



Mozambique School Lunch INITIATIVE



The MSLI team celebrates a successful 2022!

Happy New Year from the Mozambique School Lunch Initiative!

In this newsletter, I'd like to share some of our highlights from 2022, and some of the things we're excited about for 2023!

Highlights from 2022...

Delivering 421,000 nutritious school meals

These meals were made from scratch, based on fresh food purchased from farmers in the local community. Each lunch provided essential nutrition that children need when they are growing and learning. And they were delicious!



Cooks serving lunch at Chate A Primary School.

Winning the Healthy Childhood Challenge

In October 2022, MSLI's new initiative, MozNutri, was selected as one of the winners of the [2022 Healthy Childhood Challenge](#). MozNutri is a nutritious foods enterprise linked with our school lunch program. Our first product is peanut butter and it has been a hit! Check out this 3-minute video where our Executive Director, Roberto Mutisse, shares about the work:

[Mozambique School Lunch Initiative – Healthy Childhood Challenge video](#)

Launching a new secondary school initiative

In 2022 we successfully launched a secondary school program to bridge the gap for rural students to continue their education, especially girls. This program is based on three pillars:

1. The first pillar is access. The secondary schools are typically too far away for students from rural villages to reach by foot. That's why MSLI started a **free school bus service** that takes these students to school and back home every day. In particular, this ensures safety for girls to go to secondary school.



Students getting on the bus in Chate village.

2. The second pillar is mentorship. For most of these adolescents, they are the first in their families to go to secondary school, and there are a myriad of challenges they face in their teenage years. Our mentors hold **weekly meetings with the students**, divided into small groups, during which they go over topics like goal-setting, communication skills, and adolescent health.



Secondary school students participating in a role play activity during a mentorship meeting.

3. The third pillar is nutrition. Adequate nutrition is a fundamental human need, and a critical safety net for adolescents living in poverty. Indeed, hunger is often a factor behind child marriages and early pregnancies. We want our secondary school students to be able to focus on their studies, so we provide a **nutritious lunch at school and snacks** during the mentorship meetings.



Students enjoying peanut butter sandwiches (with peanut butter made by MSLI) during a mentorship meeting.

Measuring major learning gains for our preschool students

2022 was the first full year of our preschool program in Duvane and Bombôfo villages, and we measured substantial learning for the children in the program. The MSLI team implemented learning evaluations every trimester for our 5-year-old children, and we found significant improvements by the end of the year.



A 5-year old preschool student in Bombôfo listens as her teacher asks questions during the third trimester evaluation.

For example, one of the questions asked the students to identify numbers written randomly on the chalkboard: 4, 9, 3, 2, 8, 1, 5, 7, 10, 6. At the end of the first trimester, students got an average of 5.56 numbers correct. By the end of the third trimester, the students got an average 8.37 numbers correct. These children are now much better prepared to start the first grade this year.

Looking forward to in 2023...

Serving more school lunches than ever!

This year we're planning on serving the most school lunches that we have ever served. As always, they will be packed with fresh ingredients, sourced primarily from local farmers.



Students queuing for lunch at Cumba Primary School.



A typical school lunch of rice, beans, and stewed beets.

Expanding our secondary school initiative and buying a school bus!

Our school bus service was so popular in 2022, that this year we are buying our own vehicle to serve even more students! We will also continue to rent two additional school buses, so that, in total, we will be able to reach approximately 280 students this year. Our vision is to see these students make it all the way through 12th grade. By owning the school bus, we'll be able to operate more sustainably and continue this program for many more years to come.

Opening our brand-new Center of Excellence for adolescent mentorship and skills

With the successful piloting of our adolescent mentorship program last year, we have now acquired a small plot of land near Manjangué Secondary School, which is where our secondary school program is based. The land cost us a whopping \$112 dollars, thanks to a land rights system that makes unoccupied land very cheap in Mozambique. This enabled us to allocate our budget to the construction of a Center of Excellence – a simple building that we designed to facilitate the weekly mentorship group meetings with the students, and host other skills development training. We look forward to sharing photos once the construction is complete in February!

Ramping up MozNutri!

With the grant from the Healthy Childhood Challenge, MSLI will be ramping up our production and sales of natural peanut butter. Our objective is to make peanut butter more affordable for the average family, targeting families with young children who would benefit the most from the added nutrition in their diets. As a non-profit organization, 100% of the profits from these sales will be funneled directly back into supporting our school lunch program.



MSLI's peanut butter is sold in a variety of sizes so that it can be affordable to as many people as possible.



Parents can mix peanut butter into porridge, adding protein and essential micronutrients.



Preschool students eating peanut-butter porridge for breakfast.

Support MSLI to do even more in 2023!

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, MSLI's work continues to grow and reach more children in rural Mozambique. Each program is an investment in children's health and education, building the foundation for them to rise out of poverty.

We are always looking for ways to expand our programs to more communities, and your support can make that happen. For example, this year we'd love to:

- Expand our school lunch program to 1-3 more primary schools
- Build and open 2 more preschools
- Launch a school bus service to cover 4 more villages
- Kickstart 3 more farmer groups

All of this depends on the resources we receive from funding organizations and generous individuals. It truly takes a team effort to make this happen, and we appreciate everyone who has been along with us for the journey!

Donate directly on our website –

<https://www.mozambiqueschoollunchinitiative.org/donate>

If you'd like to **donate with a credit or debit card**, [you can do so here and just select the "Donate with a Debit or Credit Card" option.](#)

Donate to MSLI's projects on GlobalGiving

[Click here to donate to our school bus program](#)

[Click here to donate to our school lunch program](#)

[Click here to donate to our preschool program](#)

If you're **in the U.S.**, you can make a check out to "Mozambique School Lunch Initiative" and send to:

Mozambique School Lunch Initiative
5105 S. Park Lane
Spokane, WA 99223

If you're **in Mozambique**, reach out to Ahuti Kumar for the best ways to donate locally!
ahuti@mozambiqueschoollunchinitiative.org

A huge thanks to all of our supporters!



Students in Bombôfo Primary School, when asked if they like chicken stew and rice for lunch.

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