Education for Effective Nutrition in Action (ENACT)

Welcome to the 2nd issue of the ENACT project newsletter

PILOTING HIGHLIGHTS

Piloting is now well under way. Uganda has finished piloting and Ghana has almost completed, at the time of writing. Most of this issue will focus on the piloting in Ghana.

Botswana, having completed up to Unit 6, have decided to continue the rest of the module in January. This has been due to students’ other work commitments (as they are final year students taking exams).

Tanzania started piloting in mid-October, and piloting is now well under way. Nigeria started in mid-November, and Ethiopia has just begun.

Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana

As part of the Unit 4 Outside Activity, students were asked to attempt to change a dietary habit, and keep a record of the process. Success or failure of the trial was not an issue. The idea was to look at the process and get an idea of what is involved.

Aim

I want to stop skipping breakfast and also decrease sweets and “junk food” intake.

Strategy

- Wake up earlier than usual and prepare breakfast.
- Buy fruits and eat them alongside my breakfast in the morning.
- Tell my roommate and friends to monitor me; prompt me when it comes to taking sweets or junk foods. They should help restrict my consumption.

1 Please see the first issue of the newsletter for background information on the ENACT project: http://www.fao.org/ag/humannutrition/nutritioneducation/69725/en/
“A platform to unite nutrition education students in Africa with an aim of (reducing) malnutrition through effective Nutrition Education”

The Facebook page has nearly reached the milestone of 500 “likes”. Ghanaian students and tutors Dr Esi Colecraft and Dr Gloria Otoo deserve a special mention for having been very active, posting a lot of interesting comments and photos.

Some news, via the NESA Facebook page...

Although Uganda finished piloting nearly three months ago, students are still contributing to Facebook discussions and sending in news.

They successfully held the Makerere Nutrition Camp mentioned in the previous newsletter. The camp was held over 6 days, and attracted 40-60 people each day. Well done Uganda!

One of the piloting students explaining a “real food pyramid” to visitors

Meanwhile, students are becoming aware of attitudinal barriers to be overcome and the assumption that healthy food is less interesting and tasty, as shown from the comment from a Ugandan student who finished piloting.

“Recently I was with a group of friends and tried to explain to them the increasing cases of liver cancer due to aflatoxins that are found in many of the food we are eating regularly in Uganda (pounded ground nuts, maize flour made from spoiled seeds). My advice to them was to take caution on where they buy these foods or to pound it themselves. All of them literally refused the information but rather said....Jolly, whatever you are studying is spoiling you and is turning you into a mad person!!!” (Jolly Buttowski, Uganda)

Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana (cont.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prepared breakfast and ate but took the fruit at lunch. Took only a glass of Coca-Cola the whole day.</td>
<td>It was difficult to wake up and make breakfast; also it wasn’t easy staying away from sweets. My friends helped to monitor me on this.</td>
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Tanzania joins in...

We are happy to see that Tanzania is also taking an active interest in the Facebook page. Attitudinal barriers are again seen in the following posting from a Tanzanian student.

“I’m from one of the pastoral societies (Sukuma society) in Northern Tanzania. While adults stay at home for activities like farming and house building, teenagers take cows to pasture. Early in the morning, mothers cook for teenagers before they leave. The food cooked is the same every day (ugali from polished maize flour, shaken milk and dried green vegetables). After eating in the morning, the teenagers don’t get any other food/water until they are back home in the evening. In Sukumaland, marriage is a victory of excellence. A word spoken by a married person is most valued. It is common to hear an old person claiming that he/she has no time to listen to an unmarried person. What should I do to make them listen to me while I am not married? Should I marry first before I talk to them? However, I have not thought of getting married yet!”
(Bundi Clement, Tanzania)

Tutors’ encouragement is important in order to get the students going on Facebook...

“Our FB page administrator and Esi (tutor) try to post issues after each tutorial to encourage participation and that seems to be working. However the discussions could be deeper. Some students are not FB savvy and have not contributed at all but we encourage them to do so... Sometimes when we have to cut a discussion short during a tutorial because of time, we ask them to continue the discussion on FB.”

Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana (cont.) Day 2

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<td>Prepared and ate my breakfast and the fruit was taken at lunch. Ate a quarter of a bag of potato chips crackers (whole bag-182g).</td>
<td>Did not have appetite, but had to get something to eat. I didn’t eat much of my breakfast. I ate a little “junk food”; but it wasn’t easy to put the bag away.</td>
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Focus on Ghana

Feedback A big thank you to tutors Esi and Gloria for providing us with very high quality feedback.

What tutors said about the piloting experience... What Ghananian students said...

“It was interesting and very enlightening for me. I would even say more enlightening than interesting. I have learnt a lot of new things from this unit. The only problem is the time it took... it is not easy doing this course as well as my own “academic” courses...” (Re. Unit 3)

Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana (cont.) Day 3

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<td>Reheated the meal I refrigerated yesterday and ate as my breakfast; added an orange too. Took a lot of sweets.</td>
<td>It was not so difficult to get breakfast and I was a bit comfortable about eating it. I bought the fruit a day before to eat. However, I could not stop myself from eating the sweets.</td>
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Students and project participants with fruit kebabs prepared at a project meeting
“The role play, though simulated, really placed me in the shoes of nutrition educators and helped me experience how it was like trying to educate people using common understandable words” (Re. Unit 2)

Evidence that the “knock-on effect” is already happenining...

“My roommate is not part of my recruited participants for the project, however, she is equally interested and going along with the program.”
(Elma K. Manu)

Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana (cont.) Day 4

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<tr>
<td>Did not eat my breakfast.</td>
<td>I woke up very late, past “breakfast time”; so ate at lunch (time).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Took a glass of soda in the afternoon.</td>
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Informal ENACT meeting

At the recent IUNS congress in Granada, a mini-ENACT meeting was held to discuss the EAT training-of-trainers course. Those present were: Esi Colecraft (Ghana); Gloria Otto (Ghana); Judith Kimiywe (Kenya); Joyce Kinabo (Tanzania); Paul Amuna (University of Greenwich); Ignatius Onimawo (Nigeria) and Ellen Muehlhoff & Cristina Álvarez (FAO).

Farewell and Welcome

We say good bye and thank you to BeeGeok Cham, who has returned to Malaysia. She was part of the ENACT team as an FAO intern and then as a consultant.

We welcome Dr Suzanne Piscopo from the University of Malta, who is helping us review the piloting feedback and revise the ENACT course material. Suzanne is the Vice President Designate of the Society for Nutrition Education and Behaviour (SNEB).

Publicity for ENACT

A news article on ENACT will be appearing in the Society for Nutrition Education and Behaviour (SNEB) International Nutrition Education Division (DINE) Newsletter on December. The DINE newsletter keeps SNEB members informed about international work.

Message from Ellen

Nutrition is crucial to both individual and national development. The FAO/WHO ICN2 technical preparatory meeting held in Rome from 13 to 15 November 2013 agreed that all forms of malnutrition must be addressed. While there has been a tremendous increase in the global political commitment to improve nutrition, the impact is still modest. The meeting concluded that there is a substantial unfinished agenda, i.e. to address the causes of undernutrition and resulting child deaths: undernutrition is directly or indirectly responsible for 3.5 million child deaths in Africa alone every year.

If we want to address and prevent undernutrition and ensure healthy productive lives for all, we need long term sustained initiatives. This includes food security, a focus on gender and women’s empowerment, nutrition sensitive agriculture that produces enough nutritious foods, and last but not least, nutrition education.

Nutrition education is key for promoting healthful eating habits throughout the life course. Nutrition education is essential for all people, but especially for poor people in rural and urban areas, to help them make the best use of scarce resources. Nutrition education is cross cutting and must be integrated with food and agriculture interventions, and social protection and health programs, to enhance the impact of these programs.

Ellen Muehlhoff
Excerpts from a student diary from Ghana (cont.) Day 5

**Actions**

Took my breakfast before going to church.

Took a fruit in the evening.

**Comments**

It was not so difficult to wake up and eat; and I knew I would be hungry at church if I didn’t eat.

**Conclusions**

The student says: “Eating my breakfast actually helped me to be more attentive in class and also increased my concentration; I really liked this, so will follow through with it.”

Her friends say: “She really likes sweets, so this change will be good for her because the sweets are not healthy. However I think that breakfast will not be easy since it might take time. “She might find it difficult to wake up early to make the food and eat and also get ready for her lectures.”

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**The ENACT team and our partners**

**FAO ENACT Team**

Ellen Muehlhoff, Senior Officer/Team leader

Jane Sherman, Consultant

Anthony Jennings, Consultant

Ramani Wijesinha-Bettoni, Consultant

Cristina Álvarez, Consultant

Melissa Vargas, Intern

Suzanne Piscopo, Consultant

**Botswana (University of Botswana)**

Prof. Maria Nnyepi

Dr Segametsi Maruapula

**Ghana (University of Ghana)**

Dr Esi Colecraft

Dr Gloria Ottoo

**Ethiopia (Hawassa University)**

Mr Esayas Bekele

Ms Getenesh Teshome

**Voluntary participants: Kenya (Kenya University)**

Prof. Judith Kimiywe

Dr Dorcus Mbithe

**Nigeria (Michael Okpara University)**

Prof. Ignatius Onimawo

Mr Charles Nkwoala

**Tanzania (Sokoine University)**

Prof. Joyce Kinabo

Ms Nyamzi Bundala

**Uganda (Makerere University)**

Prof. Archileo Kaaya

Dr Christine Magala-Nyago

**Prospective partners for the online piloting**

People’s University

University of South Africa (UNISA)

Dr Paul Amuna from **Greenwich University (UK)** advises the ENACT team on curriculum development.

For further information, please contact

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