

Regional Workshop
Bénin – Côte d'Ivoire – Burkina Faso.

Building Resilient and Sustainable School Feeding Systems in West Africa



Background and Rationale

School feeding programs promote educational access, child nutrition, and local agricultural development. In West Africa, these systems are increasingly threatened by climate shocks, funding challenges, and evolving public health crises. Nevertheless, such programs have consistently been linked to increased school attendance and retention, particularly among girls, who often face additional educational barriers. The need for resilient, homegrown strategies is more urgent than ever. This workshop will convene diverse stakeholders to co-create innovative, sustainable solutions that ensure every child receives a quality education and a nourishing daily meal.

Objectives

- Share replicable best practices and successful models from across the region;
- Promote regional collaboration and policy alignment on school feeding;
- Support the integration of local food systems and nutrition-sensitive procurement
- Build resilience in school feeding programs against environmental and socio-economic disruptions;
- Strengthen the link between school feeding programs and improved education outcomes, especially increasing attendance rates among girls.

Expected Outcomes:

- A regional roadmap for resilient and sustainable school feeding programs;
- Strengthened cross-sector and cross-country partnerships;
- A toolkit of best practices adapted to the West African context;
- Commitments to scale up locally sourced, nutrition-sensitive school meals;
- Evidence-based strategies to boost school attendance and retention, with a focus on improving educational outcomes for girls.

Participating Countries

Stakeholders from Benin, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire will attend, ensuring shared regional perspectives on opportunities and challenges in building robust school feeding systems.

Participants

The workshop will include representatives from the Ministries of Education, Nutrition, Agriculture, and Health across West Africa, civil society organizations, farmer cooperatives, youth leaders, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and development partners such as the FAO and UNICEF. This open forum aims to build policy and practice through diverse voices.