

Title

Dinner is ready in 1-2-3 euros

Short description

The goal of this project is to support families with a low socio-economic status (SES) to cook a low-budget, balanced, sustainable and nice meal for their family.

The project includes two main components:

1. The provision of recipe booklets + the provision of free products + the guarantee of the prices during the intervention period. The intervention period started in March 2016 and ended in August 2016. During this period, recipe booklets with balanced, sustainable meals that cost 1, 2, or 3 euros for each person per meal per day were provided every 2 weeks (in total 10 booklets were provided to the participants). The prices for the ingredients were based on the prices for that specific period of the year (linked to the seasons). When there was an unforeseen fluctuation in the food prices, the supermarket guaranteed the fixed price for the low SES participants of the project via the Colruyt promotion/membership card. The recipes always included ingredients for three adult portions. Moreover, at the start and every 3rd month, some healthy food products were provided.

2. Social component: the organisation of workshops to bring parents together

Two types of workshops were organized: cooking workshops and supermarket visits. The supermarket visits were designed to increase awareness regarding shopping, such as training in the shop on reading food labels, deciding on portion sizes.

Based on the results of the test phase, the project appears to be promising to reach disadvantaged families. However, more research is still necessary to confirm this.

Topic

Consuming – food

Characteristics (type, level)

Local/Regional - Private/Public – Intervention

Country/Countries of implementation

Belgium

Aims and Objectives

The goal of this project is to support families with a low socio-economic status (SES) to cook a low-budget, balanced, sustainable and nice meal for their family.

Target Group

Low SES families

Status

Completed - follow up plans: The public center of social welfare and Colruyt are currently upscaling this project to more low SES inhabitants of Kortrijk as well as to other cities in Belgium

Start and Completion dates

The project started in January 2015 and ended in August 2016. Currently, the partners are scaling up the intervention to other cities in Belgium.

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

The supermarket Colruyt in the city of Kortrijk worked together with the Public Centre for Social Welfare in that region (OCMW) to provide low SES families with low-budget, feasible, balanced and sustainable recipes to improve their family meals together with workshops (i.e., cooking classes and supermarket visits).

Via this project, the low SES families could gain insight/knowledge, and skills on cooking low budget, balanced and sustainable meals for a low budget, and could adapt their lifestyle accordingly.

Effects on:

Health and Wellbeing	Via this project, the low SES families could gain insight/knowledge and skills on balanced, sustainable meals for a low budget, and could adapt their lifestyle accordingly. This potential impact on lifestyle could have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of these families too.
Vulnerable populations	This intervention is solely targeting low SES families.
Environment	The recipe booklets include balanced, sustainable meals (i.e., a focus on seasonal foods). The booklets also hold suggestions to use the leftovers of the meals the next day. Moreover, the recipes also take into account the needed food portions to avoid the creation of too many leftovers.

Initiated and/or implemented by

The supermarket Colruyt, the city of Kortrijk and the Public Center for Social welfare (OCMW) initiated this project together in 2015 to help low SES families to provide low budget, balanced, sustainable meals to their family as these families have a hard time to

think about healthy lifestyles and the health it creates on the long term. Low SES families often focus on the short term, and the solutions of other more urgent issues/problems.

The collaboration between these private and public partners was initiated first based on a question regarding how the supermarket uses the food surpluses from the OCMW. After this first encounter, they decided to sit together and brainstorm on possible ways to collaborate. Moreover, the Colruyt Group is the spokesperson of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Together with seven other Belgian organisations, they help to raise awareness of these goals amongst the general public in Belgium. They also want to inspire and encourage as many people and organisations as possible to contribute more actively to sustainable development.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

The project was conducted in the city of Kortrijk by the following organizations/partners

- Public center for Social welfare (OCMW)
- Private sector: Colruyt group
- City of Kortrijk

Financial support

Colruyt was responsible for the funding of the recipe booklets and provision of free food products.

OCMW was responsible for the workshops.

Evidence-base

The practice was developed based on a participatory process together with both social organisations and profit sector. Until now, to our knowledge, no other initiatives in Belgium or elsewhere are implemented similar to this practice.

Main activities

The project includes two main components:

1. The provision of recipe booklets + the provision of free products + the price guarantee during the intervention period

The intervention period started in March 2016 and ended in August 2016. During this period, recipe booklets with balanced, sustainable meals that cost 1, 2, or 3 euros per person per meal per day were provided every 2 weeks (in total 10 booklets were provided to the participants). The prices for the ingredients were based on the prizes for that specific period of the year (linked to the seasons). When there was an unforeseen fluctuation in the food prizes, the supermarket guaranteed the fixed price for the low SES participants of the projects via the Colruyt promotion/membership card. The recipes always included ingredients for three adult portions. Moreover, at the start and every 3 month, some healthy food products were provided.

2. Social component: the organisation of workshops to bring parents together

Two types of workshops were organized:

- Cooking workshops

- Supermarket visits: to increase awareness regarding shopping, i.e. training in the shop on reading food labels, deciding on portion sizes

In total, 15 workshops were organized.

Evaluation

Qualitative data was used (i.e., focus groups) to get insight into the opinion of low SES families on the concept of this project (beforehand). After the project, eight duo-interviews were conducted to evaluate the experience/appreciation of the participants regarding the project.

Quantitative data was collected using the membership cards that store all the bought articles per supermarket visit. By using this membership cards, it was possible to check if the participants actually bought the recipe ingredients per two weeks.

Main results

The qualitative data indicated that participants were very enthusiastic about the project. Some of the outcomes were: it helped them to worry less about the preparation of healthy, sustainable meals; they indicated changes in their eating patterns – for example more vegetables; they stated to have learned more about low-budget meals.

The quantitative data showed that 76 out of 144 participating families bought the ingredients during this intervention period. 31 families did not make any recipes.

Key success factors and barriers

The collaboration between the private and public organisations was built on trust and this is really important for this kind of practice. Also, the exchange of expertise made it possible to learn more and improve the practice.

In addition, the focus on the needs of the target group in the development phase also added to the success of this practice.

The distrust where private partners have to cope with when they want to implement health promotion initiatives is difficult. In the city of Kortrijk, there was a very good collaboration and a trust relationship. But the negative perception of the public/the consumers about the goodwill of a supermarket to add to health, sustainability, and equity is difficult to change.

INHERIT Perspective

The 'Dinner is ready in 1-2-3 euros' project has been chosen for inclusion because of its potential impact on both health, equity and sustainability. The project aims to support low SES families to cook a low-budget, balanced, sustainable and nice meal for their family. The project comprises two intervention components: 1) a BEHAVIOURAL component including the provision of recipe booklets and provision of free food products, and 2) a SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL component including cooking and supermarket workshops with other parents.

More information

See attachment for an example of a recipe booklet (in Dutch and French)

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