

School Meals Coalition: Nutrition, Health and Education for Every Child
Commitments of the Government of Japan

In Japan, school lunches are believed to have begun in 1889 in Yamagata Prefecture for children of poor families attending private elementary schools. The School Lunch Program Act was formally enacted in 1954, and since then school lunches have become widespread. They maintain a high level of quality and are considered a key component of school education. Currently, nearly 100% of elementary schools and 90% of junior high schools serve school lunches.

Menus are created daily to deliver the required nutritional balance in accordance with the children's stage of development based on the School Lunch Consumption Standard. In order to avoid incidents such as food poisoning, school lunches are strictly managed, from the selection of ingredients to the delivery of meals to the children, as outlined in the School Lunch Hygiene and Sanitation Management Standards. Furthermore, the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku (food and nutrition education) was created to promote various measures and policies in accordance with the Basic Act on Shokuiku which went into effect in 2005. As part of the Shokuiku initiative, school children are trained to acquire knowledge of food and nutrition and to develop their judgement in order to achieve a healthy diet for themselves and others. This system employs diet and nutrition teachers who are assigned to schools to manage lunches and provide guidance on food and nutrition in an integrated manner. We believe that Japan's advanced school lunch system and Shokuiku initiative have the potential to be a model for the rest of the world.

Recognizing the importance of school lunches, Japan has been providing bilateral assistance to developing countries to expand the coverage and improve the quality of their school lunches, and is helping to expand the coverage of school lunches throughout the world through financial contributions to the United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP). Japan has also been contributing to the promotion of home grown school lunch programmes in developing nations by linking WFP's school feeding programmes with bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector. Furthermore, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 last December. As a result of that summit, the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth was issued, giving international society direction in improving nutrition. Over 27 billion USD of financial commitments for nutrition-related global assistance were also announced by a wide range of stakeholders including Japan.

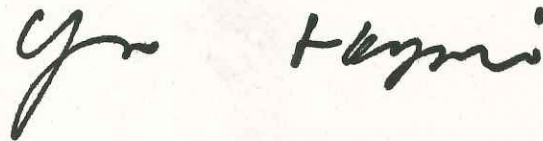
As a country which has developed advanced school lunch systems and provided assistance for increasing the scale of school lunches around the globe, Japan will strive to create a world

where every child has the opportunity to enjoy a healthy and nutritious meal in school by 2030, and support the realization of the objectives of the school meals coalition.

In order for the school meals coalition to achieve its objectives, the Government of Japan commits to the following:

- Share insights into Japan's advanced school lunch system according to the interest of partner countries.
- Share knowledge and experience on the promotion of Shokuiku and initiatives of the private sector relevant to school lunches according to the interest of partner countries.
- Continue to contribute, through our bilateral assistance in the field of school lunches, to the capacity building and human resource development of developing countries for the implementation of school lunch systems, the promotion of home grown school lunches, and the introduction of Shokuiku.
- Continue to contribute to the school feeding programmes of the WFP, supporting the recovery of the opportunity for children to have school meals lost during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring that children are able to meet basic nutritional needs in times of emergency.
- Contribute to enhancing the international attention on school lunches by advocating for the importance of school lunches, nutrition and health at global forums.
- Promote school lunch and "Shokuiku" in Japan, with an emphasis on nutritionally balanced school lunches, advancing further use of local produce in school lunches and implementing "Shokuiku" throughout school education activities based on relevant regulations such as the School Lunch Program Act.

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