



Tropentag, September 14-16, 2022, hybrid conference

“Can agroecological farming feed the world?
Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Effect of non-participation of local/indigenous people in the development and implementation of child feeding programs

CHARLES WAFULA¹, CATHERINE NDISO², RUFO LIBAN³

¹*Tropical institute of community health and development (TICH), Community health and development, Kenya*

²*Jomo kenyatta university of agriculture and technology (JKUAT), Public health,*

³*Kenya methodist university (KEMU), Department of health,*

Abstract

Importance and problem

Local knowledge is a huge, largely untapped, resource that can be applied to influence highly adaptable child feeding practices. In Kenya, community health volunteers and mothers form important linkage through which local and indigenous knowledge can be tapped for adaptation of interventions to improve child feeding practices.

Aim

This paper examines extend and how community health volunteers and mothers have been involved in development and implementation of currently used communication strategies and materials on child feeding practices.

Study location, Material and Methods

This study was conducted between July – December 2021 in Marsabit County in Kenya, largely rural pastoral community with some emerging urban communities that tended towards urban lives. This was a qualitative study with 101 participants comprising 52 mothers, 49 community health volunteers through 10 focus group discussions. Mothers and community health volunteers were individuals from the community with experience of local context regarding child feeding practices and associated challenges.

Main results

The study found that out of the more than five major programs implemented in the county on child feeding practices in the last five years, participation of indigenous people (mothers and community health volunteers) remained nonexistent. However, during implementation all programs brought in participation of community health volunteers through training on capacities for adoption and sustainability of the practices by mothers and caregivers of children who participated mainly as beneficiaries. Further, findings show that almost all programs on child feeding practices experienced challenges at implementation with difficulties in accessing types of food promoted due to seasonality of crops and the migration life style of pastoralists with very low demonstrated sustainability especially among the rural pastoralists.

Conclusion

Findings of this study highlight consequences of non-integration of local and indigenous knowledge in the design and implementation of child feeding practices that include high level of challenges in implementation, lack of adaptation to local context and ultimately unsustainable child feeding practices.

Keywords: Child feeding practice, local knowledge, local/indigenous people