FOOD and NUTRITION EDUCATION for Healthy Diets

WHY IS FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION NEEDED?

MALNUTRITION is a global problem

1.9 BILLION adults are **overweight** or **obese**

2 BILLION people suffer from some form of **micronutrient deficiency**

161 Million children under the age 5 are **too short for their age**

795 Million people **do not get the food they need** to live a healthy life

UNHEALTHY DIETS

are one of the leading causes of global **malnutrition**

Diets and eating behaviours are influenced by many factors

INDIVIDUAL
- Food preferences & enjoyment
- Beliefs, attitudes, values, perceptions
- Knowledge, skills
- Empowerment

FAMILY / GROUP
- Cultural & social practices
- Social support
- Networks
- Peer influence

COMMUNITY / INSTITUTIONAL
- Rules, informal structures
- Child care organizations
- Workplaces, schools
- Neighborhoods, shops, restaurants
- Community organizations
- Information available
- Recreational facilities, parks

NATIONAL
- Health care system
- Food assistance programs
- Food industry
- Food & agricultural systems
- Policy
- Political & social structures
- Media
- Social & cultural norms

Food and Nutrition Education works at all these levels

FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION

consists of a variety of **educational strategies** that can be implemented at **different levels**, aimed at **helping people** to achieve **long-lasting improvements in their diets** and eating behaviours.

FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION is not only about giving people information. IT IS ABOUT:

- Empowering people to take charge of their own diets and health
- Building on people's desires to be healthy, know more about diets, and eat good food
- Understanding people's needs and what influences their diets
- Carrying out realistic and participatory educational activities
- Aiming at small, appealing, do-able improvements in what people perceive and **do**
- Engaging all people who can help or hinder dietary changes
- Including all relevant sectors and strengthening their capacities
- Influencing decision makers to implement policies which promote healthy diets
- Advocating for improvements in the food environment to enable healthy food choices

Some RESULTS of successful food and nutrition education initiatives:

CONSUMERS
understand their dietary needs, recognize popular misinformation and make healthier food choices

FAMILIES
prepare nutritious food safely and hygienically

Plan and shop for healthy meals that are within their budget

GOVERNMENTS
work to integrate food and nutrition education into national policies

PARENTS
gain new knowledge and skills to give their children a good start in life

PEOPLE
enjoy cooking and eating healthier foods

COMMUNITIES
make better use of their traditional and local foods

SCHOOLS
know how to provide healthier meals and snacks for their students

FOOD PRODUCERS
are supported to produce and market healthier foods

POLICY MAKERS
understand the need to regulate harmful food advertising to children

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Contact info:
http://www.fao.org/nutrition/education/en/

C0064e/1/04.16