

Schools asked to feed students on enriched foods

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KAMPALA. The government is concerned that while school-going children are getting energy-rich foods at school, there is need to supplement it with other enriched foods in vitamins, iron and folic acid to support their growth and improve their attention span.

This follows reports that 16 per cent of the households are undernourished with hunger remaining high among children, according to Dr Wilberforce Kisamba Mugerwa, the National Planning Authority chairperson.

He said 40 per cent of the population does not meet the required dietary intake of 2,200 calories per day. This in turn, he added, affects a child's brain development.

Ms Sarah Ngalombi, a senior nutritionist at the Ministry of Health, said this will be reversed once they make it mandatory for factories to put extra nutrients in maize flour, the main meal in schools. She explained that they have already progressed by making it compulsory for every factory manufacturing edible oils to add vitamin A, iodinised salt and also have wheat flour fortified.

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Percentage. Of the population that does not meet the required dietary intake of 2,200 calories per day.

"We have succeeded on all wheat flour, cooking oil and salt. Our next target should be maize flour because it is mainly used in schools," Ms Ngalombi said during the national dialogue on parent-led school feeding organised by Ministry of Education yesterday.

Buganda Road Primary head teacher, Mr David Ssendendo, welcomed the idea saying there is no significant cost between the none and fortified foods.

The Minister of Education, Ms Janet Museveni, discouraged the practice of some parents contributing unprepared food such as beans and maize flour towards feeding their children while at school.

She said some school authorities might take advantage of this to ask for money from parents to construct kitchen and dining room facilities, buy firewood, furniture, utensils and pay cooks who prepare the food. This will mean that those children whose parents and guardians cannot afford might be denied access to study.

FORTIFIED FOODS

Progress. Ministry of Health has progressed with compulsory

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