

## **Key factors for sustainable school milk programs in developing countries.**

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When one talks about school feeding programs, it is often thought that they are the same as nutrition education programs, general education programs, just school garden programs, or even a common catering or food service as found in public or institutional cafeterias. However, a school feeding program may be a very complex system requiring a thoughtful, comprehensive and multidisciplinary design and implementation. The simple fact is that school children simply trust in what the program is offering them. Therefore, both the service as the food products, and the whole program, must be of the highest quality. The program must be based on a sound design, optimum management, strong science and technology, appropriate institutional and political support, and sustainable-efficiency criteria. In developing countries, the social and economic conditions, characteristics and capacity of food chains, and constraints to human development, should be taken into account. Some key elements to consider are:

- Comprehensive and integral approach to design and execution
- Political support and commitment
- Designed within a national agricultural and social development framework
- Emphasis in human development, safety and well being
- Cultural viability
- Technical, economical and managerial feasibility

- Priority criteria and national situation base for design and implementation
- Solid on the scientific, technical, managerial and educational aspects
- Efficiency and effectiveness in the design, execution, monitoring and evaluation, beyond operational indicators to cost-benefit and impact indicators
- Nutritious, wholesome, culturally acceptable food products including milk and dairy