Child Nutrition in Emergency Contexts: The Case of South Sudan

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Outline of the Presentation

- Overview of global hunger and undernutrition
- The state of malnutrition in protracted crises
- The case of South Sudan
  - Current statistics on malnutrition (The State of Jonglei)
  - Causes of malnutrition
  - The approach to malnutrition
Severity of the problem of Hunger: An assertion by the WFP

Hunger kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria & tuberculosis combined.
Overview of Global Undernutrition and Hunger

- One in nine people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy and active life (795 million)

- The vast majority of the world’s hungry people live in developing countries

- 13.5% of the population of the developing countries is undernourished

- Asia alone has two thirds of this total
Overview of Global Undernutrition and Hunger

- Progress has been made in Southern Asia but the situation remains bleak in Western Asia (India, Indonesia, etc).

- Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest prevalence of hunger.

- One in every four people is undernourished.

- Poor nutrition contributes to nearly half (45%) of deaths in the under fives - 3.1 million children each year.
Overview of Global Unernutrition and Hunger

- One out of six children - about 100 million children in developing countries is underweight.
- One in four of the world’s children is stunted.
- In developing countries the proportion can rise to one in three.
- 66 million primary school age children attend classes hungry across the developing countries. Africa alone has 23 million of them. WFP estimates $3.2 billion to be what is needed to reach the 66 million children.
The state of Malnutrition in Protracted Crises

- Many countries in protracted crises are home to persistently high level of malnutrition

- The state of food insecurity in world (FAO, 2010) identified 22 countries in protracted crises with high levels of acute and chronic malnutrition

- In most of these countries, Global Acute Malnutrition is higher that 15%, the WHO cut off for a crisis level
The State of Malnutrition in Protracted Crises

- In Afghanistan the prevalence of chronic malnutrition is as high as 59% and acute malnutrition as high as 9%

- In south Sudan the prevalence of chronic malnutrition is as high as 40% and acute malnutrition as high as 16%

- In Central African Republic the prevalence of chronic malnutrition is as high as 43% and acute malnutrition as high 12%
South Sudan is the world’s youngest nation which gained independence from Sudan on the 9th of July, 2011.

This former region of Sudan has witnessed some of the World’s most horrific humanitarian catastrophes during its struggle for Independence for more than two decades.

In December 2013, a civil war broke out between fighters loyal to the incumbent president Salva Kiir and his former deputy Riek Machar.
Malnutrition Situation in the various parts of South Sudan

Source: South Sudan IPC map for July- August 2014. Available at: https://www.google.com/search?
Documentary about the Malnutrition Situation in South Sudan

- https://youtu.be/4PtuSVCza8Y
Current Situation of Malnutrition in South Sudan (Jonglei State)

Adapted from the 2015 UNICEF Humanitarian Situation Report
Crisis Definition and types of Acute Malnutrition (under fives)- WHO

- Crisis definition
  - GAM $\geq$ or $= 15\%$
  - SAM 2-3%

- Types of Acute Malnutrition- MUAC Threshold
  - MUAC <115mm and/or bilateral pitting oedema- SAM with high risk of mortality
  - MUAC $\geq$115mm and <125mm- MAM with risk of mortality
  - MUAC $\geq$125mm and <135mm- Risk of malnutrition
  - MUAC $\geq$ 135mm- Adequate nutritional status
Causes of Acute Malnutrition in South Sudan

- Immediate Causes
  - Poor diets (low in quantity, quality, variety)
  - Disease (particularly diarrhoea, respiratory tract or ear infections, measles, parasitic gut infections)

- Underlying causes
  - Family food insecurity
  - Inadequate care of vulnerable household members (unfair distribution of food)
Causes of Acute Malnutrition in South Sudan

- Unhygienic living conditions (poor water and poor sanitation)
- Inadequate health services

Basic causes
- The war
- Poverty
- Lack of information, political and economic insecurity
- Lack of resources at all level, unequal status of women
The Approach to Malnutrition

- The approach to addressing malnutrition in South Sudan should be multisectoral and multifactorial (health, agriculture, cultural issues, political, etc).

- Endeavour to address the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition.

- Nutrition Intervention (Community Therapeutic Care)
  - Community Mobilisation
  - Supplementary Feeding Programmes
The Approach to Malnutrition

- Outpatient Therapeutic Programmes
- Stabilisation Centres (Inpatient treatment centres)
My Opinion

- The humanitarian situation in South Sudan is a complex emergency

- In as much as efforts are being made, more should be done to address the situation

- It is disheartening to note a funding gap of more than 70% (UNICEF Situation Report 2015)
My opinion

- Nutrition programmes should be scaled up so as to reduce child crude mortality rate (malnutrition is an underlying cause of more 40% of child mortality in South Sudan)

- More should be done to end hostilities and warring factions should be held responsible for violations
Bibliography


Bibliography


