



Expanding School Lunch Program in Zanzibar

Zanzibar is an archipelago within the Indian Ocean which consists of Unguja, the Pemba islands, alongside other small islands. TFT has been supporting Zanzibar governments' school feeding program since 2014. At the beginning, the program targeted 5,255 students to provide school lunch. In December 2020, the number has increased to 14,184 students. The government plans to expand the school feeding program to all the schools. Currently, they are formulating National School Feeding Strategy with the support of implementing NGO. The Strategy is used to develop a sustainable school feeding program for the entire Zanzibar.

TFT TABLE FOR TWO

School lunch program supports local economy

Zanzibar's school feeding program contributes to the local economies by offering a market for the farmers in this area to sell their produce for school lunches. By December 2020, 32 farmer groups with 320 farmers participate in the program. Not only farmers but also millers who mill sorghum and cowpeas also participated in the program, covering the entire agricultural value chain. For farmers, having regular buyers of their products leads to a stable income. By forming a farmer's group, they can buy agricultural inputs like fertilizers in bulk prices. Also as a group, they can supply large quantities of produce and respond to the demands of large consumers like schools. Some groups are now commercially successful. For example, the JUWA farmers group is a contract group for orange-fleshed sweet potatoes. The group added more members and increased yields. With assistance from TFT's donors, they now produce and sell sweet potato and sorghum flour commercially.





Mr. Zuweni Juma Ame, a teacher from the school participating in the program says, "Before the program, teachers had to visit students' homes to convince them to attend schools. Now, we do not need to do this as most of the students attend schools voluntarily." Mr. Ali, the principal of Ukongoroni primary school, thankfully says, "Students now sit longer in the classrooms during lessons. It is easier for guardians and community to handle their children's education."

Porridge in Zanzibar



Schools in Africa where TFT supports serve students porridges made from crops, beans/peas, potatoes and maize flour. Those porridges contain carbohydrates and sugar, plus nutrition such as protein and fiber. Other benefits of porridge are; it is easy to cook and it is handy that only cups are needed to drink.

Porridge served in schools in Zanzibar is made from sorghum, cowpeas and orange flesh sweet potato flour. The orange flesh sweet potato is rich in beta carotene which will turn into vitamin A when consumed.

Adding the sweet potatoes can increase the nutritional value and are also rich in fiber. Since sweet potatoes contain sugar, they may be easier for students to eat.

Vaccination for COVID-19 started in Africa

African countries where TFT supports started their vaccination for COVID-19. Lead and coordinated by United Nations agencies, the COVAX Facility provides vaccination for a maximum 20% of the total country's population to developing countries. Countries in Africa that received vaccines started their vaccination programs. Ghana was the first country in Africa that received its vaccines from COVAX on February 24th, 2021. In March, Rwanda and Kenya started vaccinating their medical personnel. Rwanda is making good progress. The country already vaccinated 320,000 people in the first batch of vaccination. Tanzania is one of the few countries that does not support vaccinations. The President, who was sceptical about Coronavirus, suddenly passed away. It is expected that the change of head of the state may change Tanzania's approach toward COVID 19.

All the schools reopened in Rwanda. Kenya is back into strict COVID-19 measures.

In Rwanda, schools were closed from March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In October 2020, the schools gradually reopened for students in higher grades. For lower grades and kindergarten students, schools finally reopened in February 2021, after 11 months of closures. The school year will end in July in Rwanda. But lower grade and kindergarten will open till September to catch up on their lost time.

In March 2021, the positive rates of COVID-19 has dramatically increased in Kenya. The government announced strict measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. The measure includes; a ban on travel in and out from Nairobi and surrounding 5 counties that have a high number of patients; a night curfew from 8 pm to 4 am; and closure of schools and sports clubs. Schools in Kenya are on long holidays from the end of March to May. If the number of COVID-19 patients will not be reduced, the schools may remain closed even after the holidays in May.

