

# 12 enterprises registered to process, fortify food - TFDA

**By Devota Mwachang'a**

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THE Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) has registered only 12 giant enterprises to process and fortify food, despite the mushrooming of local food processors in the country.

Speaking to The Guardian on Monday, TFDA Food Inspector, John Mwingira said although there are many local processors (small and medium enterprises) of cooking oil, maize and wheat flour especially in Dar es Salaam, their products are not fortified.

"Our office is aware of local maize milling in the country, but it is difficult to fortify what they are producing before selling because they don't have the special machines called Dossifire for the exercise... the machines retail at between 3m/- and 4m/," he said.

He said of the 12 registered enterprises to supply maize flour, wheat flour and cooking oil, 10 are based in Dar es Salaam, 1 in Arusha and another one in Tanga.

Unfortified food can contribute to lack of vitamins and essential minerals including foliate, niacin, thiamine, riboflavin, zinc, lime, and selenium.

Speaking at a news conference in Dar es Salaam on Monday, TFDA Public Relations Officer,

Gaudencia Simwanza said the Tanzanian populace is lacking vitamin A, iron mineral and folic acid in their diets, something that has been highly affecting children and pregnant women.

She said the Demographic and Health Survey, 2010 shows that 33 percent of children under five years were affected by lack of Vitamin A, 37 while the lack of folic acid affected 59 percent of children.

"The government has come up with alternative strategies to ensure that people get those vitamins and minerals by providing additional drops of Vitamin A, minerals and folic acid to children and pregnant women," she said.

She said the government reached this decision after realising that it is difficult to change people's eating habits or forcing them to eat healthy.

Furthermore, she said to adhere to the Tanzania Food, Drugs and Cosmetics (Food Fortification) Regulations, 2011; the authority has issued six months (up to December 31, this year) to ensure that all imported food meet the food fortification regulations.

She said the given period of time also applies to local food processors that are not in the National Plan of Food Fortification, "the aim is to give them a chance for preparation, including installing machines."