



CHALICE (CANADA) African School Farming & Food Security Project 2021-2024



In the African communities where Chalice serves, small-scale farming is a way of life. However, for many families of sponsored children, their farms do not produce harvests that can sustain after their brief peak periods, leading to food insecurity for most of the year. These poor harvests are because the families cannot access quality farm inputs and technology, water scarcity, erratic rains and emerging crop diseases. The parents also lack agricultural training and education. Many children walk to school, some covering more than seven kilometers daily, and most go to school without breakfast.



Since 2012, Chalice has been working with these communities to build high-yield gardens, farms and orchards on school and community lands that produce food for the schools' daily lunch programs. The school farms are co-run by student agriculture clubs, training a whole generation of future farmers in up-to-date methods, bringing long-term sustainability to their communities.

The program likewise invests in the parents of Chalice sponsored children, forming them into small-scale farming cooperatives and giving them agricultural training. These "Common Interest Groups" are then able to produce higher yields, and Chalice helps them connect to buyers, including their own children's schools.



Greater education in modern practices builds the foundation for sustainable agriculture.

Beginning in Kenya and then expanding into Tanzania, Chalice's school farming program has been a tremendous success. The second phase surpassed its target and provided food to 19,340 children in 39 schools.



The parent groups have likewise flourished. As an example, a group in Mikinduri, Kenya, sold 11,000kg of sorghum and 3600kg of corn to a local miller, earning the equivalent of \$5700 CAD. The same group sold 3600 kg of corn and 1800kg of beans to their two local primary schools. The group's collective savings increased by \$1700 each season. One of those primaries, Miurine, supplemented its own feeding program with the school garden it created through Chalice, with produce such as cassava and black-eyed peas. Miurine's enrollment increased by 6.5% in 2019 alone, and the overall exam scores increased by 8%.

Now the program is ready to move into its third phase, expanding into Ghana and Zambia, and strengthening its existing presence in Tanzania.

The program has two core objectives:

1. To supply at least one hot lunch at school per child from Monday to Friday for children in public day schools; and to support two hot meals every day for children living in School for the Deaf in Ghana, St Mary's and St Odilia schools in Kawambwa and orphanages. The program will reach more than 16,000 vulnerable children in 29 schools and two children's homes in the three participating countries. Of these, 2,950 children have Chalice sponsors.

2. To enhance local production and income generating capacity of small-scale farmers (parents and community members) organized into groups, by increasing their capacity in food production and linking them to markets.



Our two Zambian sites debuting in the program are Kawambwa and Serenje. This program will help them cultivate 105 acres of land, plant more than 1000 fruit trees and raise poultry and goats. Our Ghanaian sites beginning this phase are Wa, School for the Deaf (SFD) and Nandom. The government supplies food for some of the public-school lunches, but it is not enough. This program will help these sites to produce sufficient food for all their lunches, support pork production for protein, and plant orchards to provide fruits for the children.

Our returning sites from Tanzania, Mbinga and Neema, will build on the farms they began in the earlier phase. In many cases, the introduction of lunch programs in their schools has increased enrollment, thereby increasing demand for food. This program will help the two sites cultivate 75 acres of land for 12 schools and a children's home, increase honey production at a high school, and purchase corn and rice mills to prepare excess product for sale.



In this third phase, the site staff will work with 18 parent groups, supporting them to produce food or start an income-generating activity directly linked to the school meal program market. The staff will give them free training and technical advice on how to use modern information and methods to increase their productivity. The groups will also have access to proper storage facilities and subsidized farm inputs. Some groups will grow cash crops for schools and local buyers, which will increase their own food security as well as means of livelihood. Each farmer will benefit from in-person training by staff experts on how to get the maximum yield from their land.

This phase will also increase access to water through the most appropriate technology for each area's climate and conditions. Staff will promote drip irrigation combined with soil and water conservation to make the best of scarce water resources. All the Zambian and Ghanaian schools, as well as two Tanzanian schools, will receive two 10,000 L water tanks with an irrigation system.



The total cost of this 4-year project is \$782,788.10 CAD.



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