Introduction

- Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have high rates of nutrition related diseases.
- This is associated with an increasing reliance on food low in nutritional quality, food imports and decreased local agricultural production.
- Most SIDS located in the Caribbean and Pacific have import dependency ratios of 60% and above, with predictions of these already high figures increasing soon.
- Urgent calls have been made for strengthening local food systems, resilient to climate change, to increase the production and consumption of nutritious locally produced food.
- However, intervention-based evidence is required to identify the most effective ways of addressing this.

Research Aim

To systematically review interventions intended to improve diet in SIDS, with a focus on those that applied a local food approach.

Methods

- The systematic review was conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework.
- The search strategy included studies published since 2000; those conducted in a SIDS setting; ones with an experimental, quasi- and natural experimental evaluation design, that reported on the impact of any aspect of diet.
- It was applied to twelve databases, including health related: MEDLINE (via Ovid); CINAHL; Global Health (via Ovid); EMBASE (via Ovid); Cochrane Library databases. Social science related databases: Web of Science: Conference Proceedings Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, and Social Science Citation Index; Scopus; Agricultural science related databases: AGRICOLA (US National Agriculture Library), AGRIS (hosted by FAO).
- The search was also applied to regional databases including LilACS; Aforlib.
- Screening of titles, abstracts, and data extraction were undertaken in duplicate.
- Risk of bias was assessed using the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool for randomised trials, and the Cochrane ROBINS-I tool for non-randomised studies.
- Narrative synthesis of the results was undertaken.
- The study protocol was registered: PROSPERO 2020 CRD42020201274.

Results

- 55,365 articles [12 databases; websites]; 26,682 articles [duplication – State16 and Rayen].
- 24 articles included for synthesis; Full text of 154 articles assessed; 25,908 articles excluded on title and abstract.

Conclusion

- There is an overall lack of robust evidence on interventions to improve diet in SIDS.
- The existing evidence suggests that multifaceted interventions applying a local food approach are worthy of further investigation.
- Given the increasing reliance on low nutritional quality food imports further development and evaluation of interventions incorporating increased local nutritious food production and consumption is urgently needed to help guide policy.

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References


