

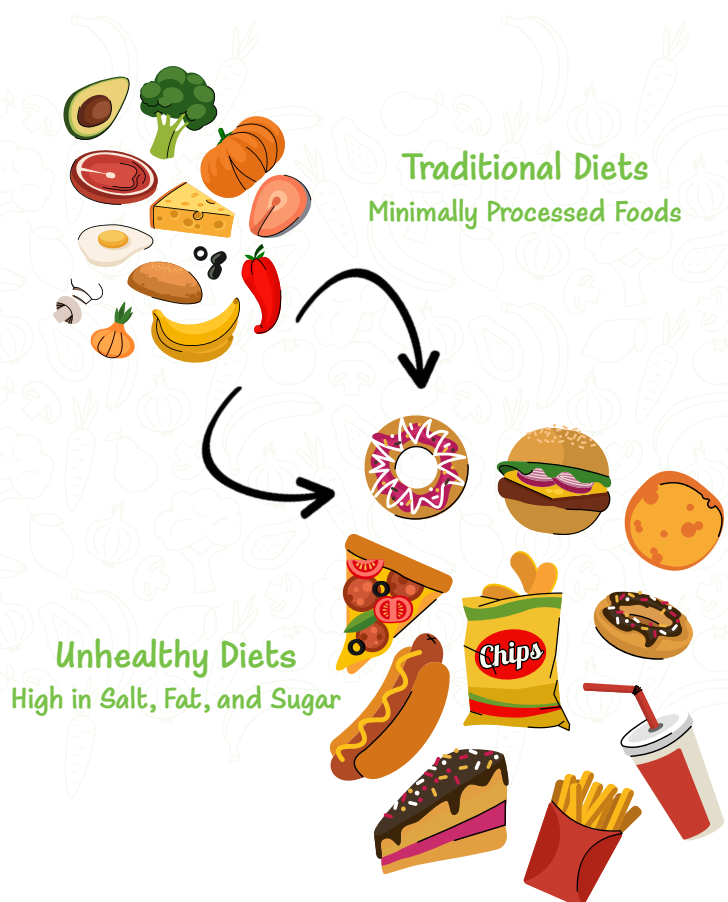


Leveraging School Feeding and Micro and Small Enterprises to Promote Access to Healthy and Sustainable Food among the Urban Poor in Kenya and Rwanda.

Background

Food insecurity is a characteristic of African food systems, which are currently unsustainable. Consequently, a large proportion of the African population is malnourished. Many African countries, Kenya and Rwanda included, are undergoing a nutrition transition, with shifts from traditional diets composed of minimally processed foods towards increased consumption of unhealthy energy-dense diets high in salt, fat, and sugar.

This contributes to the triple burden of malnutrition: overnutrition (obesity), undernutrition (stunting and wasting) and micronutrient deficiency particularly among children. School feeding programs (SFPs) are a potential entry point to food system





transformation, by enabling healthy and sustainable food systems that support local supply chains through multiple pathways and offering a way to provide nutritious meals to children. SFPs are therefore used as a strategy to promote food security and nutrition in Kenya and Rwanda. Agri-food micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and smallholder farmers (SHFs), play a critical part in shaping food patterns and consumption choices in the food systems. MSEs and SHFs are uniquely positioned to enable food system engagement with a focus on marginalized communities in LMICs, taking into consideration gender equity. Whilst there is a significant body of research and programmatic work on school feeding and farm linkages, the role of MSEs and SHFs especially in urban contexts is understudied. Currently, MSEs and SHFs rarely benefit from SFPs, because they are not adequately included in the existing consultation mechanisms.

Project Objectives

This project aims to promote access to and consumption of healthy and sustainable food in schools in Kenya and Rwanda through demand creation and enhancing the role of MSEs and SHFs in its provision via community engagement, capacity building, and advocacy.

Specific Objectives:

1. To advocate for policy and regulations that strengthen the role of small enterprises and smallholder farmers to provide access to healthy and sustainable food through School Feeding Programs in Kenya and Rwanda.
2. To strengthen the capacity of agri-food micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and smallholder farmers (SHFs) to organize and supply affordable healthy and sustainable food to school feeding programs and markets in urban poor areas in Nairobi and participate in decision-making platforms.
3. To increase the demand for healthy and sustainable food among urban poor school communities in Nairobi Kenya.

Methodology

1. Advocating for Policy & Regulations

- Desk review and knowledge consolidation in Kenya and Rwanda respectively to extract data on existing policies to strengthen the role of MSEs and SHFs in the supply of healthy and sustainable food for SFPs. This will guide the discussions during stakeholder engagements.
- In Kenya, dialogues will be held with national and sub-national policymakers to advocate for the inclusion of MSEs and SHFs in the procurement of healthy and sustainable food for SFPs. MSEs and SHFs will also be organized into groups and will be represented at Food Liaison Advisory Group (FLAG) meetings.
- In Rwanda there will be consultations with a broad range of stakeholders from different sectors such as Education, Health and Agriculture with representation from private sector, government and non-governmental institutions.

2. Strengthening the capacity of agri-food MSEs and SHFs

- Pilot a learning program to catalyze and facilitate Agri-food MSEs and SHFs into functional community-based local business associations (LBAs). Capacity building will be through the Trainer of Trainers (TOT) approach and utilizing a blended learning approach that combines interactive workshops with experienced facilitators, and mentorship programs to provide ongoing guidance and support to MSEs and SHFs.
- Facilitating linkages of Agri-food MSEs and SHFs in urban poor settings to innovate approaches, technologies and practices to supply and distribute healthy and sustainable food to schools in Mukuru, Korogocho and Kibra.
- System leadership coaching with relevant public sector actors expertly guided through "systemcraft" to understand the complexity surrounding MSEs.

3. Increasing the demand for healthy and sustainable food among urban poor school communities through public engagement

- Community Organized groups (COGs) will engage school communities in urban poor settings in Nairobi (Mukuru, Korogocho and Kibra) using participatory methodologies to create awareness for healthy and sustainable food in schools and stimulate dialogue on potential actions to promote the demand and supply of healthy and sustainable food in schools.
 - i. Soup kitchens will be used as platforms for public engagement. Primarily, the soup kitchens will create a supportive environment for people from different social classes to come together and share a meal uniting individuals who would otherwise never cross paths.
 - ii. Participatory cooking demonstrations will be done in collaboration with the Nairobi County Health Department. They will be conducted to bring together key stakeholders in school feeding programs including the school community, smallholder farmers, and MSEs to teach them nutritional concepts and basic cooking skills to ensure consumption of healthy and sustainable foods
 - iii. Participatory theater will be used to allow the participants to explore, reflect and co-create an understanding of the access and provision of healthy and sustainable food in schools.
 - iv. Comics and community radios will be used to broadcast messages about healthy and sustainable foods.



Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of the project include:

1. Increased awareness amongst policymakers on the role of MSEs and SHFs in the provision of healthy and sustainable food to school feeding programs in Kenya and Rwanda.
2. Selected food MSEs and SHFs will have sufficient capacity to:
 - Participate in policy and decision making forums regarding school food provisioning.
 - Supply healthy and sustainable food to school feeding programs in urban poor areas in Nairobi.
3. Increased demand for healthy and sustainable food amongst urban poor school communities in Nairobi.

Project information

Funding: Catalyzing Change for Healthy and Sustainable Food System (CCHeFS) is a partnership co-funded by IDRC and the Rockefeller Foundation that aims to support healthier and more sustainable food systems in Africa.

Led by: African Population and Research Center (APHRC)

Partners: Wasafiri Consulting, Kenya; University of Rwanda; Imperial College London

Project Timeline: April 2024-March 2025



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