Nutrition status of the vulnerable groups in flood prone areas of Bunyala and Nyando Sub Counties, Kenya

Abstract.

The nutrition situation in flood affected areas in Kenya is precarious and is likely to deteriorate sharply in the coming years. Humanitarian crises exacerbate nutrition risks and poor food consumption practices thereby aggravating malnutrition. There is lack of data on the pre and post floods nutrition situation. This study sought to establish the nutrition status of the vulnerable groups in flood prone areas of Bunyala and Nyando Sub Counties, Kenya The study population consisted of vulnerable groups (children 6-59 months and lactating mothers 15-49 years), key informants and focus group discussions. The study sites were Nyando and Bunyala Sub counties, in western Kenya. The areas were purposively selected given the long history of floods over time. The study adopted a cross sectional descriptive survey and evaluation design. Cluster sampling was used to select the administrative units and households, purposive sampling to select the key informants and simple random sampling to select the vulnerable groups. The sample size using the Fishers formulae totaled to 630 vulnerable persons. The data was collected using questionnaires, key informant interview guide, focus group discussions and secondary data. The data was analyzed by SPSS version 16, Nutri-survey and ENA soft wares. Chi square statistical test was used to determine the relationship between the food consumption patterns and nutritional status of the vulnerable groups. The results were then presented using tables and graphs. Results showed nutrition status of the lactating mothers based on the Body Mass Index was undernourished 7% within the normal range 39% and 56% were overweight. Based on MUAC cut offs 16% were undernourished 56 % within the normal range and 21 % were overweight. Based on the indices for children 1.5 % were severely stunted and o.6 moderately stunted, 1.3 % were severely wasted, 3.6 moderately wasted and 3.4% overweight. Based on MUAC, 4% were severely undernourished, 6% were moderately undernourished and 40% were overweight. The study reveals that the study population had a double burden of malnutrition and it's skewed towards overweight which is a risk factor for non-communicable diseases. The vulnerable groups in flood prone area of Bunyala and Nyando Sub Counties have the double burden of under nutrition and over nutrition but mainly skewed towards overweight and obesity putting them at risk of non-communicable diseases. The study therefore recommends Existing programs to be redesigned to reduce risk of the increasing over nutrition which if not made nutrition sensitive can lead to increase in non-communicable diseases which is a silent killer.

Authors.

Lynett Ochuma Odida and Prof. Jacob W. Wakhungu (Ph.D.)