

# Malawian consumers are falling in love with OFSP Mandazi!

A recent study conducted by the project revealed that up to 40% of orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) puree can be used in the production of mandazi with even better sensory attributes than mandazi made from 100% wheat flour. The study also demonstrated that incorporating OFSP in production of mandazi is profitable. It also found that the OFSP mandazi enjoy massive preference in the market mainly because they are dense and also have a better appearance which attracts more customers.

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**Fig. 1** Promotional sticker of mandazi and doughnuts used by trained sellers of the products; zolima tokha= home grown Zopatsa thanzi= nutritious



## What is the problem?

Malawi imports about 95% of the total national requirement of wheat and even this does not satisfy the industry capacity which is pegged at over 500,000 metric tonnes. Mandazi is one of the most common wheat based businesses in Malawi and one of the food items that are having an increasing demand as a result of urbanization. If 40% of wheat in these products is replaced with OFSP puree, Malawi will save considerable foreign exchange, many farmers will earn more income through increased OFSP production. As the crop becomes more profitable, seasonality will no longer be an issue as farmers will invest in irrigation and storage facilities.



## What do we want to achieve?

To increase the nutrition value of mandazi and other baked products and making them affordable

for the consumer and profitable for the sellers, the RTC-ACTION project is promoting the integration of 40% of OFSP puree into these products (Fig. 1). In this case, mandazi, a wheat based food item is an example of a readily available and affordable food item by many people in Malawi including school children.



## Where are we working?

The project is currently being implemented in the southern region of Malawi mainly in Thyolo, Mulanje, Nsanje, Chikwawa, Blantyre, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Zomba, Neno and Mwanza districts.



## How did we make it happen?

One of the strategies adopted by the project is to promote products that are already in the market like mandazi and doughnuts in order to avoid the risk of product failure. Local mandazi women trader groups were therefore identified in Nsanje, trained on mandazi making and then linked to OFSP root producers to source roots (Fig. 2). The project supported the groups with start-up materials and preliminary gross margin analysis to demonstrate the economic viability of their chosen products. Later, a detailed gross margin analysis for one of the successful women groups in Nsanje was conducted with the aim of assessing the feasibility of taking their enterprise to scale. The group was given forms to be recording all the costs incurred and income realized for a period of one month. Data collected was then analyzed and shared with the group to show them how feasible the business was, especially if they can be operating as an established group servicing the bigger market of Nsanje District.





Fig. 2 Women from Nsanje showcasing different products made from OFSP during field day in Lilongwe. (Credit L. Masikini)

## Who are we working with ?

We work with the Departments of Agricultural Research and Extension Services and Department of Nutrition, under the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development, Department Nutrition HIV and AIDS. In addition, we are also collaborating with other NGOs like CADECOM and Concern Universal. We are also working the private sector players like Universal Industries Limited as well other hotels and supermarkets.

## What have we achieved so far?

Results of the study revealed that up to 40% of wheat flour can be replaced by OFSP puree in the production of mandazi with even better sensory attributes than mandazi made from 100% wheat flour. The study also demonstrated

that incorporating OFSP in mandazi making is profitable as shown by the benefit cost ratio of 4.2 which means that efforts should be made to promote such businesses on a wider scale if farmers are to benefit. It also found that OFSP mandazi enjoy massive preference on the market mainly because they are dense and also have a better appearance which attracts more customers. As the OFSP mandazi are dense, respondents indicated that they are more satisfying than ordinary ones made with wheat flour.

## What's next?

We want to reach out to more mandazi traders in rural and urban areas to promote the use of OFSP in making the product. It is anticipated that as more OFSP is processed, there will be more demand that will in turn trigger root production (Fig. 3).

Table 1 Annual costs and returns for OFSP Mandazi from Nsanje women group (Gross Margin Analysis)

Item	Quantity	Cost/unit (MK)	Amount (MK)
Mandazi	780,000	50	39,000,000
<b>Gross income</b>			<b>39,000,000</b>
<b>Variable costs</b>			
OFSP roots	520	8,000	4,160,000
Sugar	416	900	374,400
Margarine	104	2,750	286,000
Baking powder	104	1,800	187,200
Milk	260	450	117,000
Cooking oil	260	8,500	2,210,000
Wheat flour	2,600	650	1,690,000
Salt	5,200	350	1,820,000
Firewood	-	10,000	520,000
Water	-	1,000	52,000
Eggs	104	2,850	296,400
Market fee	-	1,500	78,000
Total variable costs			11,791,000
<b>Gross margin</b>			<b>27,209,000</b>
<b>Fixed costs</b>			
Depreciation on charcoal burner			14,800
Depreciation big pot			38,800
Depreciation on big basin			11,667
Depreciation plastic drum			4,375
Depreciation on knives			5,000
Depreciation on big pan			10,200
Total fixed costs			84,842
<b>Net business income</b>			<b>27,124,158</b>



Fig. 3 Billboard Installed at Chinakanaka market for OFSP consumer awareness