LUNCH BOX MONITOR



NEXT STEP

The results of this project will give parents, schools, and governments insight into the content and composition of lunchboxes and will serve as a basis for developing impactful actions in follow-up projects as well as form the baseline measurement for future monitoring actions.





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Insight into the nutritional quality of school lunch-boxes to assess food insecurity among primary school children in Belgium

PROJECT GOALS

· To co-develop a creative, inclusive, non-stigmatising methodology that can objectively register what children (6-12 years) bring in their lunch-box to school.

· To get a clear insight into the nutritional quality of school lunch-boxes to assess food insecurity as well as the healthiness and sustainability of lunch boxes among Flemish primary school children.







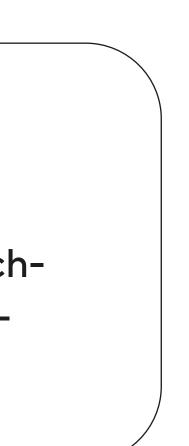


METHOD

· Co-creation: Children, parents and teachers in four Flemish school helped us to co-develop the research methodology in several co-creation sessions organised at the involved schools.

· Large-scale cross-sectional study to measure the content of lunch boxes using both an objective measurement tool (developed in co-creation) and a survey to assess socio-demographics and influencing factors related to the lunch-box content.





RESULTS

· Co-creation sessions: in total, about 90 children, 20 school actors and 15 parents participated in the co-creation sessions. Different brainstorm techniques were applied in the co-creation, also considering the type of participants. In the end, we co-created the methodology to measure lunchboxes and some points of attention were raised:

- children had to be intensely involved in the objective measurement - researchers could not touch their foods;

- certain rules needed to be applied to make sure halal/kosher foods were not contaminated;

- **no comments** could be given regarding their lunchbox; - some tips and tricks were given on the best location and procedure of the measurements.

• Lunch-box measurements: in the spring of 2023 we included 25 primary Flemish schools in our data collection on the content of lunchboxes and snacks. Selection of these 25 schools was based on making a representative sample of Flemish schools taking into account school's socio-economic status indicators as well as urbanisation degree of the location of the schools (i.e. range of types of rural versus urban schools). In total, around **1050 children** filled in our questionnaire and provided objective data on their lunchbox and/or snacks. Data-analysis is currently ongoing.

GEZOND LEVEN

Research blog (in English and Flemish) lunchbox.hypotheses.org >

