Changing consumer behaviours to influence the food system
Agriculture-nutrition linkages in Malawi - 1

• **Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAP):**
  • FS & risk management (incl. diversification);
  • commercial agriculture;
  • sustainable agriculture land and water management.
  • Cross-cutting issues gender & HIV/AIDS. *But nutrition??*

• **Approach for ag-nutrition:** Learn, grow, harvest, process & eat

• **Nutrition education** → women and men involved

• **School health and nutrition** - part of school curricula and student clubs. Very practical.

• **Production system** must be diversified from maize to other non-cereal products, including livestock - farm calendars

• **Dietary diversity:** promote all food groups every day, fuel efficient stoves, and sanitation and hygiene
• **Challenges:**
  • Scale;
  • Putting projects into action / walk the talk;
  • idea that food security = enough staple food;
  • low funding for food diversity and nutrition compared to maize

• **Lessons:**
  • Mindsets do change but gradually / takes time
  • joint approach and teamwork (e.g. accept that another ministry may have to manage some of the resources);
  • starting to mobilize resources
    • there are funds available but need to demonstrate results to attract them
    • government resources: Malawi is dedicating 18% of budget to agriculture
Promoting Orange Flesh Sweet Potato

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• **Through exploiting its multiple roles in the food system, OFSP can make a difference for vitamin A deficiency**

• **Step by step approach since mid-1990’s:**
  1) Confronting conventional wisdom (e.g. found texture is problem for consumers, not color)
  2) building evidence base (Southern Africa ahead / home of first studies)
  3) addressing bottle-necks
  4) scaling up

• **Integrated conceptual framework:**
  1) access to beta-carotene rich sweet potato vines
  2) demand creation and empowerment through knowledge
  3) ensure sustained adoption and use through market development

• **Essentials for the agriculture side:**
  • good varieties (incl. taste) → several varieties already developed
  • access to planting materials;
  • knowledge about pest & disease management
Promoting Orange Flesh Sweet Potato

- Investment needs on nutrition side:
  - community-level nutrition education (cost varies depend on context);
  - group-based work;
  - men matter (control land & influence diet choices);
  - extension need quality job aids

- Essential messages: good for health, but not a silver bullet

- Marketing more complex:
  - need to understand existing chains and relative prices
  - health messages linked to orange color
  - Need to understand consumer preferences

- Reaching out to urban consumers
  - diversified uses and processed products

- Even further opportunities with sweet potato leaves

- Opportunities for integration with health centers (e.g. pregnant women clinics receiving sweet potato vines) and other agriculture projects
Home-Grown School Feeding - 1

• All governments have school feeding; USD 75 billion/year → it’s a market
• School-feeding: a child-centric approach
• Key safety net in different types of crises (food, financial, wars, natural disasters)
• Transition from WFP support to government-run programmes → local sourcing + more local foods in line with local diets
• Objectives of HGSFP:
  – Promote local development and food & nutrition security
  – Link local small producers to markets (schools) and stimulate agriculture production and development
  – Education objectives: enrolment, attendance and retention, learning, gender
• Trade-offs between quality, diversity, price, local procurement, etc.
• The **menu planner**: linking the menu to the small-holder + education tool for teachers, kids and planners love it
Maize porridge, 500 g.

- Energy: 2000 kcal (31%)
- Protein: 28g (48%)
- Vitamin A: 700 mcg (0%)
- Vitamin C: 45 mg (0%)
- Iron: 37 mg (16%)
- Zinc: 15 mg (20%)
- Iodine: 120 mcg (0%)
Maize, iodized salt & OFSP, 100 g.

Energy: 2000 kcal
Protein: 28 g
Vitamin A: 700 mcg
Vitamin C: 45 mg
Iron: 37 mg
Zinc: 15 mg
Iodine: 120 mcg
Mozambique highlights:
- National HGSF programme and phasing out WFP support gradually
  - **School feeding programme in food-insecure districts**
    (100% geographical coverage) - includes WFP: local procurement of staples, links to small-holders + fortification and deworming
  - **Testing of decentralized food procurement models** (testing HGSF in 4 different agro-ecological zones - more diversified basket)
- School nutrition policy: 1) Provision of nutritious and diversified meals; 2) Nutrition education; 3) School gardens
- Challenges: ensuring quantity and quality of food purchased from smallholder farmers; capacity of government to manage, implement and monitor HGSF
- But huge opportunities: markets for local farmers; synergies

Botswana highlights:
- Transitioned out of WFP support in 1990’s
- Since 2003, gradual shift to decentralized procurement and use seasonal produce (presidential initiative in 2008) → Farmers change from producing staple food to other crops
- Local procurement → less need for storage of fresh produce; less money on transport, Creates jobs and increases income for local farmers
- Challenges: transition from centralised to decentralised system when district capacities are limited; climate constraints
Challenges - 1

Demand (consumer) side:

• Difficult to change people’s tastes and preferences and to meet consumer expectations for taste
• Cultural background / religion / social trends → food habits and caring/feeding practices of young children
• Behavior change takes time / attitude to new products
• Knowledge gaps regarding nutrition and food preparation
• Aggressive marketing of convenience foods of poor nutritional value
• Communities have competing needs that compromise dietary diversity (e.g. if high preparation time)
• Time constraints
• Food policies (e.g. production subsidies, etc.) which can negatively impact on consumption patterns
• Socio-economic situation of households
Challenges - 2

Supply side:
- Limited availability and accessibility of foods with good nutritional value
- Instability in supply of food
- Affordability / cost of nutritious foods
- Food safety in supply chain
- Weak extension services
- Heavy focus on non-African species and staples (adding nutrients artificially)
- Costs of diversifying production and processing
Solutions - 1

Demand side:

• Nutrition awareness-raising and education at all levels (mass media, social media, politicians, local leadership, households), including cooking programmes and community demonstrations
• Food price regulations
• Regulations on advertising (e.g. punitive taxation for “immoral” advertising)
• Marketing techniques to raise nutrition awareness and promote healthy diets:
  • “Catch” consumers young and follow them through the years (ECD, primary, secondary)
    Integrating nutrition in school curricula – new concepts introduced early in life
  • Get the right person to promote foods with youth (e.g. youth for youth)
  • know your consumer + take into consideration their preferences when planning your production and marketing strategy
  • Adapt your targeting and packaging to address certain communities
Solutions - 2

Supply side

- Increasing production and processing to increase availability and reduce prices of diverse crops
- Food processing to ensure convenient preparation of nutrient-rich foods
- Food assistance programmes – cash or food
- Fortification / bio-fortification of widely used and affordable foods (for biofortification, use local varieties to ensure acceptability)
- Invest in extension and training / equip extension workers
- Promote indigenous species (including through research and development)
- Controls on food imports
- Community ownership, participatory approaches → Stakeholder ownership at community, household, individual levels to take responsibility of their health
- Innovative approaches that show value
- Integrate research components in our projects to keep improving

Recommendations related both to demand and supply

- Research on food consumption patterns to inform policies
- Political commitment – countries need to be held accountable in terms of budget allocations
- Developing strategies with communities based on technically sound principles, incorporating indigenous foods and knowledge systems