

NutriFish Project Donates Enriched Maize meal to the Covid-19 National Taskforce

In response to the call to support fellow citizens by H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda, NutriFish Project donated 2.5 tonnes of maize meal enriched with mukene and amaranth (dodo) seeds. A 200g serving of the maize meal provides 32% energy, 40% protein, 28% iron, 56% zinc and 36% vitamin A of recommended daily requirements making it a complete meal for vulnerable groups (children under 5 years of age; pregnant and breast feeding mothers).

The donation worth 22 million Uganda shillings was handed over to Hon. Mary Karoro Okurut, Minister for General Duties in the Office of the Prime Minister, on the 4th, May 2020. NutriFish requested that the donation specifically be given to Mwanamugimu Nutrition Rehabilitation unit at Mulago Hospital. The fish and amaranth (dodo seeds) enriched composite flour will be used to prepare meals for mothers whose children are admitted, thereby offering healthier meals in comparison to ordinary maize flour.

The NutriFish Project team was led by the Principal Investigator Dr. Jackson Efitre (Senior Lecturer, Department of Zoology, Entomology & Fisheries Sciences, College of Natural Sciences of Makerere University). Other members of the delegation were: Dr. Winnie Nkalubo - Director of Research, National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI); Dr. Anthony Taabu-Munyaho - Deputy Executive Secretary, LVFO; Assoc. Professor Dorothy Nakimbugwe - Founding Director of Nutreal Limited; and Dr. Esther Babirekere - Director Mwanamugimu Nutrition Unit, Mulago Hospital. The team was joined by Mrs. Joyce Ikwaput Nyeko, Assistant Commissioner Aquaculture, Directorate of Fisheries Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Following the function at the Office of the Prime Minister, the NutriFish delegation also visited the Mwanamugimu Nutrition Rehabilitation Unit at Mulago Hospital. A meeting was held with staff of the unit and representatives of the mothers where the donation was handed over to the Director of the Mwanamugimu Unit. At the same meeting a donation of 400kg of mukene (silver fish) from the Uganda National Women Fisheries Organisation was handed over.

NutriFish is a project focusing on 'Harnessing Dietary Nutrients of under-utilised fish and fish-based products to reduce micro-nutrient deficiencies among vulnerable groups in Uganda'. The is implemented by Makerere University at the College of Natural Sciences (Department of Zoology, Entomology and Fisheries Sciences); National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI); NUTREAL Uganda Limited; and McGill University, Canada. The project is co-funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) under the Cultivate Africa's Future Fund Phase 2 (CultiAF2).

One of the objectives of NutriFish is to develop fish-enriched food products contributing to recommended daily dietary nutrient requirements for women and children including protein, folic acid, B vitamins, Vitamin A, iron, and zinc. The expected outcomes of the project are: i) reduce the incidence of micronutrients deficiencies particularly among women and children under 5 years ii) create diversified income opportunities through enterprise development in fish, fish processing and marketing and

iii) sharing project results and outputs with policy makers at local and national levels for facilitation of scaling-up of results.