

IUNS 21st ICN International Congress of Nutrition

“From Sciences to Nutrition Security”

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 15-20 October 2017 - Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel & Convention Center

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Reference

Title: Promoting Nutrition and Hygiene for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Nigeria

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Background and Objectives:

Of Nigeria's 69 million children, an estimated 17.5 million are considered orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), of which 7.3 million were orphaned by HIV/AIDS. SPRING worked closely with partners in Nigeria to tailor guidance on nutrition and optimal feeding practices and create curricula for OVCs over 2 years of age.

Methods:

SPRING conducted a landscape analysis consisting of a desk review and surveys with community service organizations on existing nutrition materials and interventions in Nigeria for children 2 to 17 years of age. The findings were used to design a training package with key nutrition information for use by organizations associated with Kids' Clubs and early childhood development (ECD) centers.

SPRING concept tested selected activities from the package in four communities in the Federal Capital Territory with teachers and children from different age group.



The training aids include several visual references that help to illustrate basic concepts in nutritional needs, dietary diversity, and hygiene and sanitation.

Results:

The resulting training package builds the nutrition capacity of staff and volunteers at community service organizations working with OVCs. The training package includes a guide for facilitators, a set of training aids, and modules with learning activities for children ages 2–5 years, 6–11 years, and 12–17. In September 2016, SPRING conducted a training of trainers to build a pool of 26 master trainers. Each of the five OVC partners is now able to cascade the trainings across community service organizations and the communities in which they work. One partner has already adapted this package for use in northern Nigeria and another is planning to adapt it for reducing obesity among Nigerian adolescents.



Children wash flour off their hands in an interactive activity. Flour is used to simulate germs and give children a visual cue on how thoroughly they must scrub their hands to remove them all.



Adolescent girls aged 12-17 review illustrations conveying information on dietary diversity during concept testing for nutrition and hygiene activities included in a training package geared towards OVCs.



Activities in training package include age-appropriate games to illustrate concepts and keep children engaged.

Conclusions:

This package incorporates developmentally appropriate lessons about food and nutrition using language, concepts, and instruction techniques tailored to each age group. In addition to OVC partners in Nigeria, who are cascading this curriculum for their communities, Ministry of Education representatives were included in the training of trainers so that they could incorporate activities from this package into existing curricula.

Keywords:

ECD, OVC, training, curriculum, education

Conflict of Interest:

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.