Changes in household and children dietary diversity in AGP intervention areas

Tadesse Kuma
Policy Studies Institute

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1. Introduction

• Despite progress, high stunting levels remain in Ethiopia

  ▪ Agricultural sector is a key player in source of income and livelihood for most of the rural communities through production and consumption of nutritious food

• The Government of Ethiopia has made nutrition a priority agenda. The high-level commitment to nutrition was reflected in the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP 2016-2020)

• In support of the second National Nutrition Program, the AGP-2 (2015-2020) integrates a focus on increased production of nutritious foods, increased households’ dietary diversity

• A Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Strategy was validated in 2017

• The National Food and Nutrition Policy, validated in 2019, promotes also access to adequate food and a diversified diet
Nutrition sensitive AGP-2 interventions

Farmer training centers bring training on
- Awareness about nutrient dense crops, fruits and vegetables
- Post-harvest handling
- Dietary diversity
- Cooking demonstrations that aims at increasing dietary diversity of households and household members

Demonstration of nutrition sensitive technologies
- Improved seeds (of ground nut, haricot bean, protein dense (quality protein) maize, orange flesh, tomato, sweet potato, beans, soya bean, and others)
- Cattle fattening
- Food preparation techniques
- Crop diversification activities
- Introducing improved breeds of cattle, cattle forage & quick livestock production technology
- Integration of poultry, fish and horticulture production and construction of poultry house fish ponds

Focus to include participation of women and youth in these trainings
2. Household Diet Diversity: changes in proportion of households who consumed various food groups in last 24 hours (AGP II MTR)

- Large increase in consumption of legumes (21%) and vegetables (16%)
- Important increase in consumption of roots and tubers,
- milk(12%) products and meat (10%)
- Increased consumption of sweets (11%)
3. Child Diet Diversity: Changes in consumption of food groups of children in AGP beneficiary HH between 2017 and 2019

- A high number of children are breastfed
- Relatively large increase in consumption of pulses (17%) and grains, roots and tubers (14%)
- Modest increase in consumption of eggs, meat, fruits and vegetables and milk products
- Small decrease in use of infant formula
Minimum Diet Diversity: AGP beneficiary HHs and children

Households diet diversity
Clear improvements in number of households that consume 4 food groups or more
- In 2019, 19% points more HH consumed a minimum of 4 and more food groups compared to 2017

Children diet diversity
- Despite clear improvements between 2017 and 2019, only few children eat the minimum number of 4 and food groups

Low Child Dietary Diversity observed compared to Household DD
Some factors contributed for progress in HH DD

- Promotion of increased production diversity and demonstration of new crops/vegetables/fruits
- Fruit and vegetable nursery sites
- Increased participation of women and youth farmers at grassroots level
- Awareness creation about and dissemination of seeds on nutrition-dense crops, food preparation techniques and crop storage facilities have been effective
- Use consultative meeting and experience sharing visits to share experiences and observe how activities are being implemented at grassroots levels.
- Establishment of strong collaboration and networks among stakeholders which led to learn from each other, information exchange, and to scaling up process
4. Challenges

- High dependency on household own production

![Primary sources of food for HHs (2019)]
Challenges (con’td)

- Improvements at household level not translated adequately for children diets
- Difficulty to get improved seeds of fruits, vegetables and nutritious crops
- Absence of nutrition expert in the different layers of the government institutional arrangement
- Limited water access to plant vegetables & fruits
- Vegetable diseases
- Rising cost of nutritious food
- Increased consumption of sweets
- Limited source of non-farm income, awareness, production diversity
5. Concluding remarks

- Although there are progresses, Ethiopia has long way to travel to ensure nutrition diversity

- More action needed:
  - Invest more on nutrition sensitive agriculture
  - Scaling up successful initiatives
  - Further expand collaborative efforts with other stakeholders and sectors to improve DD
  - **children’s dietary diversity** is remains critical national concern
Thank you !!