

LETTER FROM THE HUNGER PROJECT – BENIN

Dear Partners, Investors and Friends from the Netherlands,

This letter is to briefly update you on our activities for the third and fourth quarters as I couldn't send the quarter-three one earlier. Many activities have been implemented ever since. Before coming to them, I would like to seize the opportunity to express The Hunger Project-Benin's feelings of great excitement, joy and pride arising from the feat of our athletes in the Run for Hunger Project event last November in the Netherlands. It was our wish long since and we are happy that it has now become a reality. We are grateful to all of you and we acknowledge that our athletes' feat is yours. Congratulation then! The Hunger Project-Benin is still amazed by the enthusiastic involvement of the companies, investors, runners, volunteers, individual experts and The Hunger Project-Netherlands team whose effort led to that achievement.

Coming to our program activities, let me mention some of them, especially those related to epicenter self-reliance and particularly the epicenters targeted to reach self-reliance status by 2016. They include Avlamè, Kissamey and Bétérou. In those epicenters, the communication to keep the population more aware about the stepping back of The Hunger Project from the communities, has been strengthened with the purpose of having the population to sharpen their vision and to further specify their role for the next stage. This communication is also extended to communes/municipalities and to the governmental bodies/structures in charge of agriculture, health and nutrition, water and sanitation and so on at local levels - so as to have them as well more involved for the next stage. It is planned that local Non-Governmental Organizations be involved in that communication/dialogue so that their support serves the self-reliance purpose.

I am pleased to share with you that our programs are making progress. In that regard, I will only mention, in this letter, some achievements. Our Food Security Program, this year (by the end of November), has recorded in Zakpota and Kissamey epicenters an excess of 10 tons of food to be stored in villages outside the epicenter buildings. This comes in addition to the food banks filled up to capacities. Some epicenters in the north are in the same trend. This is due to the success of inciting measures that go along with the warrantage mechanism.

In addition, our Entrepreneurship Development Program has put in place a strategy to promote real entrepreneurs and this strategy is adopted by the most important governmental institutions in charge of supporting youth entrepreneurship programs.

Tremendous progress has been made in promoting Moringa tree so that it serves more in improving nutritional status within and outside the epicenters. The Moringa leave powder processed in Wawata epicenter (the closest to Cotonou) is now conventionally distributed by two private companies which have signed contracts with The Hunger Project and Wawata epicenter communities to sell the product through pharmacies. Meanwhile, the packaging has been improved to meet the required standards.

Our Microfinance Program has been involved in a farm-firm contract aiming to promote cashew nut value chain in Tré and Ouissi epicenters as well as in the surrounding localities. SNV (a Dutch NGO), Afokatan (a cashew nut company), and producer bodies are involved in the contract. The purpose is

to have a win-win mechanism for all parties and particularly to support farmers in producing on more efficient and fair basis.

In very short time I will contact The Hunger Project-Netherlands for the preparation of the next investors' visit that we are looking forward to.

Meanwhile, I wish you Merry Christmas and a very Healthy, Prosperous and Happy New Year.

Warm regards to you all.

Pascal Djohossou
Country Director THP-Benin