TECHNICAL MEETING ON THE DIET AND EATING PRACTICES OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE

PROGRAMMATIC EXPERIENCES AND PLATFORMS FOR PROMOTING KEY DIET AND EATING PRACTICES

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Premise

• Identifying efficacious practices to address current nutrition problems among adolescent girls and WRA is an essential first step; however, those practices will not be adopted or sustained...
  – if they are not feasible for the populations most at risk and
  – if they are not promoted effectively, with the right delivery strategy, targeting the right audience(s), and addressing the applicable determinants of change.
Improved nutritional status

Dietary intake

Health status (disease)

Food security

Access to quality health services and environment

Immediate causes

Dietary intake

Health status (disease)

Underlying causes

Determinants of practices

Demands

Motivation, attitudes, convictions, perception, and beliefs

Social norms and role models

Policy change, systems strengthening

Supply

Availability of health services and food

Quality of health services and food

Target populations

Individuals

Families, partners, and peers

Community leaders and service providers

Government, business, NGO, and faith leaders

Delivery strategies

Community / social mobilization (campaigns, community events)

Behavior change communication (IPC, small media, and mass media)

Advocacy (raising resources and political/social leadership commitment)

Non-Communication Strategies (policy change, systems strengthening)
Review of the Literature

• In response, SPRING conducted a rapid review of the literature and programmatic documentation to...
  – provide information on global programmatic experiences to improve the nutrition of adolescent girls and WRA and
  – summarize inputs, outcomes, and lessons learned from implementers who have or are currently carrying out nutrition programs for adolescent girls and WRA.
Methods

• Searched Pubmed, Google, Google Scholar, USAID’s Development Experience Clearinghouse, the World Bank Project Database, and the websites of major organizations, implementing agencies, and USAID-funded programs.

• Limited search to LMIC and publications and/or projects implemented between 2004 – 2014.

• Conducted an online survey, reaching out to program managers through the literature and internet search as well as others known by the authors.

Search Terms

1. Adolescent girls and/or pregnant and/or lactating women and/or women of reproductive age and nutrition program
2. Adolescent girls and/or pregnant and/or lactating women and/or women of reproductive age and micronutrient and/or supplementation
3. Women and cash transfer and nutrition
4. Women and behavior change communication and nutrition
Findings

• Out of 47 persons/institutions contacted, there were a total of 15 survey responses providing detailed programmatic information on 8 projects.

• 54 programs were identified that sought to improve nutrition (practices or status) of adolescent girls and/or WRA in LMIC between 2004 and 2014.

• Donors:
  – USAID (26)
  – The World Bank (8)
  – Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (5)
  – GAIN (1)
  – DFID (1)
  – UNICEF (1)
  – Other (11)
Target Population

- Adolescent girls*: 9 programs
- Women of reproductive age: 46 programs

* The term “adolescent girl” was not always defined or was defined differently in the literature. The authors recognize overlap between these categories.
Practices Promoted

Number of programs promoting each practice

![Bar chart showing the number of programs promoting each practice. The categories are Improved eating practices*, Consumption of a diverse diet, Purchase/consumption of fortified foods, Intake of adequate amounts of water, Intake of IFA/iron, Intake of micronutrient supplements, and Consumption of additional food. The numbers are 30, 14, 11, 2, 20, 4, and 1 respectively.]

*The category ‘Improved eating practices’ was used when programs reported promoting ‘dietary practices’, ‘eating practices’, or ‘food intake.’
Delivery Platforms, Strategy, or Activity Used

Number of programs using each delivery platform, strategy or activity

- Community-based nutrition education/promotion: 28
- Mass media: 10
- Distribution of micronutrients, food, or cash: 17
- Capacity building of service workers: 22
- Capacity building of local organizations/governments: 31
- Policy/strategy/protocol development: 24
Effectiveness

- Of the 44 long-term or completed programs, 15 provided data on the effectiveness of the approach in changing priority nutrition practices.
Initial Recommendations: Policies and Systems

1. Address nutrition of adolescent girls and WRA in policies, systems and guidelines.
2. Define adolescence and bring attention to the specific nutritional needs of adolescent girls.
3. Disaggregate data by age and gender at the national level.
4. Integrate nutrition into existing guidelines for services that reach adolescent girls and/or WRA.
5. Streamline and collaborate at all levels.
Initial Recommendations: Policies and Systems

1. Expand upon lessons learned from IFA programs.
2. Consider interventions to prevent and address risk factors for N-RNCDs.
3. Identify platforms to address the nutritional needs of women outside of pregnancy and lactation periods.
4. Involve women and communities in nutritional program planning.
5. Identify opportunities for multisectoral collaborations and/or program integration.
6. Address gender norms.
Thank you