



Community Centred Prevention of Malnutrition

Report on urban programming

Introduction

CCPM urban NIPPs programming started in a combined Cycle 3 and 4 that commenced in June 2014 covering one health facility Vengere which is in Makoni District's Rusape town. So far 2 cycles have been completed and these have had a fair share of challenges and constraints. The CCPM team has nonetheless continued urban programming covering Rusape town catchment area for the purposes of lesson learning and improvement. This report highlights the challenges encountered, solutions employed and recommendations for CCPM urban NIPPs programming.

Challenges

The following are the major challenges faced during CCPM urban programming;

- Generally there has been low attendance of participants, both males and females in NIPP circles. Unlike in the rural setup where the major challenge is on low male participation, attendance for both males and females has been low in town. The intended beneficiaries take longer to understand the project purpose because urban communities are more concerned about incomes which sustain their day to day lives and less concerned about what they perceive to be social issues.
- Moderate Acute Malnutrition cases have not been willing to participate in the NIPP circles despite the evidence that urban community has high numbers of MAM cases compared to the rural community. They were expecting to receive handouts.
- The team struggled to adapt the programme to an urban setting as this had solely been designed to suit rural programming in components like WASH.
- It is perceived that Rusape Town Council as a major stakeholders in this project has less experience in working with NGOs implementing the social programmes in an urban set up thus the processes of stakeholder engagement generally take longer than anticipated which is not the same in the rural areas and this results in the Vengere health facility NIPP activities lagging behind their counterparts in the rural areas.
- The smallest administrative unit in the urban setup is a ward unlike in rural areas where the smallest administrative unit is a village. Villages are usually under one leader who is a councillor but in the urban set up, each ward has its own councillor selected on political merit. Ultimately there has been some political influence in selecting the wards, volunteers and participants slowing down implementation plans.
- Development structures in the urban areas are different from those in the rural areas. Unlike in the rural areas where there are traditional leaders as well as administrative leaders, in the urban set up there are only administrative leaders voted in, on a

political ticket making community involvement and selection of participants including volunteers tending to have political influence.

Solutions

In an effort to address the challenges faced in urban programming GOAL CCPM team has implemented the following;

- Attendance has not significantly improved for the urban NIPPs however the team has increased areas of coverage i.e. rather than working in four wards only, in each cycle the project is covering the whole town. In addition, in this current cycle having learnt that the FES was well received in the last cycle due to electricity load shedding, this will be used to attract participants as it is of relevancy to them.
- Community engagement with stakeholders taking a lead has been done to explain the NIPPs concept, its low input high impact approach as well as the benefits participants will derive from the project to attract the MAM cases to participate in the circles.
- Revision of the approach/ curriculum to suit the urban context was done. For example, micro-gardening promoted 'container gardens' instead of 'keyhole gardens' which are used in rural areas while urban WASH approaches such as the use of soap to wash hands from a piped water source were incorporated instead of the tippy taps and ash as an agent for hand washing. Rubbish pits are not promoted in urban areas except where refuse collection is problematic.
- There has been continuous engagement of the Rusape town council stakeholders, and with time it's highly likely that they will be experienced in coordinating and even supporting urban social programmes.
- To avoid political influence, it was resolved that instead of operating in the four villages per cycle as per the roll out plan, all the 10 wards in Rusape town council participate in each cycle and transparency about the project as well as feedback to key stakeholders was increased.

Recommendations

CCPM team has recommended the following, to ensure future success of urban programming;

- When designing projects, it's important that both rural and urban contextualisation is done for easy planning and implementation of the projects that suit the context. Generic designing is not applicable.
- Income generating activities need to be the backbone/core areas in urban programming with social issues being mainstreamed since the urban livelihoods are income based if we are to compare with rural livelihoods that are agriculture based e.g. the fuel efficient stove component in the NIPP curriculum has been embraced well by the urban community can be redesigned into a business model, and promoting savings and lending groups in the community.

Conclusion

Although CCPM urban programming has not produced the intended results, a lot of lessons have been learnt out of the challenges faced and this will influence not only NIPPs but also the wider scope of urban programming.