As of January 2016, six million Haitians lived in poverty, surviving on less than USD $1.90 a day. Haitian poverty was largely driven by food insecurity, which especially undermines the potential of the country’s children and youth. Recognizing its potential as an agricultural country, Haiti decided to gradually incorporate more local production to catalyze economic growth and reduce reliance of imported food for school feeding (SF).

As part of the process of establishing a sustainable school feeding program, the Haitian State worked with the World Food Program (WFP) and the World Bank to use SABER-SF as a diagnostic tool. This began a large consultation effort on SF policy and resulted in a government-authored policy document completed in January 2016, to which SABER-SF assessment contributed substantially. The new SABER-SF policy includes a detailed 15-year action plan—a critical step for making SF in Haiti sustainable.

**SABER-SF Engagement in Haiti**

The SABER-SF engagement in Haiti provided an important opportunity for different actors engaged in SF to convene in a workshop and review the status of Haiti’s national SF program. In accordance with the SABER-SF framework, the following indicators were used as evaluation criteria:

1. **Policy Framework**: Applying the SABER-SF framework to Haiti illuminated the need to finalize, validate, and disseminate the content of Haiti’s national policy and laws around SF, as well as the need to ratify the National Program School Canteen (PNCS)’s legal framework on school feeding. To address these needs, actors engaged in the SABER-SF exercise recommended establishing an appropriate legal framework for the governance and functioning of SF.

2. **Financial Capacity**: On the financial front, SABER-SF highlighted the need to strengthen, stabilize, and diversify funding for school canteens, along with the need to strengthen the governance of funds transferred for school feeding.
Participants’ key recommendation was that Haiti intensify actions that could lead to increased mobilization of financial resources to support the canteen.

3. **Institutional Capacity and Coordination**: Participants in the SABER-SF exercise found the need to strengthen the capacity of the PNCS; a need for synergy with sectoral departments, national food safety, and health/nutrition agencies; as well as a need for coordination with the structures involved in school health, hygiene, sanitation and NGO partners. SABER-SF also highlighted opportunities to improve cooperation between local and regional authorities and decentralized services. Recommendations for improvement included developing tools to achieve better institutional capacities for management and control.

4. **Design and Implementation**: SABER-SF demonstrated the need to define, at the national and local level, procedures for targeting schools, as well as a need to have standard ration qualities which take into account nutritional needs and eating habits. Findings also indicated weakness in the process of staffing, procurement, and food management; low participation of small producers; weakness in the monitoring and evaluation system; insufficient information and data; and weak reporting. To improve the design and implementation of SF in Haiti, recommendations included developing effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and tools.

5. **Roles of Communities—Acting Beyond the Schools**: Lastly, applying the SABER-SF framework demonstrated the need for training and building capacity for local committees and the need for better community involvement in decision-making and implementation of the food program. Participants in the exercise recommended taking more measures to achieve greater community involvement in the conduct of school feeding programs.

**SABER-SF in Action**

The SABER-SF exercise enabled fruitful exchanges among workshop participants, 60 actors from the public sector, private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and departmental directorates. In addition to contributing to a general diagnosis of SF programs in Haiti and laying the groundwork for policy planning, these actors became more aware of the importance of the implementation of SABER-SF.

Furthermore, SABER-SF findings and corresponding recommendations culminated in a government-authored SF policy document intended to inform Haiti’s SF policy. The document constitutes a significant step forward on the ‘policy framework’ component of SABER. In addition to creating this document, the Haitian government identified key milestones and developed a detailed action plan for implementing policy over a 15-year period. The action plan, building on the instrumental work done by the SABER-SF exercise, supports these key milestones and identifies actions required to achieve each of them.