

## **LETTER FROM THE HUNGER PROJECT – BENIN**

Dear Partners, Investors and Friends from the Netherlands,

I will first address my warm greetings to all the investors, those whom I have not seen for a while now, and to those who have been on the most recent trips to Benin. I heard that the journey back to the Netherlands for the group, visiting Benin from March 11 – 16, has been full of episodes, in reference to flight arrangements from Ghana. But eventually and fortunately, it all ended up well.

Your commitment to supporting The Hunger Project–Benin is valuable to us far beyond your financial support. Your ideas and our discussions during the visits are very useful in strategizing our programs. We very much like the atmosphere developed with the people on the ground and with The Hunger Project-Benin team. We keep in mind those friendly times when you and The Hunger Project-Benin team could sing together on the bus. Those enthusiastic moments drag the team into dreaming stronger and bigger of achieving their own development and better empowered to fulfil the ultimate goal of the epicenter strategy. This is really wonderful. Thank you!

It was not possible for me to fully interact with the visiting groups of investors as The Hunger Project were either preparing/hosting the visit of President and CEO, Åsa Skogström Feldt. This has, however, allowed us to experiment a management of visits without my continuous presence.

The feedbacks on those visits were really good, even better than when I was part of it. This is an indication that the team here has been duly prepared and could readily share the full steps, principles, achievements, challenges and prospects of the epicenter strategy. I thank our colleagues from The Hunger Project-Netherlands (Evelijne and Elisabeth) who closely work with the team for the visits to be successful.

I am pleased to briefly share with you a few words on the stay of The Hunger Project President and CEO, Åsa Skogström Feldt, who visited Benin from March 6<sup>th</sup> to March 11<sup>th</sup>. During her stay, we had audiences with The President of the Republic of Benin, United Nations agencies (UNFPA, UNDP), the European Union, the US and the Netherlands Embassies.

On March 8, she took part in the official celebration of the International Women’s Day with the Head of State, Ministers, the diplomatic corps, International NGOs and obviously many associations promoting women. On the occasion, Åsa delivered a powerful speech calling for women and girls to be empowered everywhere for the benefit of Benin, every country and the humanity.

As it appears, The Hunger Project–Benin, through your concerted support, is definitely lifted to a stage from where we could strongly act for achieving the tipping point of the epicenter strategy. The various stakeholders we meet recognize the validity of the strategy and readily discuss opportunities for partnership. Time is ripe for us to take advantage of this stage where your support has pushed us! We could say from now that The Hunger Project can harvest the fruits of your relentless support.

In this vain, let me report that the Dutch Embassy to Benin has allocated to The Hunger Project-Benin an additional fund of CFAF 135,043,000 approximately 200,000 Euros for implementing a program, entitled: “Women and youth leadership and governance in the epicenters of The Hunger Project-Benin”, over 2 years. This project aims to support the capacity of women and youth so that they

could be more visible and active in decision-making bodies. The total amount of the Dutch Embassy's support comes now to 2,200,000 over 4 years (2013 – 2016).

In addition, I would like to mention that The Hunger Project has recently been appointed by its peers to act on behalf of International NGOs within the National Council for Education in Nutrition. This body is comprised of 13 member-institutions including the National Nutrition Council, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry in charge of Gender Promotion, the Consumers Defense League and so on.

Regarding epicenter self-reliance, a road map draft is now available and will be validated in collaboration with the concerned populations. The final version could be shared with you very shortly.

Thank you for your valuable and very much appreciated support!

Kind regards to you all,

Pascal Djohossou – The Hunger Project Benin