Responding to a Nutrition Emergency in Lusaka, Zambia

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May 21, 2009

This presentation was produced through support provided to the Infant & Young Child Nutrition (IYCN) Project by the US Agency for International Development, under the terms of Cooperative Agreement No. GPO-A-00-06-00008-00. The opinions herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Agency for International Development.
HIV and malnutrition in Zambia

- National HIV prevalence: 15.6%
- Among children under 5 years:
  - Stunting: 45%
  - Under weight: 15%
  - Wasting: 5%
  - Severely malnourished: 2.2%
  - Severely malnourished in Lusaka: 4.4%

Photo: Marni Laverentz
IYCN objectives in Zambia

- Improved enabling environment for nutrition programs.
- Improved provider performance.
- Increased community and household support.
- Increased knowledge and positive beliefs of optimal feeding practices.
- Good program practices identified, piloted, and promoted.
The problem

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<th>Each year...</th>
<th>Last year, the pattern changed...</th>
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<td>- The University Teaching Hospital admits more than 2,000 malnourished children per year.</td>
<td>- Increase in admissions seen in September.</td>
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<td>- Peak admissions occur from November to April.</td>
<td>- 170 children admitted per day by the end of November.</td>
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<td>- Around 75 to 90 children occupy 59 beds per day.</td>
<td>- For the first time, severe malnutrition cases were seen in infants less than 6 months old.</td>
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Emergency declared

- The Ministry of Health declared an emergency in October 2008.
- Stakeholders in child health convened to plan and implement activities to mitigate the emergency.
- Training health workers on appropriate counseling of mothers was an important component of the plan.
Possible reasons for increase

- Inappropriate messages about infant feeding within the context of HIV.
- Inappropriate exclusive breastfeeding practices (only 61% of infants are exclusively breastfed).
- Amount and frequency of weaning foods is inadequate.
- Escalating prices in the maize meal staple.
- Escalating prices of other foods.
IYCN response

• Since November 2008, IYCN has trained a total of 180 health workers. Training included counseling at 6-week PCR test.

• IYCN has participated in a group that has developed radio and TV messages.

Photo: Kali Erickson
The Kanyama story

Photo: Agnes Bwalya
A champion for good infant feeding practices

Photo: Agnes Bwalya
The result

• Victoria and her staff have noted that HIV-exposed babies like Nawa are thriving as a result of appropriate IYCF counseling.

• Victoria was so happy with this result that, with IYCN’s support, she has conducted a second orientation of 26 volunteers.

Photo: Kali Erickson
Lessons learned

• Training facility in-charges can help move programs forward.

• There is an urgent need to train community volunteers to supplement health efforts in infant and young child feeding counseling.

Photo: Kali Erickson
This seems strange. Could you change it to "Training facilities in charge..."

mderrick, 5/19/2009
Thank you

“The (IYCN trainings) have come at a time when Ministry of Health and in particular health workers needed to respond to the challenges in the area of maternal and child health.”

Dr. S.K. Miti, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Zambia

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Photo: Kali Erickson