

## SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020

- Complementary School Food Program  
(Programa de Alimentación Complementary Escolar - P.A.C.E.)
- Study Without Hunger 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

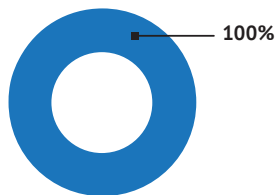
## BUDGET

Total: USD 15,884,000

- Government: USD 15,884,000
- International donors\*: USD 0
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 00

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

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



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Some schools in Panamá have electricity, clean and piped water, dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias, and kitchens, and most have toilets.

## SPECIAL NOTES

In 2020, Emergency Food for COVID-19 (Alimentación en Emergencia por COVID-19) also operated in Panamá, in addition to the school feeding program.

## MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Snacks            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Take-home rations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                        |
- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grains, cereals | <input type="checkbox"/> Green, leafy vegetables |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roots, tubers              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other vegetables        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legumes, pulses, nuts      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruits                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy products             | <input type="checkbox"/> Oil                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meat                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish                       |  |
- 
- |                                       |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy milk   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tea   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt drink | <input type="checkbox"/> Water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit juice  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

**Prohibited food items:** Carbonated and/or sweetened drinks, unhealthy snacks and sweets, other foods with artificial sweeteners, foods high in sugar and sodium, and fried foods

## FOOD SOURCES

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

## COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwashing with soap  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing testing/treatment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Height measurement     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dental cleaning/testing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight measurement     | <input type="checkbox"/> Menstrual hygiene         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Testing for anemia     | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking water            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deworming treatment    | <input type="checkbox"/> Water purification        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eye testing/eyeglasses |  |

## COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food and nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> Health              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reproductive health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School gardens     | <input type="checkbox"/> HIV prevention      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene            | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical education  |

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



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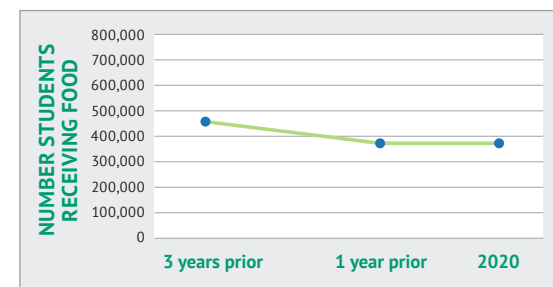
# REPUBLIC OF Panamá



## SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

### CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020

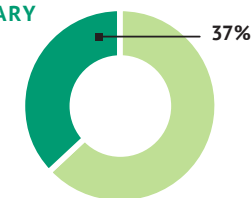
School level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving food
Pre-school	192,659	93,184	77,068
Primary school	470,850	420,481	308,272
Secondary school	372,808	304,105	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,036,317</b>	<b>817,770</b>	<b>385,340</b>



### COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 843,658

Receiving school food: 308,272



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/cereals

### Micronutrients:

Vitamins A, B6, and B12, iron, zinc, folic acid, thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At least 16 nutritionists were involved in school feeding programs in Panamá in 2020, and there are nutritional requirements regarding the recommended calories for a snack.

## STUDIES CONDUCTED

None reported

## RESEARCH NEEDED

Research on the current program(s) would be appreciated in order to improve the menu and better target beneficiaries.

## 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

The private sector is involved in food trading, transport, and processing for the school feeding program in Panamá. Because food is purchased in processed form or purchased and distributed in unprocessed form, no cooks are involved in the program. Though employment numbers are not known by the national government, employment is created within the companies that supply the food for the school feeding program.

## CONTACTS: PANAMÁ

**Agency:** Ministry of Education

**Website:** [www.meduca.gob.pa](http://www.meduca.gob.pa)

## SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

School feeding in Panamá is associated with a decrease in school dropouts and improved nutritional status of students. It further contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals, notably goal 2 of zero hunger in the world by 2030. However, the school feeding program suffers from a funding deficit. Specifically, the program experienced a deficit of USD 7,962,704 in 2020, and the frequency of food distribution decreased from 120 to 75 days per year.

## EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, most schools in Panamá closed for three months before re-opening to operate remotely for the last six months of the 2020 school year. The pandemic did not affect the number of students reached by school feeding program, the ration size, the food items included, or the amount of funding. However, the frequency of food distribution declined, there was a change in the location and modality of food distribution (specifically, food was now provided to students or their parents to pick up at school to prepare and eat at home), and there was a change in beneficiaries (switching from targeting students to targeting their families).

## COMPLEMENTARY SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM / STUDY WITHOUT HUNGER PROGRAM PROGRAMA DE ALIMENTACIÓN COMPLEMENTARIA ESCOLAR - P.A.C.E.

**Lead implementer(s):** Ministry of Education

### OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals

### MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school snacks
- Take-home rations

### FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- Twice per month during the school year

### TARGETING:

Based on socioeconomic characteristics of individual students

### HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	77,068	–	–
Primary school	308,272	–	–
Secondary school	0	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>385,340</b>	–	–

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Grains, cereals\*

\* *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 Complementary School Food Program began in 1995 and is managed by the national government in a centralized manner. In the 2020 school year, take-home rations comprised of grains/cereals were provided to students twice per month. The Study Without Hunger Program responds to Law 115 of December 5, 2019. However, this second program was not fully executed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

