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Challenges and lessons learned from the implementation of Nutrition Specific program -an NGO perspective

Karamoja region in Uganda is a region highly affected by draught, cattle rustling and food insecurity resulting to high malnutrition rates over the past 40 years. In response to the persistent and high malnutrition (GAM of > 10%) UN agencies/NGOS have been using nutrition specific approaches in isolation of the preventive approach. There has been very little or limited interaction between the nutrition specific and Nutrition sensitive programs due to the difference in objectives and targets. As a result most of the already cured cases from the nutrition specific program end up relapsing. For this reason the GAM levels have remained unchanged and sometimes even increase.

These current mode of interventions have not been designed to address the basic (Infrastructure, Education, Access to market), Underlying (inadequate access to food, inadequate care for mother and child, insufficient health service and unhealthy environment) and Immediate (inadequate dietary intake and disease) causes of malnutrition (UNICEF 1991). Instead malnutrition has been tagged only to the program that are treating/managing victims of acute malnutrition. This is reflected in the resource allocation where most of the resources have been allocated for treatment and management of malnutrition through nutrition specific interventions with very little resources allocated to nutrition sensitive interventions which target prevention of malnutrition. Nevertheless, malnutrition still continuous to affect the

population despite all these interventions. Results showed making nutrition program sensitive is a more sustainable way and where there is a gap in a program implementation mandate should not override. Also data review of the Food Security and Nutrition Assessment reports (FSNA) from 2009 to 2017, indicates that Global Acute Malnutrition rates have persistently been at serious levels (>10%) despite all the continued interventions. Similarly, stunting rates have plateaued above emergency levels (>40%).

In order to address the continuously high malnutrition rates there need shift nutrition program paradigm from the current treatment based to a more nutrition sensitive approach.

Speaker Biography

Amegovu Kiri Andrew is founder and the executive director of Andre Foods International (AFI) a an NGO in Uganda which implements nutrition main stream program for the UNWFP in karamoja and Rhino camp refugees settlement in Uganda. He holds both PhD and Post doctorate in Nutrition and Dietetics and he is an associate professor at Juba University in South Sudan. He has vast experience in treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in children under five years and pregnant and lactating women. He is a Researcher and has several publications in high impact journals in the fields of therapeutic foods, obesity, food safety and profiling of local foods for their nutrients. He has attended several international nutrition and food safety conferences both as speaker and chair.

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