

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2011 9:41 AM
To: H
Subject: FW: Food

-----Original Message-----

From: Schwartz, Eric P
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2011 9:38 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: Food

Why do they cook their own food?

Short answer.

Dadaab has 420,000 or more refugees now, but the majority have been there for many years. Newest arrivals are to receive prepared meals before they move to new settlements or join family members in existing ones, and new arrivals, especially those who need nutritional supplements, are provided with high energy, ready-to-eat supplements. In addition, the general ration package also includes some ready-to-eat high energy food. But refugees generally cook their own food for several reasons. First, they want to live as normal a life as possible, especially as many have been in Dadaab for 20 years. And that includes preparing their own meals where they live. Second, experience has shown that they don't like and are not inclined to eat ready to eat food, which if the UN and others tried to use them to fulfill all requirements, would likely result in substantial waste at a very high cost.

That's the very short answer.

Best,
Eric