

# The Interphase of Agriculture, Education and Health in addressing NCDs in CARICOM States

# Brief overview

- Structure of health system
- Some challenges
- Burden of disease
- Determinants of health
- Involvement of external partners to achieve desired health outcomes

# St. Kitts & Nevis

- Located in the NE Caribbean, leeward islands
- Independent twin Island Federation
- 104 sq. miles
- Population just over 50,000
- Per capita GDP \$15,573

# Structure Health system

- Office of policy development and information Management
- Community based Health Services. (16 health centers)
- Institution Based health Services (4 hospitals and a geriatric home)

# Health Indicators

- Life expectancy 75 years
- Infant mortality=11.3%
- Maternal Mortality=3 deaths (06-10)
- Crude birth rate= 13.2 per 1000 pop
- Crude death rate=6.8 per 1000 pop
- Fertility rate= decline 2.3-1.85
- Access to clean water= over 99% pop
- EPI= over 95% in all vaccines

# Some challenges

- Renewal of our primary health system to meet demands of shifting epidemiological profile
- Diseases of under Nutrition, communicable, diseases associated with poor sanitation, poor hygiene
- And now, Over nutrition and the NCD burden

# Burden of Chronic Diseases

- They are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in SKN
- 2008 steps study revealed the following
- Over weight-33.5% Obesity-45% in adult pop
- Diabetes=20% adult pop
- Hypertension=34.5% adult pop

# Financial Burden

- 6% GDP Health Expenditure (NHA 2013)
- Majority of which gobbled up by the treatment and prevention of NCDs
- Stroke, heart disease some cancers
- New and emerging diseases ( ADHD, H1N1)
- Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)





# Determinants of Health

- Social and economic environment
- Physical environment
- Persons individual characteristics and behaviors (life style choices)

# Critical Challenge

Many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their circumstances and environment. To a large extent, factors such as where we live, the state of our environment, genetics, our income and education level, and our relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health, whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact.

# Important Interphase

- Looking outside of health systems for solutions
- Inclusive participatory approach to understanding complex health issues and finding common solutions.
- Health, Agriculture and Education

# Land Mark Achievements

- In the earlier days the focus was on a whole of society approach that advocated the inclusion and prioritization of NCDs on the development agenda at various high level meetings.
- This was accomplished in the UN high level meeting on NCDs
- 2007 Port of Spain declaration
- Inextricable link between health and economic development

# Present NCD trends are evolving

- Prevention and control now trending towards the life course approach.
- We are now looking at the youth where its easier to influence life style change.
- Safe guarding the health of our youth for a brighter Caribbean future

# Early Intervention in Primary schools in keeping with current trends

- Improving quality of school meals
- Menu Modification, changing unhealthy diets
- Lifestyle changes and choices through education
- More physical activity
- Education on tobacco use
- Obesity and harmful use of alcohol

# Building and testing farm to fork model

- Improve Nutrition and Health outcomes in CARICOM through available intake of local fresh fruits and Vegetables
- Decrease caloric Intake and increase micronutrients
- Reduce incidents of Preventable NCDs, through renewed commitment to primary health care through early intervention programs such as the CARICOM food security project.



# Future

- Increased Financial sustainability of our fragile health systems as the burden of disease as it relates to NCDs would be lessened
- Over the years a reversal of the threat to economic development posed by unchecked NCDs
- Healthier adult population leading to enhanced quality of life to accompany longevity.

# Education

- More informed students as it relates to Healthier choices
- Smarter Students due to infusion of healthy micronutrients in modified school meal menus
- More favorable anthropometric measurements in school kids (BMI)
- More physically active students, based on accompanying education.
- A brighter future for our kids
- Generation of more data to inform policy makers

# Agriculture

- Farmers with a ready market for their produce
- More locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables
- Increased food security
- More diversity in crops, increased yields in string beans, pumpkin, watermelon, tomatoes
- The all essential increased technology, i.e. Genetic engineering, green houses, drip irrigation, etc.
- A more successful transition from Sugar production adding more diversity to our agricultural product.













And so This Farm to Fork  
approach is virtually a win  
win situation for all!

Gracias

Thank you!