



Mozambique School Lunch INITIATIVE

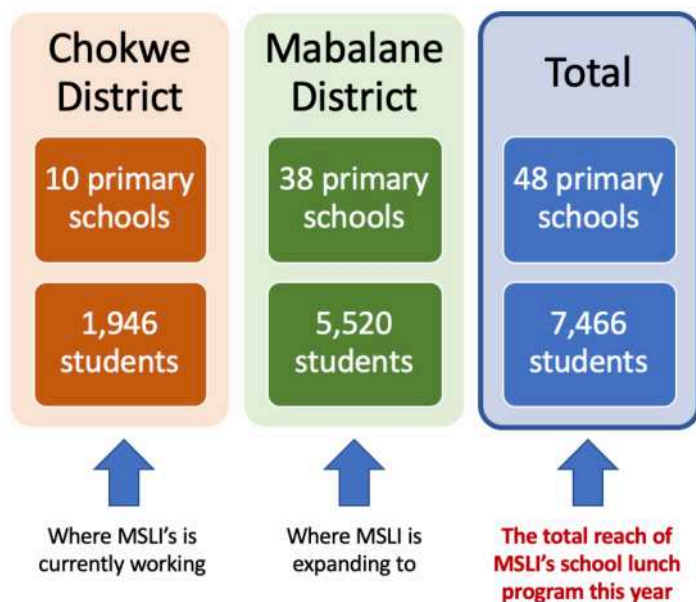
BIG ANNOUNCEMENT!

This month MSLI has officially launched a new partnership to expand our school lunch program to over 5,500 MORE kids in Mabalane District!

Thanks to the generous support and partnership of Mary's Meals, a non-profit organization that supports school feeding programs in 17 countries around the world, MSLI will be rapidly expanding the reach of our school lunch program -
- **providing school lunches across 38 rural schools** in Mabalane District.



Students at Kokwe Primary School receiving school meals for the first time on Monday, May 20th!



Students at Mabomo Primary School - one of MSLI's new schools this year!

A big step forward to scaling in Mozambique!

This expansion of MSLI's school lunch program just so happens to coincide with our 8-year anniversary of serving school meals in Mozambique! Over these past 8 years, we have consistently provided school lunches to vulnerable kids. Every time that we have grown to include a new school, we have never gone back! Not only has this been great for the kids, it has also helped MSLI build our capacity as an organization - developing our human resources, testing new things, iterating, and learning. The consistent support of small donors has been essential to get us to where we are now so that we have the ability to partner with a big organization like Mary's Meals to start rapidly scaling the school lunch program.



Students like these will be receiving school lunches for the first time ever, as of May 2024!

What is Mabalane District like?

Under our school lunch program expansion, MSLI will now be working in Mabalane District as well as Chokwe District (our headquarters). Mabalane District neighbors Chokwe, but is more rural and less developed. There is a single paved road in the entire district, and it takes approximately 1.5 hours to drive from Chokwe town to Mabalane town (the center of the district) along this paved road. Mabalane District is characterized by an arid climate, and the majority of families are pastoralists (herding cattle and goats), as well as making charcoal to sell. Villages are located in remote areas, often along a river or other body of water. Transportation is very limited, and when the MSLI team visited the villages to scope out the new area, we often didn't see another vehicle the entire day.



A village in Mabalane District. Many children, especially boys, end up dropping out of school to herd goats and cattle.



The roads in Mabalane District are often in poor condition - like this road the MSLI team was on to reach Anexa Jojo school.

Education in Mabalane District

There are very low levels of economic development in Mabalane District, and the primary school is often the only government/public service in a given community. Overall, children in the rural communities achieve very low levels of education, **with a steep drop off in the number of students enrolled at school after the third grade.** Boys as young as 9-years old drop out to be cattle herders, either for their own family or as child labor for other families. Girls have less pressure to drop out in grades 3-6, but once they are adolescents, they are likely to marry early. In conversations with teachers, they told us that the children only really start to have a handle on the Portuguese language by the 4th grade, meaning that actual learning is quite limited. Teachers have a hard time advancing with the curriculum when students do not attend regularly. **Many teachers said that attendance can be as low as 50-75% by the second trimester. MSLI hopes to change that by the introduction of the school lunch program!**



Students like these at Chaves Primary School face tough learning conditions, but the school lunches will help a lot!



Many schools in Mabalane District are very small, due to the rural setting, like Jasse Primary School.

In other news... MSLI has launched a new program with the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique!

This year, MSLI received support from the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique to provide additional English language and digital skills training for 302 high schools students in our mentorship program.

Twice a week, students meet in small groups with a MSLI mentor to practice English through fun, interactive activities. We have found that students are often shy and worried about making a mistake in front of their peers. That's why our mentors create games in small groups to motivate the students and put them more at ease.

The students have also been developing their digital skills proficiency through the use of MSLI's Lenovo tablets. The students have been learning how to use basic apps, write a Word document in



Students learning about email during a tablet session.



Smaller groups create more opportunities for students to practice speaking English.

Google Docs, send emails, and search for information via Google. These skills will be valuable for the students, especially after they graduate and start looking for jobs.



For many students, using the tablets this quarter has been a new and exciting experience, as most have never used a smartphone or tablet before.

Interested in getting involved?

The saying "it takes a village to raise a child" is emblematic of MSLI's work in Mozambique. Our work over the last eight years has been supported by countless people who have believed in our mission to improve child nutrition and education outcomes in Mozambique.

Large funders like Mary's Meals or the U.S. Embassy play a big role in enabling us to scale our work. But it often takes years of testing and trying new things before larger donors get on board. That's where small donors and your consistent support makes such a difference. Small donors allow us to develop new initiatives that we think can increase the impact of our programs for children. So a huge shout out to all those who have been part of our journey.

This year, in addition to the expansion of our school lunch program, **we're also fundraising for a few specific goals for 2024:**

- Expand our preschool program, refining our model to be more cost-effective and scalable
- Kickstart two more chicken egg cooperatives to produce high-quality nutrition for the preschools
- Expand and test new initiatives with our secondary school support program, exploring pathways for school-to-work transition

All of this depends on the resources we receive from funding organizations and generous individuals. If you are interested in supporting one of these initiatives and want to get involved, please reach out!

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](#)

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 Combomune Rio Primary School - one of the new schools MSLI will be providing school lunches at this year in Mabalane District.

Learn more: <https://www.mozambiqueschoollunchinitiative.org/>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mozambiqueschoollunchinitiative/>

Follow us on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mozschoolslunch/>

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