

Holiday Cooking Camp

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“Holiday Cooking Camp” is an initiative of an Association named “Cooking Healthy Circle” in Burkina Faso, a West African country. The Association is chaired by Ms. Flore YAMEOGO, Director at National Television.

“Cooking Healthy Circle” is the gathering of fifteen women who are passionate about the arts of cooking. 3 years ago, they decided through their Association to organize every year from July 2 to August 14 “Holiday Cooking Camp” to help young’s boys and girls who are between 10 and 25 old years by training them to cook.

“Holiday Cooking Camp” is one of many women community’s activities, people like. Today the country has to face many problems of population developpement like health, education, family organization, etc., caused by poor feeding and hunger. One of the strategies adopted by the “Cooking Healthy Circle” is healthy eating for better living by, is to involving youth. While men and boys do not cook in Africa’s traditional culture, the “Holiday Cooking Camp” is also a way to fight against sexist stereotypes in traditional education.

Most families agree and accepted to register their children. The training program is based on traditional and modern meals. The program insists on traditional meals cooking from the perspective of helping youth bio diversity and health foods. The Association works with both men and women cooking and nutrition.

“Holiday Cooking Camp” lasts 42 days with 3 sessions of 14 days. By session, there are about 100 young people divided into 10 groups at the rate of 10 or 15 trainees.

In July 2007, it was the 3rd time for this Holiday Camp. Young people are very happy to learn about the things is needed in their lives, schools and universities which are not yet taught in Africa. However, this practical knowledge is needed to build strongly their future lives on gender equality. Men and women, boys and girls are able to cook in the family.

“Holiday Cooking Camp” is aimed at changing mentalities and showing societies various possibilities, men or women, boys or girls, have to prepare food themselves.

After an interview, Stephan TIENDREBEOGO, a 16 old age, one of boys of the camp, thinks that he will not need to call his sister to help him to get something to eat when he feels hungry.

For the 2007 edition, the Analysis Centre of Economical and Social Politics (CAPES in Burkina Faso) has sustained this women initiative by giving young people small books about some types of traditional meals like gonre, zamne, sakabo (to), babenda, mansa, samsa, suma, etc.. It is also a way to build youth people's indigenous knowledge.

Burkina Faso basic meals are wealthy in vitamins, for example, A, B, C, and D. As everybody needs to grow healthy, it is very important to promote traditional meals as one development strategy. The future project of "Cooking Healthy Circle" is increasingly to train some mothers by helping them in the household tasks. Women are working hard and further away from home. Meanwhile, husbands and children are waiting for their wives and mothers before having something to eat. In this case, learning programs help create a link between healthy foods and cooking time.

In Africa, the basic cooking of meals is very time consuming. That is cooking of these meals has not been adapted to women today or modern work timetables.

The Association in order to succeed of capacity building in healthy cooking needs to create a training centre for women, men, boys and girls.

Members are looking for means to realise their future project. National television and radio as well as local language medias help the Association by showing and talking about the activities of the camp.



During the 2006 cooking camp, young girls are busy cutting onions.