



FOOD WITHOUT BORDERS

Recipes from Médecins Sans Frontières staff and their
communities around the world



MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES
DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS

In many of the places where Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) works, food is a way for people to connect.

Mealtimes shared between staff, or between patients or other members of communities, are an opportunity for people to exchange culture, tradition, stories and enjoyment.

For MSF staff working in a busy hospital or bustling refugee camp, food gives everyone a moment to slow down. MSF is lucky to have incredible cooks who provide meals for our other staff so they can concentrate on their medical humanitarian work, and staff often exchange recipes while living together for weeks or months on assignment.

For many patients, good nutrition is central to their recovery. Our cooks also provide food for people receiving care from MSF.

We hope these recipes, shared with you by MSF cooks and other staff, allow you to connect with a few of the faces that make up our organisation.





**NABEELA ABU
KHADEER**
COOK

Mushroom sauce is one of Nabeela Abu Khadeer's specialties for MSF staff working in East Jerusalem.

Here, MSF has a coordination team overseeing our comprehensive care programs in Gaza and mental health services in the West Bank. Nabeela often serves this sauce with chicken to hungry staff.

"My sister does catering for parties," says Nabeela. "One day, I was at her home and we tried making a sauce with the ingredients we had. It was so good that we tried to make it again. And then I made it for the office."

"I cook for my family, and my husband, because I am a mother and I have to; I enjoy it. I like cooking to make them happy. I've been cooking for MSF for six years. I like to see people happy after eating the food."

Mushroom sauce, Palestine

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 cups mushrooms (portobello or similar)
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed or finely chopped
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 cups cream (and milk if desired)
- Black pepper to taste

METHOD:

1. Cut the mushrooms to your liking (diced or in rough pieces).
2. Add the mushrooms to heat, add garlic and butter and cook gently, over low heat, for five minutes.
3. Add cream and the pepper, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes.
4. If too dry, add more cream or a little milk.



"I've been cooking for MSF for six years. I like to see people happy after eating the food."

— NABEELA ABU KHADEER

Women prepare rice and chickpeas for people at the Ain Issa camp for displaced people, in Raqqa governorate, northeast Syria, June 2017.

© Chris Hubby

**SHUKRIYA SALEH
MOHAMMAD**
COOK



This okra and tomato recipe is a typical recipe in Syria, often handed down in families from mothers to daughters.

Okra, also sometimes known as 'ladies' fingers', is a popular vegetable in many different cultures around the world. In northeast Syria it is often preserved before being used in cooking.

Shukriya Saleh Mohammad is a cook in the MSF Hassakeh project, and

made this recipe for Australia-based pharmacist Aiesha Ali when she worked in the program in 2017.

"Shukriya cooked three meals a day for the staff while we were there," says Aiesha. "She always managed to go to the market and get fresh produce for us, even though it was a rare commodity, and learnt English phrases like 'lunch is ready' so she could call us in for a meal!"

Okra and tomato, Syria

INGREDIENTS:

280g lamb leg or shoulder, cut into large cube pieces (Shukriya uses Awassi, the local Syrian sheep)
1.5 tbsp oil
450g okra (preserved or fresh)
2 cans diced tomatoes
1 cup water
2 cloves garlic
Black pepper to taste
1 tsp paprika
2 handfuls fresh coriander, chopped

METHOD:

1. Put the lamb in a large pot and cook until browned.
2. Add the oil and then the okra into the same pot. Fry for a few minutes.
3. Add the canned tomatoes and a cup of water, and bring to a boil. Then reduce the heat and cook on low until the sauce thickens slightly.



4. Add the garlic, black pepper, paprika and a little coriander. Continue to cook to thicken the sauce and until the lamb is done to your liking.

5. Serve with leftover coriander on top.

Serves 4



LISA SEARLE
DOCTOR AND PROJECT
COORDINATOR

MSF cooks Mama Locrezia (left) and Mama Thérèse taught Lisa Searle this recipe in Bukavu, South Kivu.

'Pili pili' is the Swahili word for chilli.

Dr Lisa Searle, based in Hobart, Tasmania, was taught this recipe by a few different cooks, affectionately known as 'Mamas', in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

"Pili pili is a staple in all the MSF projects in the DRC I have worked in;

always on the lunch or dinner table and probably the most important condiment at every meal.

"Congolese people generally don't put a lot of chilli in their cooking, but instead make a range of different spicy condiments to allow each person to choose their preferred level of heat. Be warned—this one is HOT!"

Pili pili, Democratic Republic of Congo

INGREDIENTS:

- 500g Scotch Bonnet chillies
- 3 medium onions
- 1 bulb garlic
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tbsp white vinegar

METHOD:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. If no blender available, you can also finely chop the chilli, garlic and onions or alternatively pound them in a mortar and pestle and then mix through the other ingredients.
2. Pour the mixture into a non-stick frypan and put over low heat. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 30 minutes until the mixture has turned a deep red and the oil has separated.
3. Allow to cool slightly, then pour into a clean jar.



This pili pili will keep in the fridge for a couple of weeks. It's fantastic drizzled over almost anything you can think of, but especially beans and rice, vegetables, Sukuma wiki (a collard greens-based dish from eastern Africa), and vegetable soups.



“A lot of them come from very far. They haven’t got any relatives here who can bring food. So we cook for them three times a day. My speciality is Pundu (a sauce with manioc leaves).”

— MAMA ALPHONSINE, HEAD OF THE KITCHEN AT BILI HOSPITAL, DRC, SPEAKS ABOUT COOKING FOR FEMALE PATIENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN WHILE SCOOPING UP SOME PUNDU (2018).

 **COOKING FOR PATIENTS IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

In many hospitals where MSF works, our cooks provide meals for patients and their families or carers.



**DENISE
MASSIBAYE**
COOK

Denise Massibaye has been cooking for MSF teams in Chad for almost three decades.

Denise is from Koumra, in the south of the country, but the ingredients used in the typical dishes cooked there can't easily be found in Australia or New Zealand. Thiep is a Sengalese-Chadian recipe, a favourite that Denise learnt

while at cooking school. She's served it to many MSF staff over the years.

In southern Chad, MSF provides prevention and treatment during outbreaks of measles, meningitis and malnutrition, treats children with malaria and supports health services for women and children from community health centre level up to inpatient care level.

Thiep, Chad/Senegal

INGREDIENTS:

- Rice for 6-8 people
- A leg of lamb or mutton
- 3 large carrots
- 2 eggplants, cut into wedges
- 2 cans tomatoes
- 2 onions
- 4 cloves garlic
- 3 zucchinis
- Salt and pepper
- Oil
- Chillies optional

METHOD:

1. Soak the rice in enough water to cover it.
2. Cut the leg of lamb into pieces, off the bone.
3. Marinate the pieces of meat in salt, pepper and garlic (insert pieces of garlic into the meat).
4. Leave both the rice and the meat (in the fridge) for an hour.
5. Cut carrots, zucchini and eggplant into large wedges.
6. Brown the meat in a large frypan and put it aside.
7. Make a tomato sauce by frying the onion, and tomatoes and garlic together. Add water if needed.
8. Strain the rice.
9. Now place the vegetables in the same pan you used for the meat, cook until tender and put aside.
10. Using the same pan, stir the rice until it becomes translucent.
11. Add the sauce to the rice along with meat, stir regularly (like a risotto).
12. Add the vegetables once rice is tender. Bon appétit!



Serves 6-8



SAKINA YASMINE
COMMUNITY HEALTH
EDUCATOR



A spice market in Old Dhaka, Bangladesh.

“Old Dhaka is famous for biriyani,” says Sakina Yasmine of her home city.

“We received the recipe as a tradition from Mughals [who ruled modern-day Dhaka in the 16th and 18th centuries]. With time, the recipe and process of preparing it has been changed. But still, it’s the famous food of the Kamrangirchar area.”

In Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, MSF runs two primary healthcare clinics in the Kamrangirchar area offering occupational healthcare for factory workers, sexual and reproductive healthcare for adolescent girls and comprehensive survivor-centered care for the survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

“My role is to support MSF delivering its health messages among the community,” says Sakina. “I love my work.”

Beef biriyani, Bangladesh

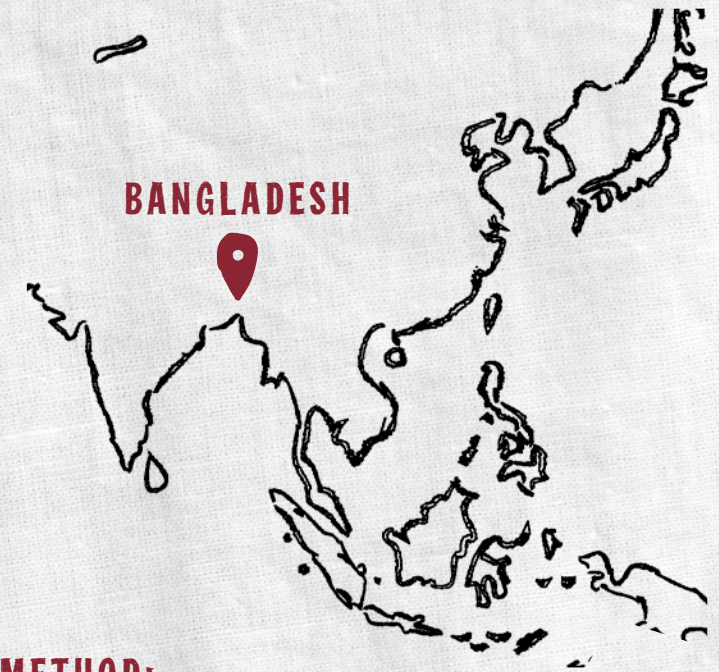
INGREDIENTS:

- 1 kg polao rice
- ½ tsp white pepper powder
- 1 cup sour curd
- 1 tsp ground mace
- 1.5 kg brisket of beef
- 1½ cups mustard oil
- 2 cups sliced onions
- 2 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste
- 1 cinnamon stick, crushed into 5–6 pcs
- 5–6 pcs cardamom
- 5–6 pcs clove
- 6 common plums
- 6 raisins
- 1 cup powdered milk
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp nutmeg powder
- ½ tsp cumin powder
- 2 tbsp rose water
- 1 tbsp almond paste

METHOD:

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the sliced onions and cook until they start to turn brown.
2. Add the whole spices and almond paste; heat gently, swirling in the oil to release the flavours. Add the salt.
3. Add the meat (cut into smaller pieces) and cook through.
4. When the meat is mixed with spices, add sour curd and cook it for 10–15 mins.
5. When the mixture releases a nice flavour, add the polao rice (not cooked) and mix it with the meat preparation.
6. Add 1.5 litres water to 1 kg rice and cook for 10–15 mins.
7. Finally add rose water for flavour.

Serves 4-6





**JEAN—CHRISTOPHE
NOUGARET**
MSF COMMUNICATIONS



Abdallah Zarzour
is the head cook in
MSF's Nablus hospital
in West Mosul, Iraq.

Spaghetti Bolognese, from France to Iraq



INGREDIENTS:

500g spaghetti
2 large onions, diced
2 garlic cloves, diced or crushed
A bunch of celery, diced
1 large carrot, chopped
Mediterranean herbs
200g minced beef (or other preferred meat, or replace with a vegetarian substitute)
200g sausage meat
400g canned diced tomatoes
Salt, pepper
Olive oil
Paprika
1 stock cube
1 tbsp brown sugar
1 tbsp flour

METHOD:

1. Pour two tbsp of olive oil in a large frying pan and add the onion. Stir until it starts to yellow, then add the garlic, carrot and celery, and cook for two minutes.
2. Add the meat (or vegetarian substitute) to a second frypan with

hot oil. Add two pinches of salt, season with pepper and paprika, and cook until it is done (but not too much). While frying, prepare the stock by boiling a cup of water in a small pan, and adding the stock cube.

4. Add a tbsp of flour to the stock and stir with a wooden spoon. This will allow your sauce to thicken.

5. Combine the cooked meat and vegetables in one frypan, then add the tomatoes. Add the tbsp of sugar, to sweeten the sauce and hide the acidity of the tomatoes. Now add the stock. Turn off the heat.

6. Cook your pasta in salted boiling water, drain and rinse with cold water.

7. Put your frypan back on the heat and wait a minute or two until the sauce starts to bubble. Then add the cooked pasta and stir for a couple of minutes. Bon appétit!

“This recipe is from my Italian grandmother’s kitchen in Nice, France,” says Jean-Christophe.

Also known as Madeleine de Proust, this meal was enjoyed by the MSF team in Erbil, Iraq, when Jean-Christophe visited in September 2017.

“At that time, Mosul had just been retaken by the coalition forces and Iraqis had gone through almost 20

years of war. Around Erbil, tens of thousands of people were stranded in camps. We met patients and MSF staff and facilitated journalists’ visits to shed light on people’s experiences and MSF’s mental health programs there.

“In the evenings, cooking was my de-stressor. When you’re spending several weeks or more in the same house with colleagues, it’s a good way to get to know each other!”



 **NUTRITION IN NIGER**

Mothers take part in a cooking workshop organised by MSF in Magaria, 2017. They are learning to make nutrition-rich porridge: it will aid in the recovery of their children who have been treated by MSF for malnutrition, and ease their return home.



© Viviane Delle

**RAMAN
VISHNEUSKI**
PATIENT SUPPORT
SUPERVISOR



In Belarus, every family has a machanka recipe.

“The traditional way to have it is with pancakes, by dipping them in the sauce,” says Raman Vishneuski. Raman works in MSF’s Belarus project, which has been running since 2015 to support treatment for people with multi-drug resistant and extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis.

Many of the patients also have alcohol addiction or are from vulnerable

groups. “I work with a great team of like-minded people helping patients to overcome multiple hurdles they come across during the long, uncompromising treatment this disease (tuberculosis) requires,” says Raman.

“We help them learn new ways to cope and look for different life resources to fall back on both during and after their treatment.”

Machanka, Belarus

INGREDIENTS:

200g sausage (e.g pork)
2 tbsp vegetable oil
Salt, black pepper to taste
1 tbsp wheat flour
2 tbsp butter

SAUCE:

1 cup broth
1 cup sour cream
15 smoked or salted pork ribs (about 350g)
1 onion

METHOD:

1. For the sauce, place flour and butter in a saucepan. Stirring constantly, quickly fry the flour and remove from heat.
2. Pour in the broth, mix thoroughly so that there are no lumps.
3. Add sour cream, stir, then add salt and pepper.



4. Let the ribs simmer in boiling water for five minutes, then quickly fry in a pan in vegetable oil and transfer to a pot.
5. Fry the onion until half cooked, and fry the sausage. Add both to the pot.
6. Pour sour cream sauce on top and stew for five minutes.
7. Serve with pancakes.

Serves 4-6



NOR FAZILAH
MEDICINE DISPENSER

Coq Keria is a doughnut-like favourite among all ages in Penang, Malaysia, because of its fluffy, soft texture.

“It’s a unique recipe that we eat at our tea time,” says Nor Fazilah. “We deep fry it, and after that we roll it in the sugar.”

Nor has been working with MSF in Penang for two years. Here, MSF

provides medical care for refugee communities and survivors of human trafficking.

“I love my job because I can meet people all around the world. My main concern is to serve the community in Malaysia who really need the treatment [MSF provides]. I’m so proud to be called an MSFer.”



Coq Keria, Malaysia

INGREDIENTS:

2–3 sweet potatoes
Wheat flour (enough to make the dough soft)
Caster sugar (for topping)
Oil

METHOD:

1. Peel the skin off the sweet potato and cut into small pieces.
2. Wash and simmer it for about 20 min until soft (add a pinch of salt during simmer).
3. Drain all the water and let it cool.
4. Then mash the sweet potato and add the flour until it becomes a soft dough.
5. On another plate, sprinkle some flour. Knead the dough on the floured plate and make it into small balls. Press down each ball a bit and make a hole in the middle.
6. Heat the oil until it is very hot and fry the balls until they turn golden brown.
7. Let them cool for few minutes, and then roll them in sugar.

**No matter where we are in the world,
food brings people together. Happy cooking
from Médecins Sans Frontières staff to you!**

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Zenab Mahammed,
MSF Cook, South Sudan