



RADIO : NKHOTAKOTA COMMUNITY
PROG : PHINDU MU ULIMI
THEME : UNDERNUTRITION SITUATION AND SOLUTIONS
AIRED TIME : 13:30hrs MONDAY/THURSDAY
DATE : 2016
PRODUCER : JOHN KISEWE MPAKANI
PRESENTER : JOHN MPAKANI
DURATION : 11 MNS

Sigh tune fade under narrator's voice

Malawi has been experiencing drought and shortage of rainfall in some districts including Nkhotakota, the situation that has resulted in food insecurity among many families in the country since 2013. Under nutrition in women and children remains a persistent public health and development challenge in Nkhotakota district including Malawi as a country.

Nearly half the children suffer from chronic under nutrition (stunting) and micronutrient deficiencies, including iron and vitamin A.

Welcome dear listener to your favorite radio program Phindu Mu Ulimi which comes your way every Mondays 1:30pm and repeated every Thursdays at 1:30 in the afternoon.

I am John Kisewe Mpakani. This segment is part of an audio series highlighting the importance of Communication as a major tool for Development. It has been produced with the support of the World Association of Community Broadcasters and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. And you are listening to Nkhotakota community radio station.

INSERT LOCAL MUSIC DONE BY WOMEN

Today in our program, we will discuss about nutrition and we will find out the reasons why the situation undernutrition situation is worsen in the district and also we will find out the solutions

to the situation of stunting growth of children from the Nkhotakota District Hospital nutritionist Mr Ulunji Mezuwa.

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

Nkhotakota is one of the districts that is affected by malnutrition and currently we are at 43.5% stunting, meaning to say 43 out of 100 children under 5 stunted that means they are too short for their age, so that's the situation is like in Nkhotakota, but not only that, we also have the wasting whereby we have 4%, that means 4% of the children in Nkhotakota are wasting, that means they are too thin for their height. We also have issues to do with vitamin A deficiency in the district; anemia among women of child bearing age is at 13.5% which is also on the high side, so in Nkhotakota we are a bit behind when it comes to issues of nutrition.

Narrator : why undernutrition in women and children remains a persistent public health and development challenge in Nkhotakota district and Malawi?

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

As we might know, women and children are the vulnerable population groups, especially children and the reason is that women do not have reproductive resources because nutrition goes hand in hand with the access to food, now if women have less access or inadequate to food and reproductive access, what that means is that the food they are going to access will be of low quality and also the quantity of that food will be also on the low side. The same way with children, children are called the indirect beneficiaries, children cannot go and farm, children cannot go find resources and what have you, so as a result they remain on the receiving hand while in comparison with men and other abled people in the community are at an advantage of accessing food, that's why undernutrition is of major public concern among that population group.

Narrator : why rural children are more likely to be stunted than urban children in the district?

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

It is true that rural children are at risk of being stunted than urban children because there are number of factors. First of all, we are talking about access to food, in the communities there are less economic activities that can bring money to the family or to the house hold for them to buy quality food, as a result, they maintain to be on the cycle of malnutrition while in urban settings, we have people who are working, who are doing businesses and they are able to afford to buy different food stuffs which are nutritionally adequate. So that's the reason why we have a situation whereby in rural areas people suffer more from malnutrition than in urban areas, though there are some people in the urban areas who are very poor, mean to say that they are very poor

and they cannot even afford to buy quality food, are also there but in comparison in rural areas, it is the rural areas that suffer more than in urban areas.

Narrator : what are the consequences, negative impacts of stunting?

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

Alright, there are many negative impacts of stunting, stunting results into brain shrinkage, a child who is stunting has a small brain capacity, as a result, that child might not do well at school and also that child might not be relayed upon by the community, so as a result, they get into a cycle of poverty and a cycle of malnutrition. But also a stunted child will fall sick frequently as a result parents or guardians will spend more time in the hospital and spend more money in health care than on other reproductive resources. So a stunted child is at risky because nutrition dying at the end of the day because we are talking of inadequate food in the body, in adequate nutrients in the body that can help in fighting diseases.

Narrator : so what must be done to end or reduce stunting rate in Nkhotakota district and Malawi as a country?

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

There is a lot that needs to be done; we are talking of multisector approach whereby different sectors have been coming together fighting malnutrition. Malnutrition due its causes, it's a determination in nature, malnutrition can be caused by disease, malnutrition can be caused lack of food, we are talking are talking several ministries and several partners might pull resources together and implement those evidence based activities so that we, we must improve on malnutrition as district. For example, we are targeting, mostly when we want to reduce stunting, we are targeting women from conception to 2 years, that is from the time they get pregnancy to the time child is 2 years. So if we are to improve food nutrition, they are eating all six food groups and they are eating these groups in right quantities. What that means is the child who is going to be born, is not going to be stunted because the child will be well nourished from conception up to two years.

Narrator : lastly, as a district hospital, what are they doing to end or reduce stunting rate in Nkhotakota district and Malawi as a country?

INSERT : DISTRICT HOSPITAL NUTRITIONIST MR ULUNJI MEZUWA.

There is a lot that is being implemented, we have growth monitoring, we are monitoring the growth of the child, so that if the child defects we should put them on the program whereby they receive nutritious food commonly known as chiponde and or they receive soya bean flour as supplementary food while when the situation is more waste, they may receive milk formulas, the

idea behind is to manage malnutrition. At the same time we are also preventing malnutrition and the way of preventing malnutrition, we are doing community mobilization, we are mobilizing the community in Nkhotakota to take part in activities that are being done at community level, whereby at community level they do nutrition education, we have what we call care groups and these care groups comprises of 10 women who are looking after 10 households in their neighboring community, so what we are doing is they are teaching the women because they have been trained, so they are teaching the women and they are educating the households on how to preserve, process and how to feed the child, there are a lot of programs encouraging exclusive breast feeding whereby we say the child must be breast fed for the first six months, the child should in an inclusive breast fed, no water, so talking about the programs, we have a lot of programs in nutrition. We are not the only one players in the game, we also have ministry of agriculture, we have ministry of social welfare, we have community development, we have partners like concern worldwide, NASO these are the partners that are helping us. Malnutrition is real and it is everyone's fight, our country is not developing because of malnutrition, so I am encouraging all the people in Nkhotakota to take part in the program that we initiate.

INSERT MUSIC

Narrator: Dear listeners, Rural children are more likely to be stunted, about 48 percent than urban children which 41 percent every year. This is all what we had in today Phindu Mu Ulimi program. If you have any question and comment, please don't hesitate, send us SMS to 0995 038 111 or 0881 171 111.

Remember this segment is part of an audio series highlighting the importance of Communication as a major tool for Development. It has been produced with the support of the World Association of Community Broadcasters and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

I have been your host, John Kisewe Mpakani but do not forget to beep on the numbers; 0995 038 111 or 0881 171 111 to continue receiving messages nutrition, agriculture and climate change.

Goodbye!!!!