

WORKING PAPER

# School Meals Case Study:

## Mexico

Prepared by the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition, an initiative of the School Meals Coalition

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# Historical background

Mexico is a sovereign country located in the southern part of North America. It is bordered to the north by the United States, to the south by Guatemala and Belize, to the west by the Pacific Ocean and to the east by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.<sup>1</sup>

As a representative and democratic republic, the country is made up of 32 states. Its capital, Mexico City, is the country's most populous. It also has 2,477 municipalities, or *alcaldías*, which are the basis of the country's territorial organisation. Mexico's territory covers an area of nearly 2 million square kilometres, making it the fifth largest country in the Americas and the third largest in Latin America.<sup>1</sup>

With a population of nearly 130 million, it is the third most populous country on the continent. The population is made up of 51.7% women and 48.3% men. In terms of age distribution, nearly 25% are children and adolescents aged 5 to 19.<sup>2</sup> Seventy-nine percent of the population lives in urban areas, and 21% in rural areas.<sup>3</sup>

The official language is Spanish, and 6% of the population speaks an indigenous language (68 languages).<sup>4</sup> In terms of education, although education in Mexico is free and secular, 4.7% of the population over the age of 15 cannot read or write. On average, the population in this age range has completed 9.7 grades of schooling. Furthermore, 94% of children aged 6 to 14 and 45.3% of the population aged 15 to 24 are enrolled in school.<sup>5</sup>

## Country profile

### Population and economics

About 25% of the total population are children and young people aged 5 to 19 (Table 1). Mexico ranks among the fifteen largest economies in the world and is the second largest in Latin America.<sup>6</sup> Of total GDP, trade, services, communications and transport activities account for 64%; construction, manufacturing, electricity distribution and gas supply account for 32%. Agriculture, forestry, livestock, fishing and aquaculture account for 4%.<sup>7</sup>

Table 1: Demographic and economic information on Mexico.

Total population (2023)	Total population aged 5 to 19	Total number of persons employed in the agricultural sector	Gross Domestic Product per capita (2023)
129,500,000 <sup>2</sup>	32,514,609 <sup>2</sup>	5,407,000 <sup>8</sup>	13,790 USD <sup>9</sup>

Sources: INEGI <sup>2</sup>; SADER <sup>8</sup>; World Bank <sup>9</sup>.

### Education

The National Education System (NES) is composed of:

- **Basic Education** which includes the levels of
  - Pre-school for girls and boys aged 3-5 years
  - Primary school for girls and boys aged 6-11 years
  - Secondary school for adolescents aged 12-14 years.
- **Upper secondary education**, which includes the baccalaureate level, aimed mainly at adolescents aged 15-17 years.

- **Higher Education** which includes the levels of Higher University Technician, Associate Professional, Bachelor's Degree, Speciality, Master's Degree and Doctorate; aimed at people aged 18 years and over.

The State, through the Secretariat<sup>i</sup> of Public Education (SPE), is in charge of formulating and coordinating educational policies in Mexico, which by law is free, secular and compulsory.<sup>10</sup> There are 231,534 public and private basic education schools attended by more than 23 million children and adolescents aged 3 to 14 years,<sup>11</sup> representing 92% of this population group. Of this total, 24% benefit from the School Meal Programme (Table 2).

*Table 2: Number of children in public and private schools and of the school meals programme beneficiaries (2023-2024)*

Total number of students <sup>ii</sup>	Total number of schools	Average class size	Number of children involved in school meals	% of children eligible for free school meals
23,681,935 <sup>11</sup>	231,534 <sup>11</sup>	N/A	5,698,608 <sup>12</sup>	24%

Sources: Sistema Interactivo de Consulta de Estadística Educativa SEP, 2024 <sup>11</sup>; SNDIF, 2024 (direct request) <sup>12</sup>.

## Food security and nutrition

### Food security

According to the most recent surveys, food insecurity (FI) by age group is distributed as follows:

- 53.4% of households with children under 5 years of age have FI: 27.5% mild, 16.6% moderate and 9.3% severe.<sup>13</sup>
- Of schoolchildren with mild FI, 36.5% are overweight or obese: 34.5% in moderate FI and 38.3% in severe FI.<sup>14</sup>
- Of adolescents with mild FI, 43.5% are overweight or obese: 41.3% in moderate FI and 44.3% in severe FI.<sup>14</sup>

### Nutrition

- **Stunted children aged 5-19 years:** Information not available.
- **Micronutrient deficiencies in the population aged 5-19 years:** 6.8% of preschoolers, 3.8% of schoolchildren and 10.1% of adolescents are anaemic. In addition, 30.6% of preschoolers and 17.2% of schoolchildren have iron deficiency; 17.4% of preschoolers and 20% of schoolchildren have low levels of vitamin B12; and 4.7% of preschoolers and 23.3% of schoolchildren have vitamin D deficiency.<sup>15</sup>
- **Wasting or acute malnutrition in children aged 5-19 years:** Information not available.
- **Overweight in children aged 5 to 19 years:** 19.2% of schoolchildren and 23.9% of adolescents.<sup>16</sup>
- **Obesity in children aged 5 to 19 years:** 18.1% of schoolchildren and 17.2% of adolescents.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>i</sup> In Mexico, a Secretary of State is the equivalent of a ministry in other countries.

<sup>ii</sup> At the basic education level, which is the target of the School Meal Programme (SMP), the student population is between the ages of 3 and 14.

# Design and implementation of school meal programmes

## Description

The School Meal Programme (SMP) in Mexico began in 1929 under the name "Gota de Leche" and consisted of providing a ration of milk to students in schools in Mexico City. In 1935, the School Breakfast programme was introduced, but it was not until 1995 that it was extended to the whole country. Since its decentralisation in 2001, it has undergone changes in its composition, objectives, implementation and coverage. Starting in 2007, nutritional quality criteria for inputs and menus were created in response to the increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity among children. In 2015, emphasis was placed on targeting for programme implementation, and committee training was formalised. In 2019, strong actions began to be implemented to transition from cold to hot school breakfasts to ensure better food quality. That same year, the programme changed its name from Desayunos Escolares to Alimentación Escolar (School Meals).<sup>17</sup>

The programme is operated by a public institution known as the National System for Integral Family Development (*Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*, SNDIF), which is part of the Ministry of Health<sup>iii</sup> and is governed by the Comprehensive Strategy for Social Assistance, Nutrition and Community Development (*Estrategia Integral de Asistencia Social, Alimentación y Desarrollo Comunitario*, EIASADC). This strategy includes, among other aspects, the nutritional quality criteria mentioned above.

In terms of governance, this central structure allows the SNDIF to establish guidelines and targets at the national level, while the State and Municipal Systems, in coordination with the SNDIF, are responsible for adapting and implementing the programme at the local level, considering the specific needs and conditions of the state and municipalities.<sup>17</sup>

## Objectives

The SMP aims to promote access to and consumption of nutritious and safe food for children and adolescents in basic education (preschool, primary and secondary) attending NES public schools, through the provision of meals designed based on nutritional quality and safety criteria, with cultural relevance; accompanied by food guidance and education actions that encourage the purchase of local products from small producers and/or small businesses, as well as promoting family and sustainable agriculture contributing to an adequate nutrition and promoting universal coverage of Hot School Meal Programme (*Alimentación Escolar Modalidad Caliente*).<sup>17</sup>

The SMP integrates the sustainability concepts through the EIASADC so that each State System DIF (*Sistema Estatal para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*, SEDIF) can adapt them according to their needs. In general terms, the programme:

- Should align with and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda.
- Seeks to promote social equity among its target groups, based on the protection and promotion of human rights.

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<sup>iii</sup> Government agency in charge of public health in the country.

- Ensures that the food consumed meets nutritional and hygiene requirement, in compliance with Official Mexican Standards.<sup>iv</sup>
- Suggests the purchase of at least 15% of food supplies from local producers, small producers or small businesses to support the local economy.<sup>17</sup>

## Coverage

During the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year, 5,698,608 food rations were delivered daily,<sup>12</sup> covering 27% of the basic education school population attending public schools and 24% if all the country's enrolment is considered (public and private schools).<sup>11,12</sup> Table 3 shows the detail of school enrolment in Mexico and the coverage of the SMP in relation to enrolment.

*Table 3: Total School Meal Programme (SMP) coverage by level of education*

Educational level	Total enrolment in public schools	Total enrolment in private schools	Total enrolment	Beneficiaries of the SMP	% coverage of total schools	% coverage of total public schools
Preschool	3,651,176	592,028	4,243,204	1,464,881	35%	40%
Primary	11,812,079	1,342,275	13,154,354	3,615,148	27%	31%
Secondary	5,661,963	622,414	6,284,377	503,289	8%	9%
Other spaces <sup>v</sup>	-	-	-	115,290	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,125,218 <sup>11</sup></b>	<b>2,556,717 <sup>11</sup></b>	<b>23,681,935 <sup>11</sup></b>	<b>5,698,608 <sup>12</sup></b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>27%</b>

Sources: Sistema Interactivo de Consulta de Estadística Educativa SEP, 2024 <sup>11</sup> ; SNDIF, 2024 (direct request)<sup>12</sup>.

## Targeting

The EAP is primarily aimed at:

- Girls, boys and adolescents attending NES public schools located in municipalities, rural, urban or indigenous localities with a high and very high degree of marginalisation.<sup>vi</sup>
- Girls, boys and adolescents attending NES public schools with a prevalence greater than or equal to 15% of students with malnutrition, regardless of the degree of marginalisation.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>iv</sup> Official Mexican Standard NOM-043-SSA2-2012 and Official Mexican Standard NOM-251-SSA1-2009.

<sup>v</sup> Child day-care centres, nurseries, high schools, universities, hostels, community centres or canteens.

<sup>vi</sup> The degree of marginalisation is evaluated based on several criteria that reflect the living conditions and access to basic services of the population, such as lack of access to education, health, decent housing, basic services, extreme poverty, among others.<sup>18</sup>

## Meal types

- **Hot mode:** includes the delivery of a nutritious food ration, prepared within the food spaces by the School Meal Committee (SMC). The food is served in the school canteen or an adapted place.
- **Cold mode:** includes the direct delivery of a menu consisting of one serving of plain milk (unflavoured and with no added sugars), one serving of whole grain cereal (mainly bars or biscuits), one serving of fresh or dried fruit with a portion of oilseeds and at least one serving of raw vegetables. Their consumption takes place on the school campus.<sup>17</sup>

The time at which school meals are provided is variable and depends on each school. The SMC is mainly composed of mothers, fathers or guardians of the beneficiaries, who must monitor and promote actions aimed at adequate nutrition. These actions include the receipt and preparation of inputs; delivery and distribution of rations; management of surplus inputs; and ensuring that the food consumed meets nutritional, quality and safety needs.<sup>17</sup>

## Nutritional norms

The guidelines for the composition of food support are established by SNDIF based on the qualitative and quantitative nutritional quality criteria established in the EIASADC.<sup>17</sup> Cyclical menus are designed taking into account that:

- Food from the region is included, respecting food traditions and customs.
- Cover 25% of individual daily requirements.
- Be made up of:
  - A beverage - water and/or skimmed milk. In case of providing atole (a hot masa-based beverage) or plant milk from cereals such as oats, rice or amaranth as a beverage, the portion of cereal in the main dish should be adjusted.
  - A main course
  - A fresh seasonal fruit

For hot school meals, the delivered pantry must contain at least 15 different items from the groups included in the "*Plato del Bien Comer Saludable y Sostenible*"<sup>vii</sup>, depending on the days and the number of beneficiaries for whom the preparation is envisaged.<sup>17</sup>

Table 4: Input requirements by modality

Hot mode	Cold mode
Skimmed milk 2-4 cereals maximum 1 food source of calcium At least 1 food source of animal protein and/or haem iron 2-5 varieties of legumes 1 food source of healthy fats (oilseeds, avocado, peanut butter, etc.) Vegetables and fruits preferably fresh (if vegetable mixes are provided, they should not contain potato and corn) <sup>17</sup>	1 portion of skimmed milk (250 ml) 30 g whole grain cereal 10 to 12 g oilseeds 1 portion of fresh fruit or 20 g of dried fruit A portion of raw vegetables <sup>17</sup>

Source: Integral Strategy for Social Food Assistance and Community Development 2025, SNDIF <sup>17</sup>

<sup>vii</sup> <https://www.gob.mx/promosalud/articulos/que-son-las-guias-alimentarias>

It is recommended to offer a combination of whole grain cereal, dried fruit and oilseeds with no added binders, sugars, fats or salt, to avoid the resulting products requiring front-of-package warning labels.<sup>17</sup>

## **Food procurement**

The tendering process for food supplies is carried out based on the formulation of the allocations to be delivered. The contracting of suppliers can be centralised or decentralised, in accordance with previously established state criteria.<sup>17</sup>

In general, food supply consists of the supplier delivering inputs to SEDIF warehouses, which in turn deliver them to SMDIF or, in other cases, directly to the canteens. Food that is not delivered directly by SEDIF and/or SMDIF is purchased by the SMC from local producers or, if available, is acquired through the school garden to complement and elaborate the menus suggested by each State.<sup>17</sup>

## **Legal framework and public policy evolution**

The legal framework for school feeding in Mexico is based on several laws, guidelines and norms that seek to guarantee the right to adequate food for children and adolescents.

In the first instance, Article 4 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States establishes the right to food as part of the right to health and specifies that it is the State's obligation to be able to guarantee it.<sup>19</sup>

The General Law on Adequate and Sustainable Food issued in 2024 establishes that all children and adolescents in basic education have the right to receive adequate food in school establishments, free of charge or at affordable prices, adhering to the general guidelines for the preparation, distribution and sale of food and beverages.<sup>20</sup>

For its part, the General Education Law establishes the importance of healthy lifestyles in proper nutrition in the NES.<sup>21</sup>

The Social Assistance Act regulates, among other things, the School Meal Programme.<sup>22</sup>

The General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents protects the right to adequate food.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, the General Guidelines to which the preparation, distribution and sale of prepared, processed and bulk foods and beverages, as well as the promotion of healthy eating lifestyles in all schools of the NES, establish the norms and requirements for the quality and safety of food sold and distributed in schools in general.

Finally, the EIASADC is the document that sets the guidelines for the operation of the SMP. Based on this, each state has the commitment to issue the Rules of Operation of the programme in its Official Journal to give it legal support.

Regarding the evolution of the SMP, it has been characterized mainly by its decentralization, its greater scope and adaptation to the epidemiological and nutritional context of the country. In addition, in recent years attention has been paid to improving the programme's targeting mechanisms and has strengthened the comprehensive strategy in favour of healthy, sustainable and fair nutrition for children, including actions for the transition from cold to hot breakfasts.<sup>24</sup>

Likewise, regulatory policies have been implemented to improve the eating habits of children and adolescents in schools because they spend 4 to 6 hours in schools and have multiple opportunities to access and consume food, either through the SMP or through the sale of food and beverages (mostly through the sale of food). This sale is characterised by the offer of unhealthy products, and it has been identified that students consume an average of 550 extra

calories per day from sugary drinks, fried foods and sweets, which results in a considerable weight gain per school year.<sup>25,26</sup> Despite efforts to improve the nutritional quality of the SMP, unhealthy sales within schools have represented an obstacle to the achievement of the programme's objectives.

**Efforts to regulate school food environments:** In 2010, the government drafted regulations to combat childhood obesity by regulating the sale and distribution of prepared and processed foods and beverages in basic education schools but faced legal and operational gaps. In 2023-2024, "My Healthy School" platform identified that more than 98% of schools did not comply with the regulation and sold unhealthy products such as fried foods and soft drinks, while their supply of fruits, vegetables or drinking water represented only 20%.<sup>27</sup>

**Towards a comprehensive model for regulating school food environments:** In response to repeated calls from international organisations and the National Human Rights Commission, in 2024, laws were modified and enacted to protect the entire student community due to the urgent need to act in favour of their health and nutrition. Examples of these laws are the General Law on Adequate and Sustainable Food (*Ley General de Alimentación Adecuada y Sostenible*), and the General Law on Education (*Ley General de Educación*), from which the General Guidelines for the preparation, distribution and sale of prepared, processed and bulk foods and beverages, as well as the promotion of healthy lifestyles in nutrition, are derived in all schools of the NES.

## Costs of implementation

The budget allocated to the SMP corresponds to the Ministry of Health, regardless of whether the operation is carried out in schools. However, no public information is available on the amount allocated for each meal at federal, state or municipal level.

*Table 5: Costs of the School Meal Programme (2023)<sup>24</sup>*

Number of children and adolescents covered by the SMP	5,698,608
Average cost of a meal (MXN)	\$16 pesos <sup>viii</sup>
Cost of raw materials	Information not available
Labour costs	Information not available <sup>ix</sup>
Family involvement	Information not available <sup>x</sup>
Municipal budget per child per meal	Information not available
Public budget per child per meal	Information not available
Number of teaching days per year in one academic year	190
Number of school meal days in one academic year	190

Source: *Documentation of Experiences of Transition from Cold to Hot SMP Modality, UNICEF 2024.*<sup>24</sup> (1 dollar USD = 20.3 pesos \$ in March 2025)

<sup>viii</sup> There are differences between States (costs vary as they may include inputs, transport, utensils or site infrastructure).

<sup>ix</sup> In some cases, financial remuneration for the food preparers (usually mothers and fathers do this work on a voluntary basis).

<sup>x</sup> Recovery fees for the food ration that are covered by families, which range from \$0 to \$2 pesos in cold mode and \$0 to \$34 pesos in hot mode. These fees help to cover inputs and operating costs of the programme (Following an amendment to the General Health Law in 2023, the government is prohibited from charging fees for assistance services, so if fees are charged, they should be in the state rules and not limit access to the programme).

## Financing

For the operation of the programme, a federal budget is allocated that prioritises food assistance<sup>xi</sup>, and which is transferred to each of the 32 states of the country within the framework of the programme structure established by the SNDIF. In addition, each state and municipality contributes additional funds. The resources for the operation of the programme come from the Federal Expenditure Budget, particularly from the Multiple Contribution Fund V of the Social Assistance component (FAM-AS), which is part of the resources that the states and municipalities receive from the Federation.<sup>17</sup>

This is governed by the Fiscal Coordination Law, which establishes that the exercise and application of resources is the responsibility of each state, within the framework of the programme structure established by the SNDIF. This law establishes that 54% of the funds must be allocated to the construction, equipment and rehabilitation of school infrastructure, while the remaining 46% must be allocated to the provision of school meals - which is channelled by the SNDIF - of which no less than 85% must be prioritised to food assistance. This budget in 2024 amounted to 14 billion pesos. It is important to consider that at the state and municipal levels, other funds are added, which vary from state to state.<sup>17</sup>

Within the linkages to operate the programme, some SEDIF have the support of other Secretariats such as: Public Education to facilitate communication with school authorities; Agriculture and Rural Development for the implementation and monitoring of school gardens; Urban Works and Services for the construction of prototype kitchens; Bienestar (equivalent to the Secretariat of Social Development) with state investment to reinforce school feeding; the Secretariat of Health to refer girls and boys with malnutrition problems. Between 2007 and 2022, there was a "Full-Time Schools" programme, which in some schools included a food component, with a budget allocated from the education sector. However, since the 2018-2024 government administration, priority was given to other aspects and the programme disappeared. In some cases, the SEDIFs took over responsibility for the schools that had canteens under the programme and began to operate the preparation and delivery of hot breakfasts.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand, in some States, there is participation with academic institutions, or there are partnerships with organisations such as Save the Children or Fundación Banamex, or other donors such as Central de Abastos, to provide fresh vegetables and fruit.<sup>24</sup>

## Monitoring and evaluation

To guarantee the proper operation of the SMP, the State DIF Systems carry out monitoring through follow-up visits or periodic supervisions to the warehouses and canteens. The visits are random and the aspects that are monitored are:

- Adherence to menus in terms of quality and quantity (portions)
- Review of the absence of non-permitted foodstuffs
- Food input sufficiency
- Good hygienic practices, among other things.<sup>17</sup>

Also, each SEDIF implements follow-up strategies through communication media such as phone calls and WhatsApp groups.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, the EIASADC is planning a nutritional surveillance system, called "Evaluation of Nutritional Status", which concentrates information

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<sup>xi</sup> Federal Contributions for Federal Entities and Municipalities General Branch 33 Multiple Contribution Fund V, Social Assistance component (FAM-AS).

on weight, height and eating habits of children and adolescents of the NES, mainly at primary and secondary levels.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the SNDIF performance index annually evaluates key aspects of the food programmes implemented by the SEDIFs, such as the transition from cold to hot mode, nutritional quality, state and municipal contributions, progress in coverage, distribution, social participation, resources provided and training.<sup>17</sup> However, the results of these evaluations are not public.

There are few studies on the impact of the SMP. One of them, by Shamah Levy *et al.* (2010), showed that DIF's hot breakfasts in the State of Mexico have a higher energy and protein adequacy for children and adolescent beneficiaries.<sup>28</sup> Another corresponds to an internal self-evaluation of DIF in Mexico City, which identified the need to strengthen the programme's monitoring and operational supervision mechanisms.<sup>29</sup> In 2023, the National Evaluation Council (CONEVAL)<sup>xii</sup> conducted an evaluation of the budget and coverage by state, but not on the results or impact of the programme.<sup>30</sup> This shows that the lack of recent nationwide evaluations limits our knowledge of the real impact of the programme at the various levels at which it operates.

## Lessons learned and best practices

While there is no current information on the results and impact of the programme, it is possible to identify good practices at the different levels at which the SMP operates:

- Improvements in the nutritional quality of inputs and their composition, especially with the promotion and incentive (through the performance index) to move from cold to hot breakfasts in the SEDIFs. Progress enabled five states to achieve 100% coverage of the hot modality for their beneficiary population by the end of 2023.
- Diversification of state or municipal funding sources in addition to federal funding, to increase the effectiveness of programme operation and extend coverage.
- Establishment of mechanisms for the local purchase of at least 15% of inputs from small producers and small businesses, as determined in the programme's rules of operation, where each state must seek to provide fresh food for the programme in both modalities.
- Leveraging infrastructure from other programmes that had school canteens, mobile kitchens have been innovated, and government funds now allow up to 15% to be invested in infrastructure, which was not possible in previous years.

## Challenges

- The lack of a space for inter-institutional coordination between the health, education, agriculture and finance sectors, as proposed by the General Food Law through SINSAMAC, reduces the potential impact of programme actions, including the SMP.
- The transition from cold to hot breakfasts has made significant progress, however there are still barriers to accelerating progress and it is still difficult to buy foods for cold breakfasts that do not carry warning labels about the presence of critical nutrients in amounts greater than those set out in NOM-051 nutrient profiles. The food on offer does not yet satisfy this market. The food supply does not yet satisfy this market.

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<sup>xii</sup> Decentralised public body in charge of evaluating and monitoring social development policy in the country.

- The amendment to article 36 of the General Health Law, which implies the cessation of DIF recovery charges, is causing difficulties in covering expenditure, particularly of an operational nature, while at the same time requiring the capacity of committees to be strengthened for the proper use of resources.
- The SMP, being linked to social assistance, can have a political use, limiting the recognition of its importance and impact on health, nutrition and learning, reducing its potential as a tool for resilience and social well-being, as well as undermining the targeting process.
- The lack of enforcement of regulatory policies in the school environment perpetuates the sale of ultra-processed foods and beverages during the school day.

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# Annex

## Recommendations for the System for the Integral Development of the Family (*Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*, DIF)

- Strengthen inter-institutional coordination and linkages between the health, education, agriculture and finance sectors to enhance the impact of the programme's actions, with DIF and the Ministry of Education taking a leading role.
- Continue efforts to move from cold to hot breakfasts, as well as to resume joint actions with research centres to support the development of nutritious inputs that do not have warning labels.
- Establish clear mechanisms for transparency and accountability of economic resources for the implementation of the programme at all levels, as well as strengthen the capacities of the Committees for the best use of resources.
- Standardise and shield the school meal programme from political use to recognise the importance and impact of health, nutrition and learning as resilience and social wellbeing programmes.
- Universal coverage has been envisaged; however, it requires a feasibility analysis and firstly ensuring a transition from cold to hot meals based on available resources.
- Analyse, according to the changes required to improve and strengthen the operation of the SMP, whether adjustments to the General Law on Adequate and Sustainable Food are necessary.
- Refine differentiated strategies to address different forms of malnutrition (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity) in the SMP.
- Establish regular and systematic outcome and impact evaluation mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement of the programme.
- Guide SEDIFs on how to obtain and organise resources to address the structural and financial realities faced by schools to achieve healthy environments (access to basic services, kitchen infrastructure, equipment and utensils for food preparation and the rising costs of healthy food).
- Seek transparent mechanisms for remuneration or formalisation of the work of mothers and fathers who prepare food for school meals.
- Develop tools and build solutions that help small and medium farmers to increase their production and include them as participants in the value chain and formalisation to ensure their participation in school meal programmes, giving priority to women producers.
- Standardise and strengthen training and awareness-raising plans to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the programme.
- Support the implementation of regulatory policies to secure the school environment and reduce the availability of ultra-processed foods and beverages for sale during the school day.