Pilots /Interventions addressing challenges in the Food Environment

T. Alafia Samuels, Honorary Professor
Where to Act for Change

• Individual level
  • Formal education system – knowledge
  • Health education supporting individual decisions

• Population / Policy level
  • New food culture
  • Commercial determinants of health
    • strategies and approaches used by the private sector to promote products and choices that are detrimental to health
  • Obesogenic environments
  • Policy strategies at the organizational, community, or population level can be powerful, sustainable, scalable, and achieve broad impact
The Evaluation of the 2007 CARICOM Port of Spain NCD Summit Declaration

T. Alafia Samuels, Nigel Unwin
co-Principal Investigators
Policy responses and lessons learned

• Indicators with the **lowest** levels of implementation:
  - diet, schools and communications

• **Highest** levels: those with clear guidance for action and support from regional or international organisations, local champions
Improving Household Nutrition Security and Public Health in CARICOM aka Food and Nutrition (FaN) project

T. Alafia Samuels, PI, on behalf of the FaN Research Collaboration
RESEARCH QUESTION

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

AIMS

• 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
  • in designing, implementing, and evaluating integrated packages of interventions that
• address key “leverage points” within their food systems
• disseminate the lessons learnt throughout CARICOM.
3 Intervention Streams

1. Recommendations from POS Evaluation and Farm to Fork projects
2. 15 small grant projects to enhance rural livelihoods
3. Project Advisory Committee recommendations based on food system mapping and stakeholder interviews recommended
   a) Schools: Increase demand for healthy foods among children
   b) Communities
      a) Improve communications along the supply / value chain – Linking farmers to purchasers.
      b) Private Sector Engaging with the private food sector and local NGOs to increase healthy options offered in the commercial marketplace
   d) Policy work with CARICOM Secretariat

• Focus work in Jamaica, gender sensitive interventions / Pilots
Interventions from Causal Map

Figure 1: Intervention impacts layered onto Group Modelling Causal Map. Numbers refer to interventions listed in Table 2 above. Green – school interventions; Orange – community interventions; Grey – policy/CARICOM interventions. Cancelled/merged interventions not included (4, 8, 14)
The number of people eating an unhealthy diet is influenced by several factors:

1. Decision to eat unhealthy foods
2. Cultural shifts towards unhealthy foods
3. Affordability of unhealthy foods vs healthy foods
4. Production/distribution
5. Marketing to consumers

Factors that can negatively impact health include:

- Negative social and health effects

Factors that can positively impact health include:

- Knowledge and skills for agriculture, gardening, and healthy eating
- Local agricultural products
- Coordinated government policies
- Fiscal measures

Ensure a stable supply of food is also crucial for maintaining a healthy diet.
SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS

Curriculum Review
Digital content supports
Validating sugar content in school drinks
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
Facilitating children teaching children

Caribbean Sesame Street

**FOOD4CHANGE CARIBBEAN’S STORY WRITING COMPETITION**

If you’re a student between the ages of 7-17 here’s your chance to win a Dell Laptop. Teachers who help the winning students may be eligible to receive USD $500.

This work is carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada.

To enter Stage 1, choose one of the three illustrations provided and write a 500-word Short Story in the Application Form found at food4changeccaribbean.org

**FOR AGES 7-17 ENTRY DEADLINE SEP 17**

OPEN TO STUDENTS IN JAMAICA, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS, AND BARBADOS

The Competition will consist of: Stage 1 - Submit a 500-word Short Story, and Stage 2 - Participate in one Zoom brainstorming session and submit a 1,000-word Long Story. Log on to our website for more information.
Recommendations from POS Evaluation – monitor diets
Monitoring content of school childrens food consumption
Supporting MOH Jamaica – COVID delayed

FaN supports healthy eating component of Jamaica Moves in schools

• Sample primary and secondary public schools – urban, rural, deep rural
• Purchase all foods available in school that day
• Use FaN supported testing at Bureau of Standards and Scientific Research Council
• Assess compliance with the new guidelines re sugar in drinks
• Baseline for evaluating pending new limits on salt and fats

26 MARCH 2019
Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, Jamaica’s Minister of Health, the project’s newly designated “Policy Entrepreneur” met with FaN’s Prof. T. Alafia Samuels, Dr. Leith Dunn and Prof. Fitzroy Henry.
COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS

Jamaica – Jamaica Council of Churches
SVG, SKN – Helens Daughters /FaN “Womens Farmers Academy”
15 small grants
Jamaica Council of Churches

Objective: To promote healthy eating to church congregations
• Public Health Professionals who are members of a church implementing health promotion interventions – Supported by Dr. Ishtar Govia

• Documentation of resources for nutritionally and socially vulnerable populations

• 10 Sermons and 10 Bible studies on biblical supports for healthy eating
  • Drafted by JCC pastors
  • Peer reviewed by 2 additional pastors
  • Digital supports – power points, videos, digital content links
  • One pagers for each Bible study that together make up a guide for healthy living
  • Soft launch and fine tuning in May
  • Public launch in early June
Jamaica Council of Churches & University of the West Indies: 

Bible Study series on Nutrition and Health

SUGAR
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

Women’s Farmers Academy

The common objective
Enhance Caribbean capacity
Focus on vulnerable groups
Designing an on-line educational intervention for female small holder farmers.

The aim
- remove barriers for women to access agricultural training
- empower women farmers to think and function as agricultural entrepreneurs.
WFA Facilitators

The Team

01.

60% of the Facilitators were in-country recruitments and all facilitators came from within the Caribbean Basin. All are not only subject-matter experts but have experience working within rural and agricultural communities.

02.

A train-the-trainers programme was designed with co-creation in mind to take into account the facilitator’s in-country experience as well as results from the Baseline Surveys.

03.

Topics that would be covered by the Facilitators, include Sustainable Agriculture, Agri-business and Market Linkages, Food Safety and Nutritional Marketing.
Background

WFA Participants

Original plan was 20 women each in SVG and SKN (40 total)

359 women applied

Ran one additional training in SKN and 2 additional in SVG to accommodate all

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

85% had never received any formal training to support their farming.

90% of SKN participants graduated

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
Fifteen small grants - pilots

- Agriculture/food-related economic activity of their choice, (USD $7,000),
  - to generate income, provide own-consumption and/or supplement own-employment.

- Beneficiaries - small groups of 6-14 persons, mostly women
  - Preliminary training and business plans

- Initial implementation stages delayed, partly due to the COVID-19 effects
  - All of projects have full complement of supplies and are in production stages.

- 11 of the 15 projects are earing revenue, and two will soon be exporting to Europe through the Eastern Caribbean Trading Agriculture and Development Company.
15 small grants, mainly to women

Jamaica (Managed by RADA)
SKN (Managed by Ms. Latoya Duncan and Dr. Eric Brown)
SVG (Managed by Dr. Natalie Toney and Dr. Randy Elliot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Main product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Carmel Goat Rearers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Westmorland</td>
<td>Goat meat / goat cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pondside Community Development Committee</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>Ginger/tumeric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jeffrey Town Pepper Producers Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>Peppers / hot sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Barking Lodge Poultry Producers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>St. Thomas</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Kingston Inner-City Project</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Denham Town, Kingston</td>
<td>Consumables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Plowden Poultry Producers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kinloss Poultry Producers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Trelawny</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Burnt Savanah Poultry Producers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>St. Elisabeth</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Retirement Ginger Farmers’ Association</td>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>St. Elizabeth</td>
<td>Ginger, cash crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Capisterre Women for Development</td>
<td>SKN</td>
<td>St Pauls, St Kitts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cherry Garden Livestock Group</td>
<td>SKN</td>
<td>Nevis</td>
<td>Goat producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>New River Farmers' Cooperative</td>
<td>SKN</td>
<td>Nevis</td>
<td>Vegetable producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Greiggs Production &amp; Marketing Association</td>
<td>SVG</td>
<td>Marriaqua</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD)</td>
<td>SVG</td>
<td>San Souci, Charlotte</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mesopotamia Poultry &amp; Small Ruminant Producers Association</td>
<td>SVG</td>
<td>Mesopotamia, Marriaqua</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understand the food environment

Ongoing research:

• Options for **low-cost healthy diets** identified and disseminated
• Enhance the capacity in 3 study countries to monitor **food security vulnerability** using a web-based system
• Analysis of trends in household food insecurity with gender analysis, and barriers
• Assessment of agriculture food production
• Profile of food imports,
• Governance assessments, and reviews of policy
PRIVATE SECTOR INTERVENTIONS
Marketable Meals – pilot

• Utilizing foods indigenous to Jamaica, develop six food products that are nutritious, appetizing, and innovative.

• These food products will be introduced to major local food manufacturing companies and food distributors for potential uptake.

1. Snacks/desserts
2. Breakfast meals
3. Lunch/dinner meals
4. Healthy fast foods
5. One-pot meal
6. Beverages
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.
Policy supports in JAMAICA: 2021 Sectoral Debate in Parliament

- Minister Tufton reported to Parliament on FaN project-supported laboratory analysis:
  - **39% of foods tested contained trans-fats.**
  - Half of those with trans fats had labels which stated “trans fat free”
    - Likely dumping from USA and other countries which have already banned trans fats
  - 2022 FaN intervention with National Food Industry Task Force, starting with importers of oils
Joint COHSOD COTED meeting 4 Nov 2019 to discuss dietary patterns and NCD risks

Seated from left: Dr. Douglas Slater, Assistant Secretary General of CARICOM, Hon Molwyn Joseph, meeting co-chair and Minister of Health Antigua and Barbuda, Hon Francine Baron, meeting co-chair and Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, Dominica, Dr. Rudolph Cummings, Former Program Manager, Health Sector Development, CARICOM Secretariat, Ms. Nisa Surujbally, FaN supported consultant, Mr. Nigel Durrant, Agricultural Specialist, Office of Trade Negotiations, CARICOM
Supporting the joint CARICOM Ministers of Health and Ministers of Trade meeting on NCDs

• Heads of Government mandated attention to Trade policy on NCD risks
• CARICOM process: Joint meetings of Ministers of Health and Ministers of Trade
  • Mandated Inter-Governmental Working Groups
  • Unhealthy Diets and Obesogenic Food Environments (Trans-fat, salt, sugar papers)
  • Harmful Use of Alcohol (Alcohol paper)
  • Priorities set, then invite private sector and NGOs to comment
  • First priority ELIMINATION OF TRANS FATS
• Project supported CARICOM with consultant (retired CARICOM technocrat)
• 28th April 2022: Policy paper for Ministerial approval (joint Health and Trade meeting) on elimination of IP-trans fats in the region.
THANK YOU