



Saving lives and changing lives in Latin America and the Caribbean: Best practices and lessons from working together with governments of the region

Side event on the margins of the annual session of the Executive Board, 2026
Thursday, 25 June 2026, 13:30–14:30
WFP Auditorium and [livestream](#)

Context

Latin America and the Caribbean has made important progress in recent years. The region continues to show gradual improvements in key indicators, including advances in food security and access to basic services, as a result of sustained efforts by governments and their partners. There has also been a reduction in multidimensional poverty over the past decade, driven by improvements in education, connectivity and living conditions.

More than 33 million people continue to be affected by food insecurity in the countries where WFP operates. Access to affordable, diverse, and nutritious food remains the main challenge in a region that still has the highest cost of a healthy diet in the world (USD 5.16 per person per day). In addition, the double burden of malnutrition represents a high economic and social cost.

In 2026 the region faces a highly dynamic context characterized by limited growth, fiscal constraints, and pressures stemming from high energy and fuel costs. The combination of economic and climatic shocks, including El Niño and the hurricane season, continues to generate uncertainty and risks for production, supply chains and livelihoods. A single climate event can destroy critical infrastructure, disrupt supply chains and lead to significant agricultural losses, affecting the food security of thousands of people.

In the face of these risks and challenges, WFP's dual mandate is more relevant than ever, particularly in a context of growing climate vulnerability. WFP continues to work closely with governments across the region, predominantly middle-income countries, to strengthen national policies and programmes, while sharing knowledge and best practices that enhance food security, nutrition and deliver sustainable, long-term impact.

Objectives

Share best practices stemming from WFP's work in Latin America and the Caribbean, showcasing government-led initiatives for building resilient communities, anticipating and preparing for disasters, and strengthening social protection systems, in line with WFP's dual mandate to save and change lives. The side event will center around governments and their own priorities, bringing together permanent representations to discuss local initiatives in select countries. The purpose is to share what *working with governments* means in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to showcase successful national experiences, to foster collaboration with other Member States and connections that strengthen synergies among regions.

Agenda

1. Welcome

- Moderator, Ms Lena Savelli, Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, WFP

2. Opening remarks

- Mr Matthew Hollingworth, Assistant Executive Director, Programme Operations Department, WFP
- H.E. Ms Carla Barroso Carneiro, President of the WFP Executive Board, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil, List C convener

3. Saving lives

- Video feature
- First panel discussion:
 - *Dominican Republic: Institutionalizing anticipatory action in social protection* – H.E. Ms Ada Hernandez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic
 - *Peru: Operationalizing anticipatory action through social registries* – H.E. Mr. Manuel Cacho-Sousa, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Peru

4. Changing lives

- Video feature
- Second panel discussion:
 - *Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: Integrated school feeding and nutrition support* – H.E. Ms Marilyn Di Luca Santaella, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
 - *Nicaragua: School feeding and local procurement for resilience* – H.E. Ms Mónica Robelo Raffone, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nicaragua
 - *Mexico: Advancing school meals through regional collaboration* – H.E. Ms Laura Elena Carrillo Cubillas, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico

5. Audience dialogue and Q&A

- Moderator, Ms Lena Savelli, Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, WFP

6. Closing

- Ms Lena Savelli, Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, WFP