Understanding Malnutrition - Conceptual frameworks

Session 3
Learning objective

I/We will learn ...The immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition and their inter-relationships using a conceptual frameworks.

It’s not simply lack of food that leads to malnutrition....
**UNICEF-Malnutrition conceptual framework**

**OUTCOMES**
- Malnutrition, death & disability

**IMMEDIATE CAUSES**
- Inadequate dietary intake
- Disease

**UNDERLYING CAUSES AT HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY LEVEL**
- Insufficient access to FOOD
- Inadequate maternal & child CARE practices
- Poor water, sanitation & inadequate HEALTH services

**BASIC CAUSES IN SOCIETY**
- Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled
- Potential resources: environment, technology, people

Source: UNICEF
From food security to nutrition security

- Inadequate dietary intake
- Insufficient access to FOOD
- Inadequate maternal & child CARE practices
- Poor water, sanitation & inadequate HEALTH services

Malnutrition, death & disability

Disease

Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled

Potential resources: environment, technology, people

Source: UNICEF
What are immediate causes of Malnutrition?

In an individual, malnutrition is as a result of either:

- An inadequate dietary intake
- Infection/Diseases

A combination of both
Malnutrition/Infection cycle

- Inadequate dietary intake
  - Appetite loss
  - Nutrient loss
  - Malabsorption
  - Altered metabolism

- Disease:
  - Incidence
  - Severity
  - Duration

- Weight loss
- Growth faltering
- Immunity lowered
- Mucosal damage

[UN SCN, 1990]

http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/training/2.5/6.html
Underlying causes of malnutrition

Production, processing and marketing of nutritious foods
- Food availability (year round)
- Access (year round)
- Utilization

Malnutrition, death & disability

Inadequate dietary intake

Disease

Insufficient access to FOOD

Inadequate maternal & child CARE practices

Poor water, sanitation & inadequate HEALTH services

Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled

Potential resources: environment, technology, people

Source: UNICEF
Access to food through...

Household Food Production....

[Images of goats and oxen]
Access to food through...

Markets.......

FAMINE EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS NETWORK
**Underlying causes**

- **Malnutrition, death & disability**
- **Inadequate dietary intake**
- **Disease**
- **Insufficient access to FOOD**
- **Inadequate maternal & child CARE practices**
- **Poor water, sanitation & inadequate HEALTH services**

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**Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled**

**Potential resources: environment, technology, people**

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**Immediate causes**

- Breastfeeding practices
- Feeding patterns
- Education and social status of the mother
- Hygiene practices
- Health seeking behaviors
- Maternal nutrition during pregnancy

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**Outcomes**

**Underlying causes at household/family level**

- Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled

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**Basic causes in society**

- Potential resources: environment, technology, people

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Source: UNICEF
Who are primary care givers?
Underlying causes...

Malnutrition, death & disability

- Inadequate dietary intake
- Disease

Immediate causes

- Insufficient access to food
- Inadequate maternal & child care practices

Underlying causes at household/family level

Biology, climate change, civil conflict, economic depression, institutional failure, political crisis, resource management

Biology: Animal, agricultural, food, human, infectious disease, plant

Quantity and quality of actual resources human, economic, organisational and the way they are controlled

Basic causes in society

- Good quality health
- Essential drugs availability
- Safe water supplies
- Clean housing
- Clean environment
- Immunization services
- Sanitary facilities
- Adequate health facilities

Potential resources: environment, technology, people

Source: UNICEF
HYGIENE
SANITATION
SHELTER
Look at the difference in the following health environments. Which do you think is most healthy?

Sparsely populated settled population in an arid climate
Overcrowded, self-settled refugees in Eastern Ethiopia
Temporary encampments in unsanitary and cold conditions
WATER SOURCE & TRANSPORT
Basic causes of malnutrition

Malnutrition, death & disability

Inadequate dietary intake

Disease

Insufficient access to FOOD

Inadequate maternal & child CARE practices

Poor water, sanitation & inadequate HEALTH services

OUTCOMES

IMMEDIATE CAUSES

UNDERLYING CAUSES AT HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY LEVEL

Quantity and quality of actual RESOURCES human, economic & organisational and the way they are controlled

Potential resources: environment, technology, people

Natural and human resource management

Source: UNICEF
Please remember......

- Addressing one or two of the underlying causes of malnutrition is necessary but not sufficient to ensure adequate nutrition.
- Understanding the cause(s) of malnutrition is critical in providing appropriate intervention.
- Seasonal changes occur in all 3 groups
  - [http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/training/2.5/17.html](http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/training/2.5/17.html)
Exercise
What are the causes of malnutrition?
Finally……

When in doubt, consult a specialist or the reference materials!!!

Reference materials

http://www.unicef.org/nutrition/training/2.5/contents.html