

SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020–2021

- National School Feeding Program

Lead Agency: Ministry of Education

NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition
- Food safety
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...

- Yes No No response

BUDGET

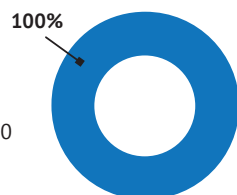
Total: USD 397,158*

- Government: USD 397,158
- International donors**: USD 0
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Yes No No response

*The National School Feeding Program was not functioning in 2020–2021. However, funds from international organizations, such as UNICEF, were used to provide students who had been served under the feeding program with grocery baskets.

**International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.



INFRASTRUCTURE

All schools in Belize have electricity; most schools have piped and clean water and flush toilets; and some schools have latrines, dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias, and kitchens. The school kitchens are typically equipped with refrigeration and gas stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES

Population and enrollment numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report. While no students were reached through the National School Feeding Program in 2020–2021, the program is expected to resume operations. In some places, this report summarizes the typical activities of the program (i.e., from 2019).

MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Take-home rations
- Other

- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Salt
- Sugar

- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- Fruit juice
- Tea
- Water
- Other

Prohibited food items: None

FOOD SOURCES

- Purchased (domestic)
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Handwashing with soap
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- School gardens
- Hygiene
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education

The checked items were provided in most or all participating schools.



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Belize



SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021

School level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving food
Pre-school	15,696	7,312	0
Primary school	45,920	49,449	0
Secondary school	46,646	39,764	0
Total	108,262	96,525	0

In 2019–2020, the National School Feeding Program reached 1,200 primary school students.



COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

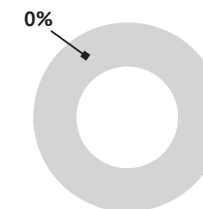
Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 92,566

Receiving school food: 0

In 2019–2020, the coverage rate was 1.3%.

Food was also provided to some students in...

- Pre-schools
- Vocational/trade schools
- Other



NUTRITION

School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:

- Fortified foods**
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements**
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity**

Food items fortified/biofortified:

Grains

Micronutrients:

Iron, folic acid

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At least 4 nutritionists are engaged in school feeding in Belize. Food and nutrition education is offered in schools with the aim of preventing or mitigating overweight/obesity.

STUDIES CONDUCTED

None reported

RESEARCH NEEDED

Not specified

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*

Cooks and food preparers
Transporters
Off-site processors
Food packagers and handlers
Monitoring
Food service management
Safety and quality inspectors
Other

**If blank, no response was provided.*

Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...

- Yes No No response

There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...

- Women Other groups
 Youth **No response**

There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?

- Yes No There are no food banks in this country.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the National School Feeding Program, the government contracts with private sector service providers, paying a set amount per meal served (i.e., in a catering arrangement). This amount covers all costs, including food purchases, provider salaries, etc. Parents provide assistance with serving food and cleaning up after the students have eaten. In return, the parents receive excess food to take home or a stipend.

SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Recent successes related to school feeding in Belize include the monitoring and evaluating of School Leaders; the assistance of children and teachers in some schools with chores (e.g., cleaning up after themselves); the timely payment of cooks and assistant cooks; the availability of fresh food at a reasonable cost; the healthy menu; and the coverage, in which children from 25 schools receive food daily. Challenges for the feeding program include the inadequate commitment from parents and teachers at some schools with regard to time, the provision of additional funds, and monitoring and evaluation; the uncertain sustainability of government funding for the program; the waste of food which children do not wish to eat; and "junk food," which is sold to children in some schools before lunch.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, no students were reached by the National School Feeding Program in 2020-2021. Charities/NGOs were engaged in the effort to reach school children with food during the pandemic in partnership with the National School Feeding Program. Belize was also affected by natural disasters in 2020-2021.

CONTACTS: BELIZE

Agency: Ministry of Education

Website: <https://www.moe.gov.bz>

NATIONAL SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education

OBJECTIVES:

- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school meals

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- 5 times per week during the school year

TARGETING:

Schools were selected in two districts, Belize district and Stann Creek District. At these schools, students were selected to receive school meals based on need. Students in the government social protection program BOOST were also enrolled in the National School Feeding program.

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	0	–	–
Primary school	0	–	–
Secondary school	0	–	–
Total	0	–	–

In 2019–2020, 1,200 students received school meals.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Grains, cereals*	Poultry	Salt
Roots, tubers	Green, leafy vegetables	Sugar
Legumes, pulses, nuts	Other vegetables	Fruit juice
Dairy products	Fruits	Water
Meat	Oil	

* *fortified*

FOOD SOURCES:

100% Purchased (domestic) 0% In-kind (domestic)
 0% Purchased (foreign) 0% In-kind (foreign)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The National School Feeding Technical Committee oversees school feeding activities in Belize, and the National School Feeding Program has been operating since 2013. Take-home rations were provided three times in 2020, with fruits and vegetables included in the package twice. As of 2021, it is unclear when the National School Feeding Program will resume operations.

