

Garden to Mouth

A Garden for food security – not just for today or tomorrow, but forever.



Hunger in Numbers

46%

Of children under 5 are permanently stunted

60%

Of children under 5 suffer from Vitamin A deficiency

2.83 Million

The number of Malawians that will experience acute food insecurity in 2016

Why is there hunger in Malawi?

The Malawian saying 'Chimango ndi moyo' (maize is life) succinctly describes the country's dependence on this rain fed-staple which produces one harvest a year. Though the majority of farmers focus solely on growing this crop, by the hungry season families' reserves of maize are so depleted they are forced to buy the staple at a ceiling price (sometimes 3 times the cost compared to the summer months).

Those fortunate enough to have sufficient maize often lack essential micronutrients. Children are prone to stunting and many succumb to deficiency related diseases.

With erratic weather patterns further aggravating the food shortage, hunger in Malawi is reaching a state of national crisis.

Every year, millions of dollars of Aid are poured into Malawi to be spent on food relief. To step out of this cycle of dependency investment must be in the form of a **long-term strategy** to provide a **solution to hunger** in the face of climate change.



Rather than 'hand outs' what is needed is a 'hand up' to transfer knowledge, skills and appropriate infrastructure to place Malawians in direct control of their own food security.

Garden to Mouth at Mkunkhu School

Prior to Love Support Unite's involvement with Mkunkhu, its students used to walk 8 km from the school to receive one bowl of porridge from a government-feeding program. Recognizing the dire food situation and critical importance of correct nutrition during early childhood, LSU has spent the past 3 years working towards delivering food security as well as clean water, medical outreach and education to over 500 students.

Garden to Mouth is a continuation of LSU's efforts to ensure that every student is food secure.

Project Goals

- Sustainably feed the school's 500 students and staff with one nutritious meal a day
- Educate the students with practical knowledge on how to be in control of their own food security
- Generate income to re-invest back into the plot and eventually expand the gardens to sustain surrounding communities.



The Garden

The 1-hectare Garden is designed as an ecosystem where each plant is beneficial to another. Each plot is designed with integrated pest management, legumes for nitrogen fixation, live mulches and natural diggers to facilitate root development. All of which are edible. Organic pest control and soil management negates the need for external inputs such as pesticides and chemical fertilisers.

All crops are grown under a simple gravity fed irrigation system: this increases their yield by 400% when compared to rain fed agriculture and provides more predictability as well as consistency.



Garden Crops:

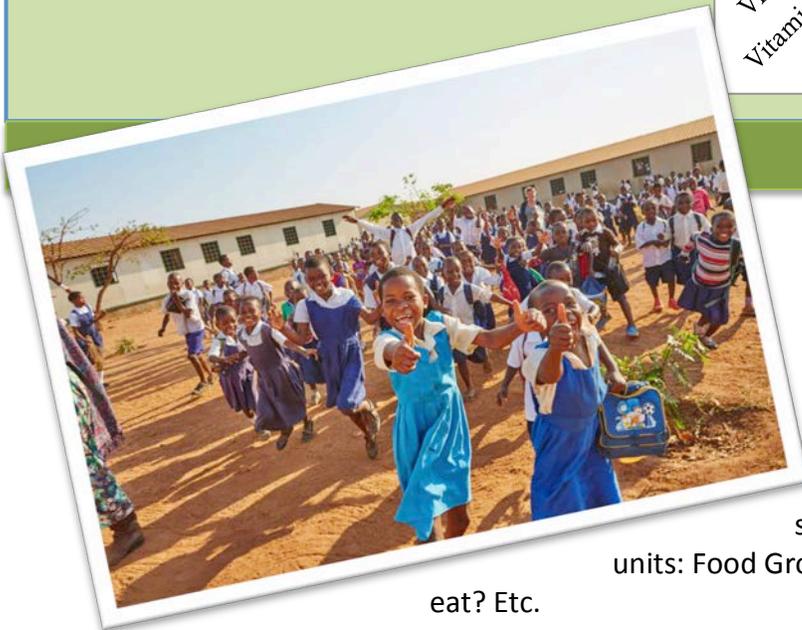
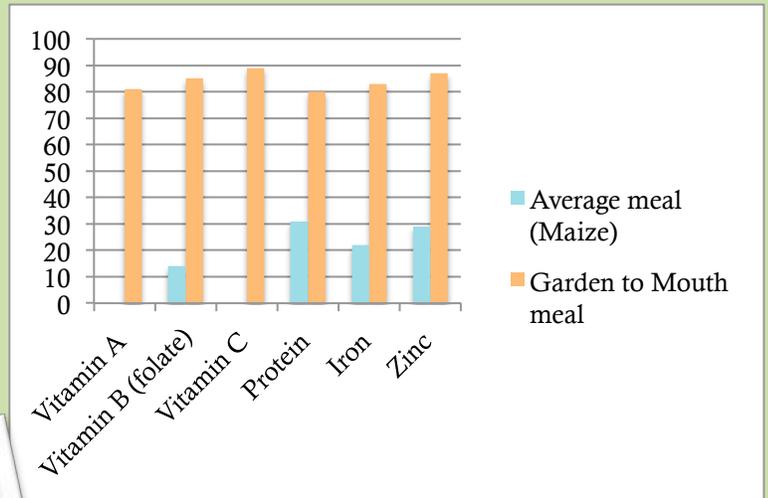
- ❖ Tomatoes
- ❖ Onions
- ❖ Garlic
- ❖ Soybean
- ❖ Eggplant
- ❖ Groundnut
- ❖ Cowpea
- ❖ Amaranth
- ❖ Sunflower
- ❖ Squash
- ❖ Sorghum
- ❖ Comfrey
- ❖ Lemon-grass
- ❖ Pigeon Pea
- ❖ Sweet Potato
- ❖ Beans
- ❖ Hibiscus
- ❖ Chili
- ❖ Pepper
- ❖ Mango
- ❖ Papaya
- ❖ Banana



NUTRITION

The nutritional goal of the project is to provide a meal of sufficient quantity (calories) and quantity (micronutrients) to support the growth and development of Mkunthu's students.

Garden to Mouth meals therefore aim to deliver over 80% of each essential micronutrient with a particular emphasis on protein, vitamin A, B and C, iron and zinc.



eat? Etc.

EDUCATION

Education runs throughout all the streams of Garden to Mouth to make the link between nutrition, agriculture and market understood and the importance of each valued. Similar to a school curriculum the topics are broken down into units: Food Groups, Soil Management, Nutrition – why do we

The units are then split into theory lessons that are taught in the classroom and practical sessions that are hands on in the Garden.

The goal is to equip students with the understanding and practical knowledge for them to be in control of their own food security.

INCOME GENERATION

A core component to Garden to Mouth is income generation. This ensures that the plot is, in the short term, economically self-sustaining and, in the long-term, profitable. While the majority of produce improves the staple meal, 20% of the yield is set aside for market.

The market strategy for Garden to Mouth is focused on the sale of raw products for consumption, soil and pest management, as well as added-value products created by simple processes such as solar drying and powdering. In this way correct nutrition and good economics become part of the same parcel, rather than a choice.