

NUTRITION FRIENDLY SCHOOL INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES REPORT

SECOND QUARTER, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Ghana Health Service in collaboration with Ghana Education Service with funding support from UNICEF introduced the Nutrition-Friendly School Initiative in the Ketu North Municipality in 2020. The Nutrition-Friendly School Initiative (NFSI), a school-based health and nutrition program was adopted as a platform on which to implement a set of school-based health and nutrition activities aimed at improving the school environment to make it more nutrition sensitive. This program hinges on four pillars which seek to promote a safe school environment that encourages the intake of nutritious food and discourages the serving or sale and promotion of unhealthy foods. It also focuses on providing health and nutrition services and skills-based health education: which is centered on a behavior change approach for promotion of optimal nutrition, sexual and reproductive health rights, physical activity and hygiene.

In view of this, eleven schools namely: Dekpor MA Basic, Ative MA Basic, Vehem Mawunyo Int'l, Tadzi AME Zion Basic, Adzoatsi MA Basic, Gbegbekorpe RC Basic, Ablorme EP Basic, Afornyegah RC Basic, Kutsinu MA Basic, Zukpe MA Basic, Afife RC Primary were trained officially on the program whilst Amenuveve Preparatory and Adrume MA Basic schools were trained on the job to implement this program. As part of activities to promote the program, all implementing schools celebrate days like the egg day, fruit day, vegetable day, physical activity day, personal hygiene day, general cleaning day amongst others throughout the term. These are all aimed at promoting healthy living behaviors of the learners.

During the period under review the nutrition unit of the Ketu North Municipal Health Directorate carried out several activities aimed at promoting and sustaining the NFSI program in the municipality. These included assessment of schools on their level of implementation, public sensitization on the program and the establishment of Nutrition Friendly Sunday Schools.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

Assessment of Schools on NFSI Implementation Status



As part of measures to ensure that all schools are designated Nutrition Friendly, the Municipal nutrition team assessed eight (8) out of the eleven (11) schools enrolled on the program on some thematic areas per the implementation protocol and all the schools passed the assessment with a cumulative score above 80% for each school. The schools are: Dekpor MA Basic, Vehem Mawunyo Int'l, Tadzi AME Zion Basic, Gbegbekorpe RC Basic, Ablorme EP Prim & JHS, Afornyegah RC

Basic and Zukpe MA Basic. This qualifies them for the next round of assessment which will be done by the regional assessment team.

Sensitization on Nutrition Friendly School Initiative



Awareness creation is one of the surest ways of getting stakeholder attention and support to sustain this program. Therefore, the nutrition team carried out several sensitization activities to create awareness on the NFSI program and its importance to the learners and the community as a whole. Some of the avenues used in the awareness creation included the churches and local radio stations. In all, five major churches (Assemblies of God, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Global Evangelical Church, St Anthony's Catholic Church and I.C.G.C) were visited reaching 1299 congregants with the key messages on NFSI. Additionally, we held a radio sensitization program on Revival fm at Tadzewu to enable us reach a wider audience within the Municipality and beyond.



Establishment of Nutrition Friendly Sunday School (NFSS)



We successfully established one Nutrition Friendly Sunday School at the St Anthony's Hospital Catholic Church in Dzodze. This was part of deliberate efforts to promote the consumption of fruits and other nutritious foods among children and their families. This was done through effective collaboration with the church committee hence making the program to gain solid grounds in the church. Since the establishment of the NFSS on the 14th of May, the church also marked prominent days like the Father's Day with fruit day celebration. Also, it is worthy of note that the church creatively marked this year's Annual Harvest Celebration with a fruit day celebration where fruit salad was prepared and auctioned for all congregants to enjoy.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of cooperation from teachers in some schools
- lack of funds to scale up the program to other schools

RECOMMENDATION

- Appeal to the Ketu-North Municipal Assembly and other stakeholders to support the program with funds and other resources to sustain the program.
- Collaborate effectively with Ketu-North Municipal Education Directorate to bring more schools on board.
- Regular monitoring and supervision is required strengthen the program.

CONCLUSION

The NFSI program is a timely one with numerous benefits hence, the municipal health directorate will continue to collaborate with other stakeholders to sustain the program in the municipality to promote the health and well-being of the people as well as transform negative health seeking behaviors to positive ones.