

Combating RUTF Shortages in Myanmar: Alternative Recipes with local ingredients

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Background

Nutrition programs are facing frequent shortages or out-of-stock conditions and limited access to specialized nutritious food products (RUTF and RUSF) in the field. In order to respond to those situations, IMAM/IYCF Technical Working Group (TWG) of Myanmar provided the technical leadership to create an alternative solution for acutely malnourished children. In collaboration with UNICEF, World Vision International Myanmar (WVIM) is starting an Alternative Recipes Program with jaggery + peanuts, utilizing local available ingredients to address the issue.

Description of intervention

This pilot program will be implemented in three townships (Patheingyi, KangyiDaunt and Thabaung) with the technical support and funding of UNICEF starting in February 2024 for 5 months. WVIM plans to synergize this intervention with other funded programs, including WVIM Area Programs and explore potential grant opportunities for implementation in other areas. The ingredients of Jaggery + Peanuts include essential nutrients including carbohydrate, protein, fat, fibre, iron, calcium and phosphorus. The project aims to provide the material and technical support to prepare this nutritious snack for acutely malnourished children. The calorie content of jaggery is 574 Kcal per 150 grams and for 180 grams of peanuts, it is 1020 Kcal. Jaggery and peanuts are a common snack for children in Myanmar.

During ongoing implementation activities for IMAM, the volunteers from each pilot village and wards of project-township will prepare the recipes at their villages/ wards after receiving training provided by UNICEF in the townships. The jaggery/peanut paste for acutely malnourished children will be provided in the form of a nutritious ball by mixing the ground contents. The dosage provided to each malnourished child will be based on their weight in accordance with the guidance endorsed by TWG. The number of balls/dosage a child receives will vary according to body weight, and energy requirements. Jaggery/peanut balls will be provided to children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition.



Required materials

Technical training

Final product

Findings

This program is just starting and is in its initial stages so that the findings and results will only be available for sharing in the next year. The alternative recipe of jaggery + peanuts will be used in place of RUTF and RUSF in the three townships. Routine IMAM indicators will be monitored over the implementation period from February to June 2024.

Conclusions & Implications

The definitive conclusions can be shown after project period with ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness and implications of the alternative recipes with jaggery and peanuts. This initiative highlights the need for local solutions – using local foods and local community participation - to address the persistent shortage of specialized nutrition products in Myanmar.



Feeding by caregiver

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