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## FOOD HANDLERS' ORIENTATION REPORT, 2025

The orientation for food vendors including all food handlers and school feeding contractors in the district was held on Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2025 at 10: 32 a.m. at Esereso.

Food vendors and the food they sell play a very important role in the socio-economic development of Ghana. This is because a lot of people depend heavily on these food handlers for their daily nutritional needs, and it is important that they are regularly screened to ensure public safety.

Also, as part of social intervention program of the government to boost the enrolment figures of school children in the basic level, the Ghana School Feeding Program was introduced.

### **Food vendors**

Vendors were educated on food safety and that it is a scientific method for describing the handling, preparation and storage of food in a way that prevents food borne illness; the occurrence of two or more cases of a similar illness resulting from consuming a common food.

### **IMPORTANCE OF MEDICAL SCREENING OF FOOD VENDORS**

#### **Public Health Protection**

Food vending involves handling, preparing, storing, and selling food that many people consume. If a vendor has a communicable disease e.g. typhoid or hepatitis, they can pass pathogens to many consumers via contaminated food or poor hygiene. The screening helps detect such cases and prevent disease transmission.

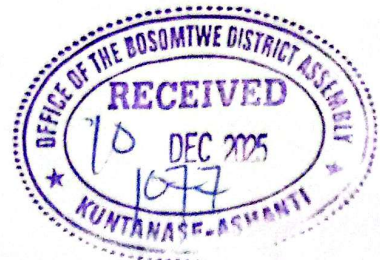
#### **Enabling regulation, accountability and traceability**

Vendors are issued with certificates which helps the assembly to identify and regulate legitimate vendors. Those without valid certificates are subjected to enforcement actions and sometimes prosecution.

#### **Schools feeding contractors**

1. They were advised to ensure that all meals prepared meet the right standard for promoting child health. The caterers were educated to keep the environment, kitchen utensils and the entire eatery clean and neat.
2. They should practice proper personal hygiene since they are providing meals for our future leaders
3. The participants were also educated on the effects of cooking at open spaces without proper kitchen which may affect the quality of the food.
4. They were advised to cook in kitchen as required by the Bosomtwe District Assembly.
5. The health officer educated them on proper hygienic and safety practices in the kitchen and how to keep their surroundings clean and also, use clean and safe water for cooking.

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6. They were encouraged to undergo medical screening before preparing and serving food for the children and public as required by law, to prevent transmission of diseases to the public and the school children.

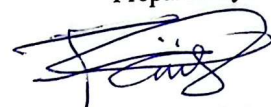
#### Concerns raised by the caterers

1. The District Assembly should renovate kitchens and provide for those not having.
2. The Government owes them and they are facing financial difficulties in rendering effective and efficient services.
3. The District Assembly should absorb their medical screening fees.
4. The Government should resource them to enable them to cook healthy and adequate food for the children.

#### Conclusion

With this workshop, the caterers are now equipped to provide healthy foods and contribute to their own well-being and academic success of the children. The Continuous support and periodic session should be considered to ensure the sustainability and implementation of their learned practices.

Prepared by:



**FAUSTINA KOKLOE**

**(AEHan)**



