INTEGRATING NUTRITION EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURE EXTENSION TO IMPROVE COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING WITH LOCAL FOODS

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OVERVIEW NUTRITION in MALAWI

• High level of malnutrition due to:
  – food insecurity
  • inadequate energy intake
  • poor dietary diversity
  – disease, water, sanitation, hygiene

• Malawian’s diet mainly based on:
  – Large amounts of staples (maize)
  – Small amounts of vegetables, legumes & Nuts
  – Rarely any food from animals
NUTRITIONAL STATUS CHILDREN UNDER 2 YEARS

Source: Determinants of nutritional status and dietary diversity among children below two years in Kasungu and Mzimba, Malawi-Preliminary baseline results IMCF, Justus Liebig University
IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION
PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To support improvements in:

– Household nutrition and food security, through knowledge, attitudes and practices
– Nutrition in Farmer Field Schools (FFS) & Junior Farmer Field & Life Schools (JFFLS)
– National Nutrition Policies & Programming

Funded by FICA with implementation support by FAO

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Nutrition Education has many entry points:

### Agriculture Programmes

- ✓ FFS
- ✓ JFFLS
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Homes

### Agriculture Activities

Production diverse & integrated plants & animals in:

- ✓ Gardens
- ✓ Orchards
- ✓ Fields
- ✓ Forests

Post Harvest processing & storage

Home Processing, Preservation, Preparation
| Develop Trials 2011 | • In 2 districts  
|• With Agriculture & Health nutrition staff |
| Trials 2012 | • 10 villages with 100 homes  
|• In 5 Agriculture sections and 5 Health posts |
| Evaluate Feb & Jul 2012 | • Rainy Season – in February  
|• Dry Season – in July |
| Round 1 Oct 2012 | • Group 1: 200 villages, 3,000 homes  
|• Group 1: Revisions – **Now Feb-Apr 2013**  
|• Group 2: 2013 July |
| Round 2 Mar 2013 | • Review & Revisions – **Now Jan-Feb 2013**  
|• Group 1: 2013 March  
|• Group 2: 6 months later |
| Round 3 Nov 2013 | • Group 1: 2013 November  
|• Group 2: 6 months later |
| Evaluation February 2013 | • Recommendations |
FOLLOWS THE ‘SUN’ CARE GROUP MODEL:

- 2 community nutrition facilitators (CNFs) per village
  - Lead farmer (agric), Community health volunteer (health)
- Works with 15 caregivers with children 6-18 mo.
- 10 sessions in 20 weeks (1 session every two weeks)
  - special sessions involving grandmothers and husbands
- Caregivers learn how to:
  - use local and seasonal available foods to improve meals
  - improve hygiene & sanitation
FAO Nutritionists

20 Master trainers
District, Supervisors, Extension
(End October 2012)

400 Community nutrition facilitators
(November to December 2012)

3000 caregivers with children under 2 years
(December 2012 - June 2013)

Plan for next round
& will go back to Round 1 to fix

Full training for
61 Extension Supervisor
& Frontline Extension Workers
Mzimba & Kasungu districts
( November 2012)

lead training & support

Trials & Round 1

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PARTICIPATORY APPROACH...
IMPROVED INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING PRACTICES...

Malawi, Mzimba and Kasungu districts
CHALLENGES

1. Integration of Nutrition into mainstream Agriculture

2. Financial resources for Nutrition programmes in Government

3. Inadequate human resources
   - Finance, skills, resources to support
   - Staff transfers

4. Competing, instead of complementing, programmes
   - Several nutrition programs (SUN, NGOs), all involving the same staff

5. Monitoring, Supervision & Support

6. All resulting in low Motivation for
   - Government Staff & Community Volunteers

→ Sustainability of the program

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LESONS LEARNT (1)

1. It is feasible for families to improve child feeding practices using locally available foods:
   – There can be improvements in children’s nutrient intakes, especially energy, protein, vitamins A and C
   – Improved access to ASF (iron, zinc)

2. Households can improve food security and nutrition with Nutrition education coupled with:
   – crop and dietary diversification
   – good hygiene practices
LESSONS LEARNT (2)

3. Services cannot be provided by government staff alone
   – community nutrition facilitators are very important

4. Inter-sectoral collaboration is essential
   – Agriculture, Health, Gender, Education, etc.
   – Coordinated programmes, partners & activity schedule
   – Regular communication

5. Essential for all partners to support systems together
   – Sustainable approaches so that projects support ongoing programmes
**SUCCESSES and NEXT STEPS**

1. Reviewed project terms of reference for government workers to align with job descriptions
2. IYCF materials improved for Malawi
3. Better coordination with and support to the District Nutrition Committee and sub-committees (SUN, School Nutrition, etc.)
4. Regular communication & review meetings
5. Proper documentation of lessons learnt, methodologies used
6. Evidences of the effectiveness of complementary feeding intervention in association with a food security intervention
   - IMCF research JLU Giessen and Bunda College

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MORE INFORMATION

- FAO-MW@fao.org
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bENV5GLcYms&feature=youtu.be
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Malawi project

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