



# Mozambique School Lunch

## INITIATIVE

*Dear MSLI supporter,*

We are excited to let you know what we've been up to in Mozambique so far this year! This newsletter will give you some key updates, featuring our brand new project: school buses for secondary school!

As always, we are grateful for your support in making this work happen! We are also thankful for the incredible team in Mozambique, including the management staff, the cooks, the preschool teachers, the mentors, the farmers, and everybody who contributes along the way.



*A student having lunch at Duvane Primary School.*

### Here's a snapshot of our work right now:

- Providing school lunch programs to **seven primary schools** (1,665 students)
- Running **two preschools** (130 students 3-5 years), providing breakfast and lunch and early childhood education
- Operating **two school buses** (139 secondary school students) to transport students from rural areas to the nearest secondary school (8th-12th grade)
- Partnering with **55 farmers** to purchase fresh food for the school lunch program

## MSLI's newest project – school buses for high school!



*High school students preparing to board the school bus in Chate village.*

### ***Rationale for starting the secondary school transport project***

Working closely with rural primary schools, MSLI saw first-hand how the school lunch program did a fantastic job keeping students in school through the end of the primary level. However, once students completed the seventh grade (the last year in primary school), they had few options to continue studying at the secondary level because the nearest secondary school was 20km away. While some parents manage to send their children to live with relatives near a secondary school, this often implies a financial burden for parents to send monthly support and also runs the risk of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of the children, especially girls. Inevitably, without any other options, most rural children were falling through the cracks and never had the opportunity to attend secondary school.

For many girls, dropping out of school often leads to premature marriages and adolescent pregnancies, which then in turn perpetuates the same situation we are working to fix with the school lunch program. If we could get these students to secondary school, however, then they might be able to delay marriage and child-bearing, and access better jobs, therefore breaking the cycle of poverty. After many discussions with the local community, teachers, parents, and students, we decided to test out a school bus system that would provide free daily transportation for students from rural areas to the nearest secondary school. Parents feel more comfortable having their children at home and students can attend school safely every day.





*Students in Cumba village getting on the school bus.*



*A bus driver departing from the pick-up point near Cumba Primary School.*

### **Logistics**

MSLI launched the first two school buses in February 2022, serving rural students from six primary schools. We hired two existing transporters (minivans and drivers), one to cover four primary schools (relatively smaller schools) and one to cover two primary schools (relatively larger). MSLI pays each bus driver \$12.60 per student per month – a very cost-effective solution! The buses make multiple trips every day in order to transport all of the students. The students also continue to benefit from our school lunch program, receiving a hot lunch at their local primary school, which also serves as the pick-up and drop-off point for the buses.



*A student aboard the Chate school bus.*

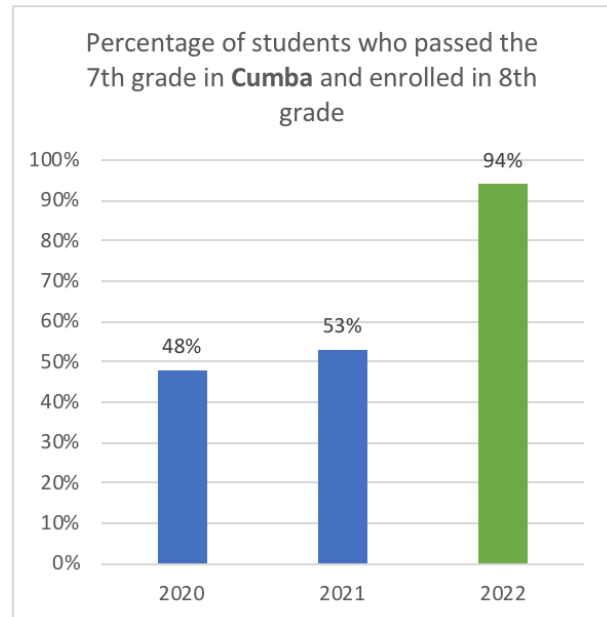
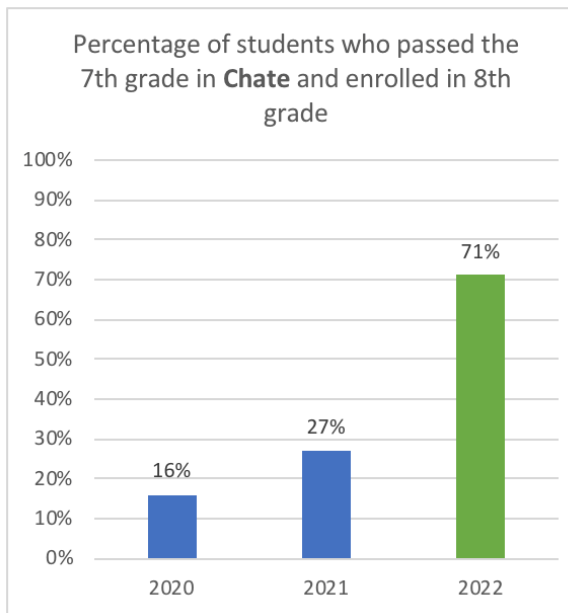


*A student enjoying her lunch on the bus.*

## Impacts

To date, this project has already succeeded in **more than doubling the share of students transitioning to eight grade** in the target rural communities. The charts below show the share of students who passed the seventh grade and enrolled in eight grade the following year.

The **green bar** represents the year in which the secondary school transportation service was offered by the Mozambique School Lunch Initiative. Of these students who enrolled in eighth grade in 2022, 89% of the students from Chate and 69% of the students from Cumba are using our free school buses!



### *Getting kids back in school, especially girls*

Furthermore, many students who had dropped out of secondary school have reenrolled thanks to the school buses. In addition to the 46 eighth grade students who passed seventh grade in 2021, we are also transporting 45 eighth graders from other years (who had previously been out of school), 28 ninth graders, 19 tenth graders, and one eleventh grader. In the coming years, we expect the school bus to greatly contribute to secondary school retention and completion rates by making it easier for students, especially girls, to go to school. **In total, almost two-thirds of the students using our school buses this year are girls!**



*Students on the Cumba school bus heading to secondary school.*