Developing healthy eating habits among ethnic minorities in Portugal

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Summary

1. Overweight in Portugal

2. National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Eating (PNPAS)

3. “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”

4. Promoting healthy eating habits among migrants
   1. Mission
   2. Goals
   3. Methods
   4. Where are we now?

5. Take home messages
Portugal: obesity epidemiology

- **Obesity**: 1 million adults
- **Pre-obesity**: 3.5 million
- **Portugal**
  - 56.8% mentions diet as an important factor for health
  - **11.2% ** ♂ obese
  - **53.3% ** ♂ pre-obese
  - **27.8% ** ♀ pre-obese
  - **10.4% ** ♀ obese

**Figure 1. Overweight prevalence in Portugal**
National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Eating (PNPAS)

Ministry of Health

Directorate-General of Health

8 Priority Programmes

National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Eating - PNPAS (2012)

Figure 2. Structure and legal framework of Directorate-General of Health Portugal
National Programme for the Promotion of Healthy Eating (PNPAS)

Aim:

Provide adequate food intake;

Improvement of the citizens nutritional status;

Direct impact in the prevention and control of most prevalent diseases at a national level (cardiovascular diseases, oncological, diabetes and obesity);

Growth and economic competitiveness of the country in other sectors related to: agriculture, environment, tourism, employment or professional qualification.

PNPAS: “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”

- Financial Crisis
- People eat less fruit & vegetables.

- 2012 - 2013
- European Financing
  - FOOD - Fighting Obesity through Offer and Demand
  - Edenred
  - DGS/PNPAS

- Vulnerable populations:
  - Reduce Inequalities in Health: socio-economic and health literacy

Management:
- Planning
- Buying
- Cooking
- Conservation

Saving:
Eat well & Cheaper

PNPAS: “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”

Mediterranean diet:
- Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity
- Women play important role

PNPAS: “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”

Dieta Mediterrânea

A dieta mediterrânea caracteriza-se pela utilização abundante de produtos de origem vegetal, produtos da época local e quantidades moderadas de carne. Este tipo de alimentação reconhecidamente saudável não é mais do que as orientações que demos ao longo deste manual.

Alimentação Inteligente
com a melhor, poupe mais

- Azeite como principal fonte de gordura.
- Cereais, derivados e tubérculos como base da alimentação
- Consumo de hortícolas e fruta da época
- Redução do consumo de carne e/ou pescado
- Ovos, leguminosas e laticínios como alternativa à carne/pescado
- Água como bebida de eleição.

1. Recipes
2. Season products
3. Portions
   i. 400g fruits & vegetables/day
4. Substitutes (eg. eggs vs. meat/fish)
5. Meals
6. Explains concepts

PNPAS: “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”

PNPAS: “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more”
Partnership: DGS - Council of Odivelas (Lisbon)

- Adaptation of the book “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more” to meet migrants needs
- Start 2013 - ongoing

Partnership: DGS - Council of Odivelas (Lisbon)

City Mayor of Odivelas → Councillor →
- Office of Health, Equality and Citizenship
- Division of Culture, Tourism, Cultural Heritage and Libraries
- Municipal Civil Protection Service

Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014
Partnership: DGS - Council of Odivelas (Lisbon)

**Portugal**

Strong relationship with former African colonies:
- Angola, Mozambique, Cape-Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Sao Tome and Principe

**Odivelas**

- 144,549 inhabitants
- Multicultural: 13,276 migrants

### Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>3,058</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>1,675</td>
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<td>Angola</td>
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<td>Cape Verde</td>
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<td>India</td>
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<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
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<td>China</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,276</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014,*
Partnership: Objectives

- Collect information of the specific eating habits, needs and doubts of the major ethnic minorities living in the Council of Odivelas;

- Adapt the contents of the book “Intelligent Diet - eat better, save more” for ethnic minorities: Brazil and Portuguese speaking African countries (PALOP);

- Promote healthy eating habits and choices among ethnic minorities;

- If positive results, extend the project nationwide.

Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014
Partnership: Methods

1. **Focus groups** with migrants associations in the council:
   - Association “Brazil House”;
   - Association Lusophone Community;
   - Other associations currently stand-by.

2. **One focal-point** in the community;

3. **One group** (mainly women) in each association;

4. **Workshops** to stimulate critical thinking about the book and compare its content with their current practices.

Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014
Partnership: Results

Current version has too much information:
- Ex. Leaflets with concise and direct recommendations;

More useful to highlight most relevant information:
- Focus on strategies and information about access to healthy food at low cost prices;

Information divided by sections:
- Seasonal food
- Breakfast
- Soups
- Salads
- Glossary (different words for the same food or type of cooking)

Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014
Partnership: Results

- Easy language (low educational level)
- More images than words
- Project perceived as relevant by the migrants community

Source: Council of Odivelas, 2014
Discussion

Migrant community interested in the project and willing to participate;

Perception that if explained how it may be possible to have a healthy diet on a low budget.

Challenges:

• Communication among ethnic groups (same nationality);
• Expand this work to other communities and councils;
• Effective communication;
• How to measure results (eg. Online tools vs paper tools)
Conclusions

• Ethnic minorities may experience difficulties adapting to a different country and to different eating habits;

• Migrant communities in a country may benefit from existing strategies to tackle obesity and to promote healthy lifestyles. Adaptation of those strategies may be helpfull;

• Adapting language may be essential for effective communication;

• Involving key actors and different institutions (national and local) is essential to understand what can be improved.
Thank you

http://www.alimentacaointeligente.dgs.pt/

www.dgs.pt