

HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL EVENT:
**THE POWER OF MULTISECTORAL APPROACHES
TO HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**

Brasilia, August 29-31 2023

The World Food Programme (WFP) and the WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil hosted the high-level regional event: "The Power of Multisectoral Approaches to Human Capital Development" held in Brasilia, Brazil, from 29-31 August 2023.

Representatives from 25 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean attended the event: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Venezuela.

In addition, international experts, members of international financial institutions (Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, CAF), bilateral donors (Canada, Finland, United Kingdom, European Union), United Nations agencies (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC, FAO, Office of the Resident Coordinator Brazil, UNESCO, UNICEF, regional organizations (Central American Integration System, SICA), international cooperation organizations (Global Child Nutrition, GCNF, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, AECID), representatives of academia (Institute of Development Studies, IDS, Research Consortium of the School Feeding Coalition) and the private sector (DSM, Mastercard) also participated.

This event highlighted the multiple challenges the LAC region faces in overcoming the multiple economic, health, and climate crises. The governments of the region have resorted to already existing social protection systems as a response to preserve human capital. This strategy has led to a significant poverty reduction. However, despite regional advances, there is still a need to strengthen a multisectoral approach to develop more comprehensive interventions to address the multidimensional needs of vulnerable populations. Mainstreaming food and nutrition security and education in this endeavor is crucial for human capital development. Yet, an effective multisectoral approach requires an integrated response from social protection systems, including school feeding programs, as well as food, health, and education systems. Such system integration will contribute to designing and implementing more comprehensive and inclusive strategies and programs to foster human capital development in the region. During the event, participants highlighted that: Social protection programs significantly improve food and nutrition security and contribute to the development of human capital in the region, especially if they are integrated into food, education, and health systems.

The experiences of several countries have shown that the articulated action of social protection programs makes it possible to improve the nutritional status of populations living in vulnerable situations. On the other hand, country representatives demonstrated that promoting family farming in institutional markets can link social protection systems to fair and sustainable food systems and healthy food environments, boosting the local economy in innovative ways.



The role of strategic alliances between the various actors: government, international cooperation, academia, civil society organizations, and the private sector is key to achieving a multiplier effect of complementary approaches for human capital development in the region.

Participants suggested that countries in the region consider:

- COMPREHENSIVELY link social protection systems with health, food, and education systems to significantly improve food and nutrition security.
- MAINTAIN a high political and financial commitment to improve the scope and quality of programs by ensuring sustained investment in social protection programs, with the participation of different sectors. This involves identifying innovative solutions within a tight fiscal space.
- INTEGRATE MULTIPLE NUTRITION-RELATED OBJECTIVES – such as access to nutritious and culturally appropriate diets, health services, improving food environments, or promoting healthy habits from the design of social protection programs to address the double burden of malnutrition.
- PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO GROUPS IN A STATE OF VULNERABILITY – depending on their health status, age, sex, disability, ethnicity, or geographical origin, especially if they intersect – to avoid leaving anyone behind. This is especially the case for people living with HIV.
- CONTINUE INVESTING in research and capacity building to inform policies and programs, especially in areas with limited information or resources.
- DOCUMENT AND DISSEMINATE the achievements, advances, and opportunities of Latin America and the Caribbean to position evidence-based public policies through global forums such as The Research Consortium of the School Feeding Coalition, among others.
- CONTINUE TO PROMOTE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION in terms of experiences of the countries of the region and shared learning to strengthen social protection systems for the promotion of food security and the fight against malnutrition in all its forms.
- PROMOTE more inclusive systems that are flexible in the face of different types of shocks and crises, which generate resilience of both programs and people.
- BUILD and share a common vision for the region through regional and sub-regional organizations such as CELAC, MERCOSUR, SICA, CARICOM, CAN (from their Spanish acronyms), among others, and work with regional and global initiatives and networks, such as the coalitions achieved since the Food Systems Summit (the School Meals Coalition, among others), the Sustainable School Feeding Network (RAES, from its Spanish acronym) to reinforce the national commitments already acquired.

With sincere gratitude to the Government of Brazil for the kindness extended to the participants of the Regional Event, the participants concluded that these suggestions, if implemented, will contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable development of human capital in the countries of the region.

