings between delegations, fostering dialogue and exchange of experiences on school feeding.

Additionally, the Centre was present at a joint booth with ABC and FAO, and at another booth dedicated to the reality show Vida de Merendeira, in the “Market Place” space for showcasing innovative school feeding initiatives, where the public interacted with institutional representatives and received printed materials.

At the conclusion of the Summit, 19 governments announced new commitments to expand school feeding in their territories.



Photo: WFP/Dahielia Rocha

REALITY SHOW 'MERENDEIRAS'



Produced in 2025, the reality show for school meal providers (Merendeiras in Brazilian Portuguese), called [Escola de Sabores](#), (School of Flavors), featured participants from riverine, indigenous, and quilombola schools. As special guests, the Merendeiras from São Tomé and Príncipe and Honduras participated in one episode. The show celebrates the diversity of Brazilian cuisine while highlighting the work of school meal professionals, including cooks and nutritionists.

The reality show plays a key role in demonstrating the importance of South-South Cooperation in school feeding and in the work of school meal professionals.

The program is the result of a partnership between FNDE, ABC, and the Centre of Excellence, and aims to recognize and raise the visibility of the work of school meal professionals, nutritionists, and school feeding managers.



In May, the awards ceremony took place for the winning school cooks and nutritionists from the previous reality show, A School Cook's Life called [Vida de Merendeira](#). The top three winners among school meal providers received BRL 25,000, BRL 15,000, and BRL 10,000, respectively, while the three awarded nutritionists each received BRL 5,000.

The first-place winner was Josefa Graciane Ribeiro (Graci) from Limoeiro de Anadia (AL), a school cook at Prefeito Pedro Ferreira da Silva Municipal School, together with nutritionist Janaina Barbosa. Second place went to school cook Leila Rojas, working at Nossa Senhora

Aparecida Municipal School in Cáceres (MT), partnered with nutritionist Elianne Pires.

Third place was awarded to school cook Sarah Santos from Varginha (MG), who works at São José Municipal School alongside nutritionist Marcélia Prado.

These reality shows aim to recognize and raise the visibility of the work of school cooks, nutritionists, and school feeding managers. Vida de Merendeira was produced in partnership with FNDE, ABC, and the Centre of Excellence, and was broadcast on Band's Sabor e Arte channel.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The Centre of Excellence also supports countries through remote or in-person cooperation, including study visits and technical missions. Some highlights from 2025 include:

South Africa

In March, a delegation of 11 government representatives from South Africa visited Brazil to learn about the implementation of the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), focusing on food safety, family farming procurement, and intersectoral coordination.



One of the country's challenges is to strengthen and expand the capacity of local farmers, promoting the creation of cooperatives and providing training for production according to school demand. Among the mission's outcomes, the delegation contributed to subsidies for the country's 2025–2029 Food and Nutrition Security Plan, which is currently under development.



The visit was organized by the Centre of Excellence, with support from FNDE, ABC, and other Brazilian government partners.



Jordan

Between April and May, the Centre of Excellence conducted two virtual visits with representatives from Jordan, aimed at presenting specific aspects of the Brazilian school feeding model, including its legal framework, financing, monitoring, and integration with family farming.

The activity was organized by the Centre of Excellence in partnership with FNDE, ABC, and WFP in Jordan. The online sessions facilitated an exchange of experiences that can support the strengthening of Jordan's School Feeding Programme, which is currently primarily managed by WFP in the country.

Virtual Visits

Established in 2021, virtual visits are a tool for knowledge exchange between countries, optimizing financial resources and identifying priorities for technical cooperation and support. Interested countries receive on-demand videos detailing legal frameworks, social participation, family farming, and other topics that are part of the implementation of Brazil's National School Feeding Programme.



Senegal

Throughout 2025, activities with Senegal took place within the Brazil-France partnership, with two main objectives: to support the revision of the country's National School Feeding Policy and to develop a strategic plan for its implementation. Senegal aims to expand school feeding to 65% of its public primary schools by 2028.

The first mission of the year, in February, enabled the delegation to assess available infrastructure and strengthen dialogue with local stakeholders. Following the mission, the Centre of Excellence team continued supporting Senegal in the development of relevant documents and coordination with national actors. In August, a second mission took place to follow up on the technical validation workshop of the policy, an important step in consolidating the school feeding program in the country.



Republic of Congo



Two missions by the Centre of Excellence were carried out under the Seeds for Tomorrow Project in the Republic of Congo. The first mission, in July, focused on training courses on soil management and biofertilizer production. The second mission, in August, aimed to consolidate the project's results and plan the next steps.

The project concluded in December 2025 with the release of the Final Evaluation Report, which highlighted the contribution of the activities toward initiating the review of the country's School Feeding Policy (*see the box at the end of this chapter*). The project's

closing phase also marked the creation of a national school feeding committee in the country.

The project aimed to promote family farming and school feeding through public procurement in the African country and was part of a South-South cooperation initiative between the governments of Brazil and the Republic of Congo, with support from the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), and funding from the IBAS Fund (India, Brazil, and South Africa).



Benin

In 2025, the Centre of Excellence carried out several technical cooperation activities with Benin under different partnerships. Within the Beyond Cotton Project, a delegation of Beninese authorities visited Brazil, and a mission was conducted to the north of the country to continue the project's field activities (see the *Family Farming chapter*). Additionally, under the Brazil-France partnership, a mission took place in the south of the country to build a biodigester and ecological school gardens.

Biodigester Mission

In October, the Centre conducted a technical mission to southern Benin focused on training and implementing low-carbon technologies for school feeding, including the construction of a biodigester model, eco-friendly stoves, and school gardens.

The mission was carried out within the Brazil-France partnership, with support from WFP Benin and the local government. Activities included a hands-on food and nutrition education session with over 40 children and a seminar on local procurement based on direct resource transfers to schools. The seminar's outcomes will be compiled into a recommendation document for the Integrated National School Feeding Programme (PNASI), strengthening the linkage between family farmers and school canteens in Benin.



Visit to Brazil

From 24 May to 1 June, a delegation from Benin visited Brazil under the Beyond Cotton Project, aimed at exchanging knowledge on public food policies, agricultural practices, and food and nutrition security strategies.

The delegation, composed of representatives from the Beninese government, the National Food and

Nutrition Agency, WFP Benin, and a participating farmer, took part in technical meetings and visits to a public school, a health unit, a rural settlement, and an agroecological initiative.

The visit also covered family farming food pricing methodologies for institutional procurement, and how syntropic agriculture techniques implemented in Benin could diversify food production.

São Tomé and Príncipe



São Tomé and Príncipe hosted two missions by the Centre of Excellence in 2025. The first mission, in October, focused on training in nutrition and school feeding program activities (*see the Nutrition chapter*). The second mission, conducted from late October to early November, aimed to strengthen school feeding through the implementation of locally adapted solutions, with a focus on sustainability and food security.



Key activities during the second mission included practical training on the construction of a low-cost cistern for collecting and storing rainwater for potable use in a school, and the construction of modular eco-friendly stoves that reduce firewood consumption and smoke emissions. The mission also involved the construction of two low-cost fish tanks, training on alternative feed production for pigs and chickens, and theoretical and practical capacity-building in the production of biofertilizers and bioinsecticides using native plants and local inputs.

Pakistan

In December, Brazil hosted a study mission delegation from Pakistan, which included a field visit in Arapiraca, Alagoas, and institutional meetings in Brasília. The delegation was primarily composed of members of the Balochistan provincial government, and focused on learning about experiences in food and nutrition security, family farming, and sustainable rural

development that could be adapted to the local context.

The visit was organized by the Centre of Excellence in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Brazilian Government, and ABC, with additional support from the Government of the State of Alagoas.



Photo: WFP/ Daniela Rocha

Seeds for **Tomorrow**



The Seeds for Tomorrow Project concluded in December 2025 with an internal seminar presenting the evaluation report, which highlighted the completion of 100% of the planned activities and the success of the initiative in bringing school feeding back onto the government's high-level agenda and into the center of policy discussions. Implemented between June 2023 and November 2025, the project was a partnership between the World Food Programme (WFP) and the governments of the Republic of Congo and Brazil, funded by the India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) Fund.

The initiative aimed to strengthen the food security of smallholders, promote family farming, and integrate local production into school feeding programs. Activities were carried out in 10 schools and 10 agricultural cooperatives located in the Bouenza, Plateaux, and Pool departments of the Republic of Congo, contributing to the strengthening of sustainable local food systems.

In 2025, the project undertook strategic actions, including the participation of Dr. Pitchou Prudence Adzona, Director-General of Basic Education at the Ministry of Preschool, Primary, Secondary Education and Literacy of the Republic of Congo, in the 2nd Global Summit of the School Feeding Coalition. During the event, four technical manuals published under the project were distributed, sharing the Brazilian experience in implementing integrated public policies on school feeding and family farming.

The materials are available in Portuguese and French in the Publications section of the [Seeds for Tomorrow](#) project page and will soon be released in English.

COUNTRY FOLLOW-UP

Bangladesh



Photo: WFP/ Rawful Alam

In July, the Centre of Excellence organized a webinar with the participation of representatives from 15 ministries of the Government of Bangladesh to present Brazil's strategies in addressing hunger.

The session highlighted family farming and school feeding as key pillars for social development, driven by coordinated action across different government sectors. The webinar marked another milestone in the partnership between the Centre of Excellence and WFP Bangladesh, which have been collaborating since 2012 to strengthen the country's National School Feeding Programme.

Indonesia

On 6–7 August, representatives from the Centre of Excellence and FNDE traveled to Jakarta to participate in the Academic Forum and the International Stakeholder Seminar on Indonesia's Free Nutritious Meals Programme (MBG).

The event aimed to analyze the national context and discuss pathways to strengthen school feeding in Indonesia. The Centre of Excellence shared experiences related to Brazil's National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) and its path toward universalization. The Government of Indonesia aims to expand the programme from 6 million to 80 million students nationwide.

Guatemala

On 30 September, the Centre of Excellence team met with the Vice President of Guatemala, Karin Herrera, during her official visit to Brazil, to present Brazilian public policies aimed at combating hunger.

Food security is a priority for the current government

of Guatemala, and the meeting highlighted key Brazilian strategies such as the Zero Hunger Strategy, the Bolsa Família Programme, the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA), and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE).



Cameroon

Following a study visit by a delegation from Cameroon to Brazil in 2024, the Centre of Excellence supported the development of the country's National School Feeding Strategy throughout 2025, providing technical inputs and international references. After this phase, the document proceeded to validation and underwent participatory workshops to support its consolidation.

family farming

THE **BEYOND COTTON** PROJECT

The Beyond Cotton Project supports smallholder cotton producers and public institutions in Benin, Mozambique, and Tanzania to link cotton by-products (such as cottonseed oil) and intercropped crops (such as maize, sorghum, and beans) to reliable markets, including school feeding programmes.

The project aims to increase production, local income, and the food and nutrition security of family farmers.

Already completed in Tanzania in 2023 and in Mozambique in 2025, the project is currently under implementation in Benin. It is a joint initiative of the Centre of Excellence and ABC, with support from the Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA).

Learn more about the Beyond Cotton Project:



**Beyond
Cotton**

Benin

In October 2025, the technical team of the Beyond Cotton Project, together with the Federal University of Western Bahia (UFOB) and ABC, conducted a technical mission in Benin. The mission included food and nutrition education activities at the Kpandri primary school and syntropic agriculture activities with farmers benefiting from the project.

In schools, activities addressed the levels of food processing, comparing natural and industrialized foods and their impacts on health with students. Government representatives and members of school committees also participated in a seminar on school

gardens. Agricultural activities included the development of new planting, harvesting, and consumption techniques for intercropped foods derived from sociobiodiversity. Throughout 2025, the project maintained the 32 school gardens established by local WFP operations and expanded local procurement, reaching more than 5,000 tonnes of dry food produced by 25 family farmer cooperatives.



Mozambique

The Beyond Cotton Project in Mozambique was concluded in 2025 with a hybrid closing ceremony held on 7 October in Tete Province, bringing together authorities and technical representatives from all institutions involved in the project.

The event highlighted the results achieved over 58 months of implementation, including more than 250 activities aimed at strengthening smallholder farmers in the districts of Barué and Guro (Manica Province) and Cahora Bassa, Mágoe, and Moatize (Tete

Province). The activities focused on improving agricultural production systems, whether intercropped with cotton or not, with an emphasis on promoting food and nutrition security and income generation for farming households.

The closing event included representatives from WFP Mozambique, the Higher Polytechnic Institute of Manica, the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of Tete, the Mozambique Cotton and Oilseeds Institute, and the District Services for Economic Activities from different provinces.

Virtual participation included experts from the Federal University of Lavras, ABC, and the Centre of Excellence.



Webinars

Between July and September 2025, the Beyond Cotton Project delivered a series of three webinars focused on the exchange of best practices among Brazil, Benin, Mozambique, and Tanzania. The sessions covered topics such as technical cooperation, institutional procurement, market access, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and public policies. With simultaneous interpretation in Portuguese, English, and French, as well as live streaming on the Centre of Excellence's YouTube channel, the webinars brought together partner institutions, experts, and government representatives.

nutrition

In 2025, the Centre of Excellence conducted nutrition training activities in countries such as São Tomé and Príncipe and Benin. In Brazil, the Centre launched the InovaSAN Project, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger, combining innovation with Food and Nutrition Security. The Nourishing the Future Project also continued, contributing to the training of managers in the field of food and nutrition security across partner countries in Latin America.

Training in São Tomé and Príncipe

In October, the Centre of Excellence, in partnership with FNDE, ABC, and the WFP country office, organized a nutrition training mission in São Tomé and Príncipe. The training covered menu planning for nutritionally adequate meals, the use of local products, food safety, and nutritional assessment of students. Visits were also conducted to farms supplying the school feeding programme.



Photo: WFP/ Jorcelina Correia

The training was designed following a study visit by a delegation from São Tomé and Príncipe to Brazil in 2024 to learn about the National School Feeding Programme. At the time, the country had only one nutritionist serving all schools nationwide; the training helped expand the number of professionals qualified to work in this area.



Photo: WFP/ Sineide Neres



In 2025, the Nurture the Future (“Nutrir o Futuro” in Brazilian Portuguese) Project resumed its activities. This initiative is a partnership between the Ministry of Health, the Centre of Excellence, and ABC. In this new phase, activities focused on the prevention and reduction of malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity, as well as on regulatory measures in school food environments and the monitoring of health, food, and nutrition indicators.

Key highlights included the organization of side events during the 53rd Plenary Session of the Committee on World Food Security, in Rome — “Breaking silos, aligning for impact: how countries use food-based dietary guidelines to coordinate agrifood systems actions” — and during the UN Food Systems Summit +4, held in Ethiopia — “Addressing the synergistic determinants of the multiple burden of malnutrition through healthy food systems: the potential of South-South Cooperation in the Nurture the Future Project”. These events were organized in partnership with ABC, the Centre of Excellence, and the Ministries of Health of Peru and Colombia.

Additionally, the project launched The Lancet Series – Ultra-Processed Foods and Human Health on 3 December at Fiocruz in Brasília. The event brought together leading experts, including researchers from the Center for Epidemiological Research in Nutrition and Health at USP (Nupens/USP) and the University of Sydney, who presented evidence and discussed the health implications of ultra-processed food consumption.

The debate on public policies in Latin America was moderated by Chef Rita Lobo, a high-level supporter of WFP in Brazil (*see the Partnerships chapter for more information*).

InovaSAN

Launched in 2025, the InovaSAN Project (a name combining “innovation” and food and nutrition security) is a South-South cooperation initiative aimed at strengthening food and nutrition security policies and programmes in countries of the Global South. Its focus is on promoting adequate and healthy diets, fostering intersectoral approaches, and building food systems that are more resilient to climate change.

Developed in partnership with the Centre of Excellence, the Ministry of Social Development (MDS), and ABC, the project is structured around two main pillars: Capacity development through AlimentaLAB, an innovation laboratory for public policy and Strengthening food systems, from production to consumption, taking into account social, economic, and environmental impacts.

AlimentaLAB

The AlimentaLAB (Innovation Laboratory for Healthy and Sustainable Food Systems Public Policies) was launched in a webinar on 26 June. During the event, the digital platform for submitting experiences from Global South countries was presented, aimed at building fairer, healthier, and climate-resilient food systems.

AlimentaLAB is a collaborative space that generates a public and free digital repository, bringing together innovative experiences to support governments and intergovernmental organizations. Submissions are made via the portal: www.alimentalab.prosas.com.br.

Global Forum of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

In October 2025, the InovaSAN Project team participated in the Global Forum of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and organized two side events: “Food Systems and the Climate

Agenda: The Role of National Initiatives and Innovative Local Experiences” and “Local Supply Chains – Multi-Level Governance and Lessons from EU–Brazil Dialogues”

other activities

PARTICIPATION **IN EVENTS**

In 2025, the Centre of Excellence participated in strategic events to strengthen South-South cooperation, increase the visibility of Brazilian public policies, and enhance discussions on food security, community resilience, nutrition, and sustainable food systems. Key events included:



National Council on Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA)



Africa-Brazil Dialogue on Agricultural Research, Development, and Innovation



Preparatory Meeting of Latin American and Caribbean Countries for the UN Food Systems Summit +4



One Planet



5th National Supply Chain Forum (ABRAS ESG Forum)



4th National Forum on SDG Best Practices: Brazil Out of the Hunger Map



5th Latin American Meeting on Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture (ELAUP) and 1st Latin American Seminar on Rural Geography (LAGRURAL)

World Food Day



This year, World Food Day (WFD), which highlights the importance of healthy diets and promotes cooperation to eradicate hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity, was celebrated in partnership with the Government of the State of Ceará during the 2nd edition of the Ceará Without Hunger Festival in Fortaleza.

WFD is observed by the four UN agencies mandated to fight hunger: the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

Nutrition for Growth – N4G 2025

The Centre of Excellence team participated remotely in the International Conference on Global Nutrition: Nutrition for Growth (N4G 2025), held in Paris, France, on 27–28 March.

The objective of this participation was to share Brazil's best practices, strengthen South-South cooperation, and promote the exchange of knowledge on food security, nutrition, and sustainable food systems.

National PNAE Meeting



The Centre of Excellence participated in the 6th National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) Meeting, held in Brasília on 4–5 February. The event brought together approximately 1,500 nutritionists, school feeding council members, and education managers from across Brazil. The opening ceremony was attended by the President of Brazil. A key highlight

was the announcement of a reduction in the maximum allowance of ultra-processed foods in school meals from 20% to 15%.

Daniel Balaban, Director of the Centre of Excellence, took part in the panel “Building New International Networks and Promoting FNS in the Global Context”, discussing cooperation to expand school feeding programmes worldwide. Albaneide Peixinho, Coordinator of the Projects Area at the Centre, presented the history of school feeding in Brazil.

The meeting also featured thematic workshops involving civil society to discuss the National School Feeding Policy. The Centre of Excellence facilitated the workshop on Traditional Peoples and Communities.

Meeting on Family Farming, Agroecology, and Public Policies

From 24 to 26 June, the Centre of Excellence participated in the ActiveCred Training Meeting, organized by the Sustainable Connections Institute (Conexus), which brought together over 60 participants for training on the use of Pronaf resources. The

training covered topics such as financial education, agroecological transition, and access to the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), using a methodology adapted for adults with different education levels.

The CrediAmbiental network is composed of agents working on the ground to transform rural credit into a tool for productive inclusion and strengthening sociobiodiversity. The Centre of Excellence moderated the panel on school feeding with a focus on family farming, alongside FNDE, and participated in group activities with representatives from government and civil society.



4th UN Conference on Financing for Development



Photo: ABC/ Paola Barbieri

The side event titled “Investing in the Future: Financing School Feeding as a Pillar to Eradicate Hunger, Enhance Resilience, and Promote Development” was organized by the Centre of Excellence, FNDE, and ABC from 2 to 4 July, as part of the 4th UN Conference on Financing for Development, held in Seville, Spain.

Representatives from governments, multilateral organizations, and cooperation networks learned about the PNAE financing system and discussed the role of South-South cooperation. During the event, high-level authorities from Indonesia and São Tomé and Príncipe reiterated their commitment to sustainable financing strategies for their school feeding programmes.



11th Regional School Feeding Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean

Held in Honduras in July, the 11th Regional School Feeding Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean brought together approximately 200 participants from 18 countries to discuss the value of school feeding as a social protection instrument, the role of schools as catalysts for sustainability and resilience, and their importance for Indigenous peoples.

The Centre of Excellence participated in the event alongside Brazilian government partners, following the discussions and contributing to the exchange of experiences that can be applied across the regional context of Latin America and the Caribbean.



53rd Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)



The Centre of Excellence took part in the 53rd Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), held from 20–24 October in Rome, and organized a side event entitled “Investing in the Future: Building Partnerships and Strengthening Financing for Healthier School Feeding Programmes”.

In addition to the Centre, the event was organized in collaboration with: FAO; Swedish Committee for FAO; School Meals Coalition; Sustainable School Feeding Network (RAES); ABC; FNDE; Kenya Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine; Swedish Food Agency, among others.



Regional Seminars for Merendeiras and Nutritionists

Throughout 2025, the Centre of Excellence participated in five regional events of the “Alimentação Nota 10 Project”, aimed at the training of merendeiras (school feeding staff) and nutritionists and promoting reflections on challenges and innovations in school feeding.

The Centre of Excellence moderated the panel “Sharing Successful Experiences in School Feeding by Cooks and Nutritionists Across Brazil’s Five Regions (Central-West, North, Northeast, Southeast, and South)”. These events were organized by FNDE in partnership with Itaipu Binacional, the Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Southern Minas Gerais (IFSULDEMINAS), and the Foundation for the Support of Extension, Research, Vocational and Technological Education (Fadema).



Brazil-Africa Forum



On 4–5 November, in São Paulo, the Centre of Excellence participated in an event organized by the Brazil-Africa Institute (IBRAF), which brought together governments and experts to discuss sustainable agriculture, food security and sovereignty, innovation, and green financing.

During his intervention, Daniel Balaban, Director of the Centre, highlighted Brazilian public policies on school feeding and support for family farming, which have been adapted and replicated in African countries, strengthening South-South cooperation and promoting more inclusive and resilient food systems.

C40 Mayors Summit

The Centre of Excellence participated in the C40 Mayors Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3–5 November, as part of the Local Leaders Forum, contributing to the mobilization process toward COP 30 in Belém.

Over 300 mayors from various countries discussed solutions to the climate crisis and the role of cities in developing integrated responses. The Centre shared approaches and lessons learned on sustainable food systems and how public policies can converge to achieve both climate and social objectives.





partnerships

In 2025, the Centre of Excellence focused its partnership activities on two complementary fronts. The first was oriented toward social protection and access to food, through solutions designed for effective implementation and potential for scaling. The second prioritized strengthening public debate and supporting medium-term policies in school feeding, nutrition, and sustainable food systems.

The alliances forged throughout the year reinforced the Centre of Excellence's institutional positioning as a facilitator between government, civil society, and the private sector, connecting applied knowledge, public visibility, and delivery capacity. In a global context of budgetary constraints, the strengthening of well-structured partnerships has become a strategic path to amplify the impact of our cooperation, while preserving institutional ethics and operational efficiency

Partnerships to Strengthen Food Systems Diplomacy and Climate Action at COP 30

During COP 30 in Belém, the initiative “Partnerships among Amazonian Countries: Transforming Food Systems and Climate Action” was launched. It aims to strengthen the capacities of diplomats and public managers to design, negotiate, and implement policies that promote sustainable food systems and climate resilience across eight Amazonian countries.

The initiative was promoted by the General Coordination for Food and Nutrition Security (CGSAN) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Rio Branco Institute, the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, the Centre of Excellence, and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO).



Global Innovation Hub for Regenerative School Meals

In 2025, the Centre of Excellence developed a project to be implemented from 2026 as part of the global “School Meals Accelerator” strategy, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation. The design was structured across seven workstreams, ranging from pilot formulation to knowledge management and dissemination of lessons learned.

Expected results include the refinement and adaptation of methodologies for regenerative school meals; the development of reference materials and guides (including components linked to the Productive School model, based on international experiences); country-level diagnostics; technical assistance packages; and the organization of a knowledge repository to support replication and scaling.



Photo: WFP/ Caroline Melo

Agroecological PNAE

In January 2025, the Centre of Excellence hosted the launch meeting of the Agroecological PNAE project, led by the Comida do Amanhã Institute in partnership with the Regenera Institute, the Fome Zero Institute, and the Centre of Excellence, with support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The initiative aims to strengthen conditions for small-scale producers to expand their participation in public procurement and to promote agroecological foods within school feeding programs.

In October, the Centre participated in the launch webinar of the public policy document “PNAE as a Driver of Agroecological Transition in Brazil: Incentives and Institutional Arrangements for Public Procurement of Healthy and Sustainable Foods.”

Fome não Tira Férias Campaign

In November 2025, during COP30, the pre-launch of the Fome não Tira Férias (Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation) campaign was held, a partnership between the World Food Programme (WFP), the Instituto Fome de Tudo, Caixa Econômica Federal, and Elo. The initiative connects social mobilization, financial instruments, and local implementation to support children's access to healthy and nutritious foods during periods of heightened vulnerability, such as school holidays.

In the pilot phase, the campaign aims to reach 1,000 children in public schools across municipalities in different states, through a social benefit card with a monthly value to purchase foods at accredited establishments. The approach is designed to test a model that combines social protection with simple, traceable, and results-oriented implementation.

Hunger Pact

Throughout 2025, the Centre of Excellence deepened its engagement with the Hunger Pact, an initiative focused on food security and the reduction of food waste. Over the year, the Centre supported the selection process of initiatives and participated in the award ceremony of the Hunger Pact Prize, held in São Paulo on 4 November.

The Centre also took part in the launch of the Legislative Agenda “From Policy to Plate” on 27 August at the National Congress. This agenda is an initiative of the Pact, mapping bills related to food security and food waste reduction.

Rita Lobo, Chef and High-Level Supporter of WFP



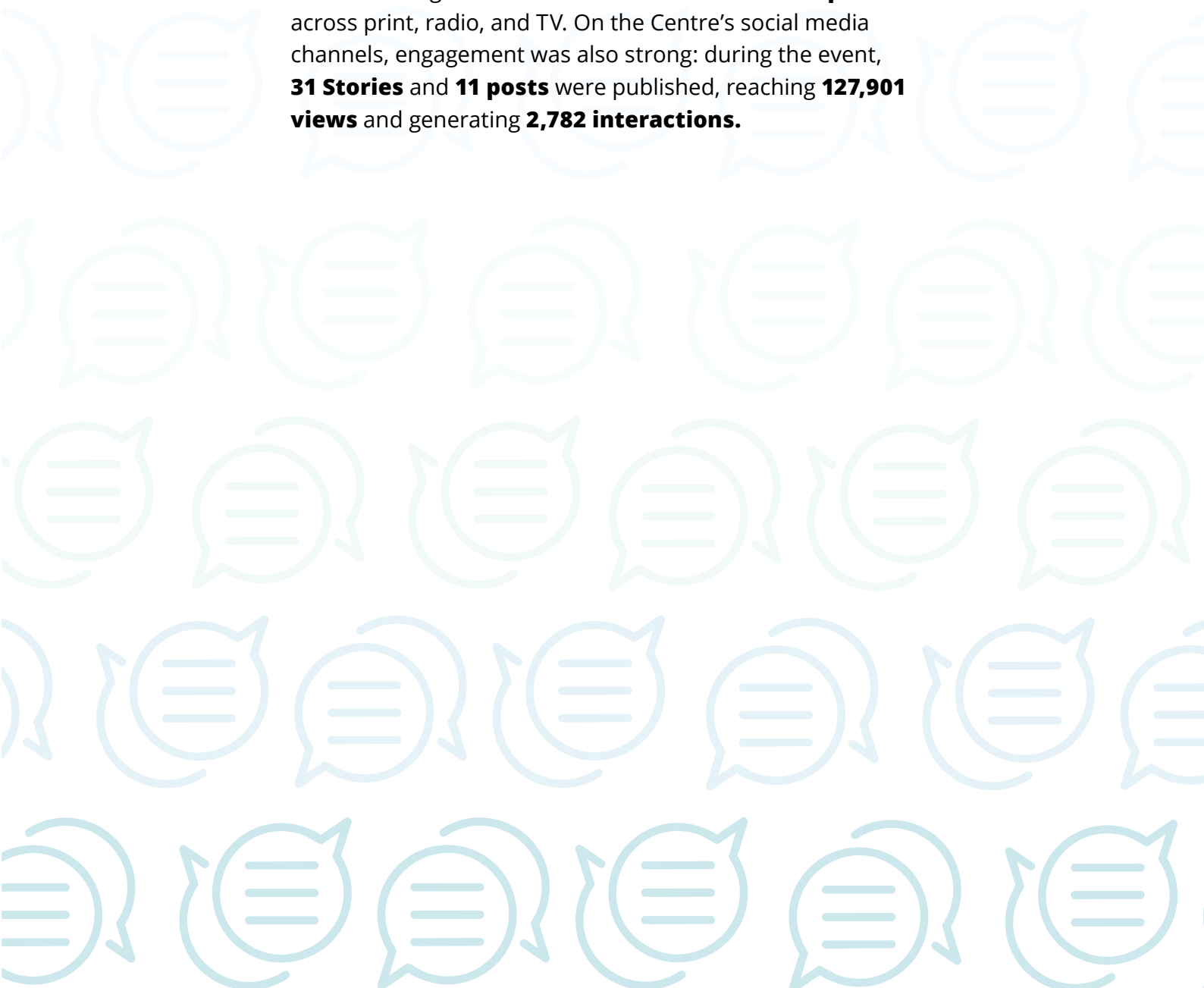
Brazilian chef Rita Lobo, a High-Level Supporter of the WFP, collaborated with the Centre of Excellence and WFP on high-profile initiatives. In March, she took part in a joint activity with WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain during Nutrition for Growth (N4G) in Paris, reinforcing messages on the importance of nutrition as a pillar for development and poverty reduction.

In December, Rita Lobo participated in the launch of The Lancet Series – Ultra-Processed Foods and Human Health in Brazil, held at the Fiocruz auditorium in Brasília, and moderated a panel on Public Policy in Latin America. The event was broadcast live on the WFP YouTube channel (@WFPBrazil), extending the reach of the discussion, with the full content later made available in Portuguese, Spanish, and English. The complete session can be viewed on the [@WFPBrasil Youtube Channel](#).

communication

In 2025, the Communications team of the Centre of Excellence played an active role in events and the production of extensive promotional materials. The highlight of the year was the 2nd Global Summit of the School Meals Coalition, held in Fortaleza, which received wide national and international media coverage.

Media coverage of the Summit resulted in **14 news pieces** across print, radio, and TV. On the Centre's social media channels, engagement was also strong: during the event, **31 Stories** and **11 posts** were published, reaching **127,901 views** and generating **2,782 interactions**.



Opinion Articles

Another highlight of the year was the publication of **two opinion pieces** by the Centre's Director, Daniel Balaban, in major national newspapers: "The Urgent Need for an International Humanitarian Fund" (Valor Econômico, March 18) and "The UN Headquarters Should Move to Africa" (O Globo, October 13).

Interviews

To raise awareness of the Centre of Excellence's work among diverse audiences, 13 interviews were granted to national media throughout the year, along with appearances by the Director on TV programs, podcasts, and documentaries. Key highlights include:

- 🎙️ Interview on "Climate Change and Food" on **Jornal da Globo**, October 5
- 🎙️ Live participation on **RTP África**, July 31
- 🎙️ Appearance on the Planeta em Perigo segment of **Domingo Espetacular** (Record TV), August 6
- 🎙️ Interview with **Jornal da CBN** on World Food Day, October 16



Photos: WFP/Caroline Melo

Products



Communications production in 2025 was marked by both volume and diversity. During the period, **121 articles** were published on the institutional website, and **71 documents**,

85 graphic products, and **42 institutional videos** were developed to disseminate the Centre's initiatives across its various channels.

Social Media



The Centre of Excellence maintained active profiles on Instagram, Threads, LinkedIn, X, Facebook, and YouTube. In 2025, **72 original cards**, **40 adapted materials**, and **66 collaborative posts** were produced.

The highlight was the **Instagram** profile, currently the most relevant platform in Brazil. In 2025 alone, the profile gained over **7,300 new followers**, reaching **19,500**. Post reach increased by **20%**, from **470,007** in 2024 to **565,340** in 2025.



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