



Feeding Schoolchildren in Kenya

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In Kenya, two and a half million schoolchildren suffer from malnutrition and hunger. According to UNICEF, a quarter of the country's 24 million children experience stunted growth due to malnutrition. Ingredion was approached by Kenyan authorities to help find a solution. Partnering with DSM, Tetra Pak, and the Kenyan government, the Company developed a nutritious, drinkable porridge that has been distributed throughout the country.

Funded by the Ministry of Education via the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya (NACONEK), the project aims to combat hunger and malnutrition experienced by school children in the arid and semi-arid regions of Kenya and to improve school attendance and educational performance. By addressing malnutrition at its core, this initiative not only promises a brighter future for these children but also serves as a beacon of hope for combating malnutrition on a larger scale in Kenya and beyond.

Made from locally sourced crops, including maize, soybeans, sorghum and sweet potato, the initiative is also committed to supporting the regional economy, with 12,000 small-scale farmers contracted to supply the raw materials. The ready-to-drink porridge is sweetened using sweetener produced from the stevia plant, fortified with 15 micronutrients, and processed and packed in a Tetra Brik Aseptic 250ml pack with a straw.

"This is a very emotionally fulfilling project to be involved in, as we are bringing our purpose to life by making life better for underprivileged children by improving their nutrition and getting them back to school," said Kennedy Ouma, director of Africa and Middle East at Ingredion. "The current launch covers 50,000 children this year, rising to 100,000 in 2024 and then upscaling to 2.4 million by 2025 as the funding increases."

"This is a collaborative project, with all partners working together to secure a successful outcome from the onset. The core objective was formulating an affordable and nutritious product based on climate-resilient crops with a minimum of 6 months shelf life for ease of distribution and storage, as the arid regions of Kenya lack clean water and cold storage due to a lack of electricity. Ingredion's role was to provide the stabilizing, texturizing and sweetening solutions expertise, which was done through numerous trials by our teams in Nairobi, Johannesburg and Luebeck (Germany) idea labs and pilot plant facilities."

Mike O'Riordan, regional president of EMEA at Ingredion, concludes: "I am really proud of our team for skilfully collaborating with multiple key stakeholders to make life better for Kenya's future generation."