

REPORT ON THE SENSITIZATION OF FOOD VENDORS AND SCHOOL FEEDING CATERERS ON NUTRITION IN THE KASSENA NANKANA WEST DISTRICT

MARCH 2025

INTRODUCTION

As part of our efforts to promote healthy lives among school children and the general public, the Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit of the Kassena Nankana West District Assembly, in collaboration with the Ghana Health Service, organized a sensitization programme on nutrition for four hundred and fourteen (414) food vendors and one hundred and twenty-seven (127) school feeding caterers.

A two-day sensitization programme was organized on 4th-5th March 2025 at the Kassena Nankana West District Assembly Conference Hall in Paga.

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE

The exercise aimed to raise awareness among food vendors and caterers about the significance of food nutritional values. The goal was to combat malnutrition and enhance overall nutrition, particularly for children, thereby fostering healthier dietary practices.

TOPICS TREATED WERE;

1. Food safety practices and personal hygiene
2. Hand hygiene
3. Environmental cleanliness
4. Vitamin A supplementation
5. Iron-Folic Acid supplementation

The Kassena Nankana West District Nutrition Officer, Ayamga John, indicated that, to get the most nutrition and energy from foods, food items must be combined in the right quantity, proportion, and type.

He further explained that food is made up of nutrients, which may be either micro or macro nutrients. Micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals are needed in small amounts. On the other hand, macronutrients such as carbohydrates and proteins are needed in target-concentrated

amounts. He stressed that fat is a macronutrient and is concentrated in energy and hence should be eaten in very small quantities. He added that the body cannot work properly if one or more of the nutrients are missing.

Most participants did not have much knowledge about the nutritional values of our local foodstuffs, which were common and known to them, yet underutilized.

However, when participants were taken through the programme, most of them were enlightened after the sensitization, which will enhance their health since they now know the nutritional values of what they have been consuming and cooking.

Participants, especially the caterers, were made to understand that good nutrition protects children against malnourishment, maintains the immune system, prevents obesity, and reduces the chance of developing chronic diseases. They were therefore advised to always prepare food that is rich in nutrition for the children in the school feeding programme beneficiary schools.

CONCLUSION

Participants expressed their satisfaction with the importance of the exercise and therefore recommended that more of such sensitization programmes should be organized to benefit all food vendors.

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