



CELEBRATING WORLD FOOD DAY WITH FUTURELIFE®

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INTRODUCTION

World food day is celebrated around the world every year on the 16th of October. It honours the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 1945. The day is observed in more than 150 countries to raise awareness of the issues behind poverty and hunger. This year's theme for World Food day is OUR ACTIONS ARE OUR FUTURE: HEALTHY DIETS FOR A #ZEROHUNGER WORLD¹.

Two sided coin

Although the theme mentions zero hunger this year the FAO (Food Agriculture Organisation) focuses on all forms of malnutrition. The Merriam Webster dictionary describes malnutrition as: faulty nutrition due to inadequate or unbalanced intake of nutrients². Therefore both undernutrition and over nutrition are a problem.

Over 800 million people in the world suffer from hunger. In 2017, 6.8 million people experienced hunger in South Africa. While the number has dropped, it still affects 1.7 million households across the country. As alarming as the hunger statistics are there is also an issue of the converse. Globally over 670 million adults and 120 million girls and boys are obese, and over 40 million children under five are overweight. In South Africa it is estimated that 28.3% of adults are obese. A combination of unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles have sent obesity rates soaring, not only in developed countries, but also low-income countries, where hunger and obesity often co-exist.

Achieving #ZEROHUNGER is thus not only about addressing hunger, but also correctly nourishing people. This year, World Food Day calls for action across sectors to make healthy and sustainable diets affordable and accessible to everyone. At the same time, it calls on everyone to start thinking about what we eat.

SOUTH AFRICA IS NO DIFFERENT

The South African nutritional landscape is no different. There has also been an increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in children. An estimated 13% of South African children under five years are classified as overweight. But with obesity we still have a real problem of undernutrition. Although child hunger rates have declined, 12% of children



under six years still live in households that report food insecurity and where children go hungry. Approximately one third of children (31%) of under two years are stunted. Stunting is an indicator of chronic undernutrition³.

In line with this year's theme, OUR ACTIONS ARE OUR FUTURE, South Africa's attention is on the nutrition of the young. While good nutrition is necessary for basic survival and healthy living for both children and adults, studies have consistently shown that investments in early childhood nutrition yield significant gains in childhood and adulthood⁴.

President Cyril Ramaphosa said, "If we are to break the cycle of poverty, we need to educate the children of the poor" (SONA 2018). Nutritional support has thus formed the foundation in the Early Childhood Development programmes across the country. The different early nutritional interventions aim to help decrease the incidence of malnutrition in all children.

WHAT IS FUTURELIFE® DOING TO HELP?

Paul Saad founder of FUTURELIFE®, officially established the FUTURELIFE® Foundation Trust in October 2014. The foundation's mission is to promote holistic Early Childhood Development in formerly disadvantaged areas through improving learners' health and education outcomes with nutrition and education programmes.

Now known as Zero2Five the FUTURELIFE® Foundation, provides over 100 unfunded and under-resourced Early Childhood Development Centres in marginalized communities with highly nutritious FUTURELIFE® meals. Our nutrition programmes are currently serving around 200 000 bowls of nutritious porridge to needy children in South Africa on a monthly basis⁵.

Providing sustainable nutrition solutions

To ensure that good nutrition does not only end in childhood, FUTURELIFE® provides sustainable access to good nutrition with our dual pouch ENERGIZE meal. FUTURELIFE® ENERGIZE offers South Africans access to affordable on-the-go nutrition in a simple ready to eat, resalable format suitable for the whole family. A true innovation with first to retail technology, our dual pouch technology keeps the purified water and nutrient dense powder separate. By squeezing and popping the internal seal, the powder and water mix to create an instant meal.

FUTURELIFE® ENERGIZE provides a whole-grain meal that is high in energy, dietary fibre and omega- 3 fatty acids. It contains a source of protein which may help strengthen muscles. It is also high in 19 vitamins and minerals including Selenium which may help support immunity.



CONCLUSION

The FAO has called on all of us to provide solutions that are affordable and sustainable in order to reduce all forms of malnutrition. We need to be aware of the types of malnutrition and start thinking and talking about what we eat. On the 16th of October let's all come together and continue the mission for #ZEROHUNGER.

REFERENCES

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