Meet your group

• Form groups of 8-10

• Introductions:
  – state your name preceded by an adjective starting with the same letter
  – (e.g. Curious Christine, Dynamic Dave, Bold Bruna)

• Decide on a group name
Understanding drivers of food choice in low- and middle-income countries to inform program and policy action

Christine E. Blake
Edward Frongillo
Learning Lab Format

• Brief overview of the science of food choice [Blake]
• 2 case study presentations [DFC PIs]
  – 30 minute group breakout session
  – 15 minute large group discussion
• Lunch Break
• 2 case study presentations [DFC PIs]
  – 30 minute group breakout session
  – 15 minute large group discussion
• Synopsis and final discussion [Frongillo]
Funded by the UK Government’s Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and managed by Drs. Blake and Frongillo at the University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health
INTRODUCTIONS

Insert team picture
DFC Technical Advisory Group

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DFC Competitive Grants Program Purpose

- Facilitate, synthesize and disseminate research to provide a deep understanding of the drivers of food choice among the poor in developing countries in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa— in order to guide on-going and future programs and research activities to improve food and nutrition security in poor countries
- and to foster a community of practice in food choice research in developing countries
15 Projects underway in 10 countries

http://www.driversoffoodchoice.org/
Learning Lab Case Presenters

- Pepijn Schreinemachers
- Amy Ickowitz
- Valerie Flax
- Kate Wellard
Some questions ...

• What is food choice and why does it matter?
• What kinds of choices do people have?
• How do we learn what drives food choice?
• What can be done to promote food choice behaviors for optimal health and well-being?
What is Food Choice?

• Food choice encompasses the processes by which individuals and households decide
  – what to grow, buy, gather, purchase or obtain
  – how to store and prepare acquired foods
  – how to serve, distribute, share, or present foods to other household members
  – when and how to consume foods and beverages
Food Choice is a Process


Why does food choice matter?

• Food choice behaviors are integral to social and economic expression of identities, preferences, and cultural meanings and ultimately influence dietary intake and health.
1 in 4 children globally are stunted and will not reach their full physical or cognitive potential.

An estimated 2 billion people worldwide are deficient in key micro-nutrients.

A quarter of all deaths from non-communicable diseases occur under the age of 60.
Leading causes of death worldwide

2016, %

- Metabolic risks
- Behavioral risks
- Environmental/occupational risks

- High systolic blood pressure
- Diet
- Tobacco
- Air pollution
- High fasting plasma glucose
- High body-mass index
- High total cholesterol
- Alcohol and drug use
- Child and maternal malnutrition
- Impaired kidney function
- Unsafe water, sanitation, handwashing
- Occupation
- Low physical activity
- Unsafe sex
- Other environmental risks
- Low bone mineral density
- Sexual abuse and violence

Guardian graphic | Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation
What kinds of choices do people have?

• “If it is not available, it will not be eaten. If it is available, it is likely to be eaten. If there is no alternative, it will be eaten”*

• Most people have some choice of what, when, where, with whom or how to acquire, prepare, serve, and consume food.

• Latitude for food choice varies

Presented at the CAB International The 3rd French–British Meeting on Nutrition, a joint meeting of the Nutrition Society, Association Française de Nutrition and Société de Nutrition et de Diététique de Langue Française was held at Nancy, France on 30 September–2 October 1998 as part of the Symposium on ‘Functionality of nutrients and behaviour’
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2017/07/27/a-golden-age-for-business-every-second-five-people-are-entering-the-global-middle-class/
Food Systems Changes Expanding Choice

• Urbanization
• Urban demand driving changes in agriculture and markets
  – Rural to urban, urban to rural
Food Systems Changes and Food Choice

- More foods are
  - Purchased
  - Perishable
  - Processed
  - Prepared
- Broad transformation
- Global reach


Global commitment to improve nutrition

- Attempts to achieve ambitious goals hindered by limited knowledge of drivers of food choice among the poor in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC)
- Solution-focused research on food choice drivers needed
Science of Food Choice

• Concerned with generating knowledge about causal drivers of food choice decision-making processes and behavior within immediate food and social environments

• Dietary intake is an outcome of food choice
Physical and Economic context of the Food Environment

Dietary intake

Political and Socio-cultural context of the Food Environment

Food System
“the aggregate of food-related activities and the environments within which these activities occur”

**Individual**

Causal Food Choice Drivers
Cost, Convenience, Distance, Time, Nudges, Identity, Preferences, Family, Health, etc.

**WHY?**
Food Choice Decision-making
Unconscious, Routine, Habit, Value negotiations, Trade-offs

**HOW?**
Food Choice Behavior
Acquire, Prepare, Distribute, and Consume

**WHAT?**

Figure 1: Mapping the Science of Food Choice to understand why people eat what they do and how they go about doing this in rapidly changing food system
The Science of Food Choice

• Three essential questions to understand drivers of choice for policy and program action

1. What?
   – What is available and what are people eating?

2. How?
   – How do people acquire, prepare, distribute, and consume the food they eat?

3. Why?
   – Why do people make the food choices that they do?
   – yields information about decision-making processes for food choice and the causal drivers of these choices.
Some questions to consider in your groups today...

• What is the food choice issue you want to address?
  – Problem, barrier, opportunity, etc.

• What drives this food choice behavior?
  – What decision-making processes are involved
  – Identify possible causal drivers

• What policy or program actions could address this issue?
CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS
Instructions for small groups

• *Pick one of the 2 cases.*
• Restate the food choice problem identified in your selected case.
  – What are some opportunities for intervening to address the identified food choice problem in the study context?
  – Keep in mind the influence of multiple levels of the food system and decision-making processes related to the identified food choice problem.
    • You may write or use a diagram to demonstrate your thinking.
• Select one opportunity for intervening that was identified in step 1. Develop program and/or policy actions for the selected opportunity for intervening to address the food choice problem.
• Consider the following as you develop your program and/or policy actions:
  – What are the preconditions for your chosen programs or policies to succeed in this context?
  – What are the possible unintended consequences of your proposed actions?
  – Is it best to address the food choice problem through one comprehensive or targeted program or policy, or with a series of coordinated programs or policies that reinforce and complement each other?
• Provide a brief rationale for how your proposed actions will lead to improvement of the food choice problem. Attempt to outline hypothesized causal pathways if possible.
• For each of your programs and/or policies, identify any additional challenges or knowledge/evidence gaps that could be addressed to facilitate implementation, scale up, and uptake.
Drivers of Food Choice
Competitive Grants Program