Improving Household Nutrition Security and Public Health in CARICOM aka Food and Nutrition (FaN) project

JAMAICA Close Out

Prof T. Alafia Samuels, Principal Investigator, on behalf of the FaN Research Collaboration

May 19th 2022
Follow up from 2 previous IDRC-funded projects

• Evaluation of the CARICOM Heads of Government POS Declaration 2014-2017
  • Highest levels: those with clear guidance for action and support from regional or international organisations e.g:
    • Surveillance: CAREC/PAHO, CARPHA, CDC
    • Caribbean Wellness day: PAHO and CARICOM

• Lowest levels of implementation: diet, schools, communications

• Farm to Fork: 2011-2014
  • Project website: https://www.mcgill.ca/globalfoodsecurity/research-initiatives/caricom-project
FaN Research question

• What are the most effective, gender-sensitive ways to improve food sovereignty, household food security, and nutrition in CARICOM states?

• 3 study countries (Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and St Kitts and Nevis)
• Region wide (CARICOM) interventions

• 4- year project. Jan 2018 – Jan 2022
  • 6 month no cost extension due to COVID
Aim

• To improve the quality and diversity of the diet
  • In 3 study countries (Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and St Kitts and Nevis)

• by engaging with stakeholders to
  • Build a shared understanding of the complex systems driving food production and consumption;
  • Design, implement, and evaluate integrated packages of interventions that promote sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable groups

• address key “leverage points” within their food systems

• disseminate the lessons learnt throughout CARICOM.
Research Partners and Collaborators

• UWI
  • Caribbean Institute for Health Research
  • Public Health Group, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Cave Hill
  • Institute of Gender and Development Studies, Mona
  • HEU, Centre for Health Economics, St. Augustine
  • UWI Open Campus

• University of Technology, Jamaica
• McGill University, Canada
• Cambridge University, UK

Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

• FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation
• IICA – Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
• CARDI – Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute
• CARPHA - Caribbean Public Health Agency
• CDB – Caribbean Development Bank
• CXC – Caribbean Examination Council
• CROSQ – CARICOM Regional Office for Standards and Quality
• CARICOM - Health, Agriculture, Human Development
• Healthy Caribbean Coalition
• Pan American Health Organization
• Ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture SKN, SVG, JAM
A. Objectives for information collation to identify intervention components

Objective 1:
To describe, by gender, age and socio-economic group, the **current nutritional NCD risks** in children, women and men, and to investigate **what factors influence** their food sources and dietary patterns.

Objective 2:
To **engage with stakeholders**, undertake critical appraisals of available evidence and data, in order to understand how local food systems currently determine the dietary patterns of populations in the three study countries.
B. Objectives to design and assess the intervention packages

Objective 3: Develop, implement and assess an integrated, adaptable and gender sensitive package of interventions that leverage local food systems to increase healthy eating and sustainable rural livelihoods.

Objective 4: Work with public, private and civil society partners to expand project impact across the CARICOM region through innovative knowledge sharing, communications and policy action platforms.
3 streams of interventions

1. Follow up POSDEVAL recommendations (Interventions re diet, schools, communications)

2. Promote sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable groups through 15 competitive projects in 3 countries
   9 grantees in JAM, 3 SKN, 3 SVG

3. *Health systems interventions*
   MOHW NCD parish plan 2022-2030
Research and Interventions

RESEARCH
• Food system model

INTERVENTIONS
• SCHOOLS
  • Curriculum revisions
  • Story writing and HFLE digital supports
• COMMUNITY
  • Jamaica Council of Churches Sermon series
  • Womens Farmers Academy (SKN SVG)
• POLICY
  • Trans fat policy process

Prof Henry Utech
RESEARCH
• Profile of imports/ultraprocessed
• Food security & covid,

INTERVENTIONS
• Capacity building
  • Ingredient testing from upgraded labs at BOS and SRC
• COMMUNITY
  • 15 small grants, 9 in Jamaica
  • Marketable meals.
Project Activities:
Inception Workshop: March 2018
Engaging with Stakeholders: Understanding Food Systems

• Individual Stakeholder Interviews
• Emerging themes from 76 Interviews with government, civil society and private sector
  • St. Kitts & Nevis: 14
  • St. Vincent & the Grenadines: 15
  • Jamaica: 47
## Engaging with Stakeholders: 4 Workshops in 3 countries

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<th>Jamaica Model Building Oct 23-25</th>
<th>SVG One-day Nov 02</th>
<th>Farm to Fork review Nov 20</th>
<th>SKN SVG Model-building Nov 21-22</th>
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Interventions
-Schools
-Communities
-Policy
Deciding to eat unhealthy foods

Marketing to consumers

Affordability unhealthy foods vs healthy foods

Production/distribution

Cultural shifts towards unhealthy foods

Negative social and health effects

Number of people eating an unhealthy diet

Food preparation standards

Food preparation

Coordination of government policies

Ensure a stable supply

Local agricultural products

Knowledge and skills for agriculture, gardening, and healthy eating

Food preparation

Fiscal Measures

Limits on marketing

Limits on marketing

Limits on marketing
Childhood Obesity initiatives in schools

• School Nutrition Policy, is a joint submission between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

• Stakeholder consultations for Cabinet Paper
  • Once approved, school cafeteria will prepare healthier options for our children.

• Evaluation of limits of sugar in drinks in school and Baseline measures for salt and fats in school meals
  • Not done due to COVID lockdowns of schools
Increase demand for healthy foods among children
Curriculum Reviews – Primary and Secondary School children

- Enhance knowledge and skills re NCDs risks and drivers, to improve dietary patterns and physical activity in children

- Secondary Schools – CXC curriculum revisions
  - CSEC Human & Social Biology; CCSLC Integrated Science

- Primary Schools - CARICOM re HFLE Curriculum
  - Adopted by CARICOM Ministers of Education 2019
  - Now working with partners to develop digital content for teachers and families
SYLLABUS
HUMAN AND SOCIAL BIOLOGY

Effective for examinations from May–June 2021.

1. NUTRITION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

1.1 distinguish between macro and micro nutrients;

1.2 discuss the functions of macro nutrients;

1.3 discuss the functions of micronutrients;

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Include definitions and examples of macronutrients and micronutrients.

Starch, reducing and non-reducing sugars, lipids, proteins; mention chemical and physical properties of carbohydrates, lipids and proteins.

Include sources of macronutrients; elements that make up the macronutrients.

Include hidden sources of sugars; effects of sugar-sweetened beverages on health; benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables with reference to fruits and vegetables grown in the Caribbean.

Vitamin A, B6, C, D, E, and K and the minerals: calcium, magnesium, fluorides, iodine, phosphorous, sodium and iron.

Include sources of micronutrients.

Include hidden sources of salt.

1.10 discuss the importance of a balanced diet;

Must include definition, food groups, the effects of age, sex and occupation on dietary needs.

1.11 discuss the effects of malnutrition on the human body;

Include the definition of malnutrition (over and under nutrition), obesity (adult and childhood), anorexia and bulimia, protein and energy malnutrition (kwashiorkor, marasmus).

Include the sources and effects of hidden salt.

1.12 determine Body Mass Index (BMI);

Include determination of waist circumference; use of BMI and waist circumference to categorize obesity; factors and implications of obesity.

(Refer to Specific Objectives 83.6, 83.11 and 92).
Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Health And Family Life Education (HFLE)

Regional Curriculum Framework

AGES 3 – 12 YEARS 2022

Approved at the Thirty-eighth Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), 23-24 October 2019

ISBN #978-976-600-503-0 (E-book)
Facilitating children teaching children

Caribbean Sesame Street
– Story Writing Competition

JAM with 3 of the 5 winners from 85 competitors
Women’s Farmers Academy
Helen’s Daughters was born in 2016 to support rural women with the use of adaptive agricultural techniques, capacity-building and improved market access.

The Women's Farmers Academy (WFA) is the collaboration between UWI ‘FaN’ project.

Joint mission: To enhance food systems in CARICOM through nutrition sensitive farming and gender-responsiveness.
**Background**

**WFA Participants**

Original plan - 40 women - SVG and SKN

359 women applied, 210 SVG

SKN - 1 additional courses

SVG - 2 additional courses to accommodate all

Graduates had to attend at least 75% of classes

SKN graduated - 15 (Round 1) + 22 (Round 2)

SVG graduated - 16 (Round 1) + 50 (Round 2)

and Round 3 started June 5th with 95 students

30% of participants were 18-29 years old and 15% were 30-39 years old

Most worked their own farms.

Of those that did work their own farms - 96% in SKN said that at least one family member would continue to farm the land as part of the next generation.

In terms of produce, 58% in SKN sold their products to others. Of those that did sell products, 68% actively promoted the sale of products to others.

94% SKN said they had received no support from Government,
The Journey

Challenges/Successes

• COVID forced us to pivot to an on-line – 8 week course
• Blended learning is supported by the digital resource library on our website with virtual classes and demonstrations available and will be open source.
• Farm visits are now possible and are a mandatory component of the training.
• With the creation of a WFA SKN and WFA SVG WhatsApp and Facebook groups, participants have created a peer-to-peer network that fosters sharing of ideas, advice and even partnerships.
The Future

Helen’s Daughters will continue work with in-country facilitators even after the WFA is completed.

SVG SKN representatives invited to Board positions in our Central Executive which oversees governance for all three countries.

Expansion may be possible with the support of Rihanna
POLICY: Trans fat elimination time line

• Support for CROSQ in attempt for regional policy on graphic front of package labelling
• Upgrade labs at SCR BOS
• Testing of samples for independent verification of trans fats (also sugar, salt and saturated fats)
• Minister reports results in Parliament in 2021
• CARICOM approves policy to eliminate PHOs by 2025
• Jamaica Stakeholder meeting June 14th
Recommendations from POS Evaluation – monitor diets

Labs Upgraded to Analyse Sugar, Salt and Fat in Food Products

• For the first time, Jamaica will have the capacity to analyse the sugar, salt and fat content of food products.

• This follows the upgrading of laboratories of the Bureau of Standards Jamaica (BSJ) and the Scientific Research Council (SRC), to conduct these tests, at a cost of $20 million, through funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada.

• The upgraded labs were officially launched on August 27, 2019.

• Minister Tufton, said this historically significant initiative will assist the Government in its drive to reduce the high prevalence of NCDs.
IMPROVING NUTRITION QUALITY
CARICOM COHSOD (Ministers of Health) COTED (Ministers of Trade) meetings on NCD and risks

• Heads of Government mandated attention to NCDs and Trade
• CARICOM process: Joint meetings of Ministers of Health and Ministers of Trade
• Project supported CARICOM with consultant
  • Inter-Governmental Working Groups
  • Priorities set, then invite private sector and NGOs to comment
• April 2022: Joint COHSOD COTED approves regional policy and approach to remove IP-TFA by 2025.
FaN and JCC

Jamaica Council of Churches & University of the West Indies:

Bible Study series on Nutrition and Health

Session 4: Too Much a One Ting Good Fi Nutten-Part 1
Dissemination

- SWAG
- Bulletins
- Website

- Dedicated PAHO Revista Journal of Public Health Supplement
- 4 editorials
- 11 peer reviewed papers

- Further publications on ongoing interventions late 2022
THANK YOU