



"School feeding governance, policy and legal frameworks" was the theme of the third virtual training session for school feeding practitioners from the Caribbean

The activity was carried out by FAO, the Brazilian and Mexican cooperation agencies and the Caribbean Agro economic Society (CAAES).

Brasília, June 8, 2023 – On June 06 was held the third virtual training session of Caribbean professionals involved in school feeding programs to discuss and exchange experiences on the subject of governance, policy and regulatory frameworks for school feeding programs. Nearly 60 people participated.

The activity was jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the school feeding project of the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Program, the Mexico-CARICOM-FAO Initiative and the Caribbean Agro economic Society (CAAES), in association with the University of the West Indies (UWI). Also, the training was an integral part of the 34th West Indies Agricultural Economics Conference 2023, held in Nassau, Bahamas. The two previous sessions were held in 2022.

At the inauguration of the training, Crispim Moreira, FAO Representative for Jamaica, Belize and the Bahamas, spoke on behalf of the FAO sub-regional Coordinator for the Caribbean and highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge among countries on the subject of school feeding, looking at issues such as the procurement of products from family farming and food and nutrition education, as well as tools and strategies relevant for the strengthening of school feeding programs in the Caribbean.

Similarly, Representatives of the Cooperation Agencies of Mexico and Brazil participated in that activity. José Alfredo GALVAN, Director for Social, Human and Sustainable Development, spoke on behalf of the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), describing the training session as crucial for the friendship between his country and the Caribbean and the commitment of his country to keep collaborating with the region.

On behalf of Brazil, the project analyst of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ABC/MRE), Paola Barbieri, and the Director of Educational Actions of the National Fund for Educational Development (FNDE), Gilnei da Costa, seized the opportunity to share the experience of Brazil to the Caribbean and explained the importance of the training for reflection, learning and exchange of experiences, practices and methodological tools among actors.

For her part, the CAAES representative, Sharon Hutchinson, professor and director of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension at the University of the West Indies, appreciated the relevance of that opportunity to bring stakeholders of different countries and institutions together.

The FAO Legal Officer, Manuela Cuvi, presented the importance of regulatory frameworks for school feeding and its relevance for governments and institutions to improve school policies. It was an opportunity for the officer to explain the implications of working with policies and laws and their differences. For her, legislation is central to sustainable school food and nutrition policies.

The coordinator of the project Consolidation of School Feeding Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Brazil-FAO Cooperation, Najla Veloso, highlighted some crucial recommendations when it comes to legal frameworks for school feeding, capitalizing on the experiences of Brazil and other countries that are part of the project. Veloso also informed that all these recommendations would be available more in-depth in a regional publication that will be launched shortly.

The training also featured successful practices and experiences from Brazil, Mexico, and the Caribbean on legal and policy frameworks. The coordinator of Social Control and deputy coordinator-general of the National School Feeding Program in Brazil, Renata Mainenti, presented the steps followed by her country to develop its school feeding legal framework, detailing important characteristics and actors, as well as challenges faced and lessons learned particularly in linking the school feeding program with family farming.

The representative of the SNDIF (National System for Integral Family Development) of Mexico, Francisco Meza, also seized the opportunity to share his country's experience addressing the experiences of the school feeding policy in Mexico.

On behalf of the CAAES-UWI, Afiya De Sormeaux presented the cases of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, highlighting advances of Caribbean countries to develop school feeding policies with the support of academia.

The session concluded with a sense of satisfaction and commitment, particularly on the part of FAO, the Governments of Mexico and Brazil, and CAAES/UWI to continue collaborating with the Caribbean countries in their process of reinforcing their school feeding programs to offer a healthy diet made of products from family farming.

For more information:

Paulo Beraldo

Paulo.PalmaBeraldo@fao.org