

## 1.4 Investing in better public sector marketing

### ***Social marketing to create and sustain desire for specific foods and healthy diets from sustainable production systems***

#### **What problem is your proposition addressing?**

Public sector marketing in the nutrition sector has not been as effective because:

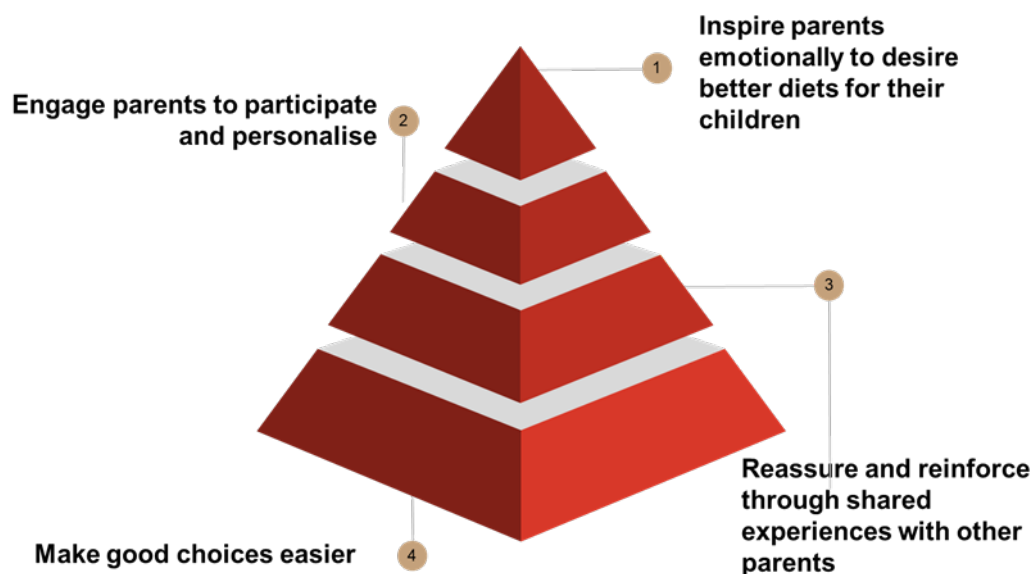
1. It does not effectively deal with the two-tier nature – diets and foods – of the issue. And leads to efforts that promote specific foods or behaviors, resulting in uncoordinated efforts creating communication overload for consumers, who then ignore many of these messages.
2. Most approaches are based on the belief that lack of knowledge (about the health benefits of good nutrition), or skills (how to prepare nutritious food) are the main barriers. So, while consumers say nutrition is important, they are not sufficiently motivated to practice better diets. Some success has been achieved using nudges to influence consumers' subconscious decision-making process, but it is unlikely to be enough.
3. There has been insufficient focus on simultaneously curtailing unhealthy dietary choices, and most importantly,
4. There is a lack of sustainable sources of large-scale funding required to support the long-term efforts required to bring about change and compete with commercial food marketing.

To create sustainable shifts, we need to create desire for healthy diets from sustainable production systems, even if it takes a long time. We must motivate and empower consumers, so they seek information in the food environment and respond to it by making better choices. Current approaches do not sufficiently leverage the role of consumer motivation and agency.

#### **How does your proposition address the problem?**

1. It treats diets and foods as a connected two-tier structure (because a good diet can be put together in many ways) and promotes them in a coherent way. A similar two-tiered approach has been used in family planning where desire for smaller families can be achieved through many different means of contraception.
2. Through use of emotions to motivate consumers. Emotions make the circumstances memorable and sufficiently compelling to action, especially if the information is relatable. We deliver compelling stories and create compelling contexts (e.g., memorable dining experiences) to sufficiently motivate consumers.
3. By working in parallel with the ideas in the 'Demand Package' from Wave 1 which create a 'level playing field' for promotion of healthy diets from sustainable production systems by restricting marketing that promotes unhealthy diets.
4. By using the 'sin taxes' – a crucial tool to curtailing bad choices – as the sustainable source of funding. This can be taxes on advertising of unhealthy diets or on foods that are central to such diets themselves.

It will use a layered communication strategy to promote better diets and specific foods together in a coherent way. The diagram below shows how it might work with parents, who as heads of households are primarily responsible for food purchases, and such households account for a large proportion of the population in most countries.



Such an architecture enables use of the right combinations of messages & channels but in a way that the consumers see as connected and coherent. Levels 1-2 create the motivation and desire for better diets, while levels 3-4 promote specific foods or behaviours; all 4 levels are under a single promotion strategy or 'brand'. A further advantage of levels 3-4 is that one can promote unpackaged / unbranded foods (legumes, vegetables) and packaged foods that are healthy (e.g., fortified flour).

### Is this a new solution or an existing solution that needs scaling?

New solution

### Which organisation/s, institution/s or groups of individuals are associated with the solution?

GAIN has been developing this idea for some time. But such an approach needs substantial long-term investment and accompanying regulatory actions. This means country govt support is essential for sustaining the solution, though donor support is required to get started. It might also need new institutional arrangements. Pawan Agarwal (who conceived & launched Eat Right India Campaign) noted the need for such arrangements in an AT1 call. Usually, a coordinating structure is required to support the campaign in countries, since the campaign will cut across many ministries. One opportunity might be to integrate this idea with the Eat Right India campaign, if the Indian govt can be persuaded.

Our consultations with Kenyan SMEs, who sell nutritious foods, showed that they believe such a public funded campaign will help their businesses enormously by boosting demand for healthier foods in general. Kenyan Govt representatives could also see the need for such investments to increase consumption of unbranded / unpackaged foods like vegetables and pulses / beans. However, more work is needed to work out how bigger food brands can align with and contribute to such a campaign. WBCSD and / or CGF could help here.

In an ideal scenario, this campaign would be connected to existing supply side initiatives, such as food safety at retail, increasing food availability through large and small food businesses. Or to ideas from Action Track 1 like Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection which will boost incomes / purchasing power in developing countries.

### What is the scientific evidence that supports your proposition?

- The role of feelings in decision-making has been acknowledged in functional and constructivist theories on cognition and decision making <sup>1</sup>.
- The 'pyramid' shown here is standard best practice in advertising and communication.
- The effectiveness of comprehensive regulatory measures to curtail bad choices has been shown in Chile<sup>2</sup>. However, without government investment in promotion, policies like warning labels, though well understood, are unlikely to be enough to improve diets – see <sup>3</sup>.

### Is this idea applicable to a particular geography, demography, landscape or other type of setting?

It is broadly applicable; however, it has been informed by the developing / LMIC countries context for improved diets. It requires further work for applying in developed countries due to different structure of retail and markets (more packaged food, issue of overconsumption of calories and specific foods etc.)

### Who are the main actors that would put this action into place?

Donors – for initial funding.

Country Govt – to ensure sustained funding and regulatory action.

Organizations like GAIN to develop and set up the programme.

Creative agencies to develop and implement these campaigns.

Food businesses who can align with the campaign. Consumers to engage and further drive issues of better diets and foods.

### Source and process

- Ashish Deo from GAIN (member of AT2 Leadership Team) is the main source with inputs from two other LT members – Emeline Fellus from WBCSD and Daniel Vennard (WRI). Eva Monterrosa from GAIN has also contributed to developing this idea.

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<sup>1</sup> Petty RE, Cacioppo JT, Schumann D. Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement. *Journal of Consumer Research*. 1983;10(2):135–46.

<sup>2</sup> Taillie LS, Reyes M, Colchero MA, Popkin B, Corvalán C. An evaluation of Chile's Law of Food Labeling and Advertising on sugar-sweetened beverage purchases from 2015 to 2017: A before-and-after study. *PLOS Medicine*. 2020 Feb 11;17(2):e1003015

<sup>3</sup> Gregori D, Azzolina D, Lanera C, Ghidina M, Gafare CE, Lorenzoni G. Consumers' attitudes before and after the introduction of the Chilean regulation on food labelling. *International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition*. 2019 Oct 3;70(7):868–74.