



Parenting

Module: Feeding our children



Help a Child (HAC) is a Christian, child-focused development organization working with local Partners in Asia and Africa. The Head-office is based in the Netherlands where the organization is known under the name Red een Kind (REK). Help a Child wants every child to have a loving and dignified existence and a promising future.

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Developed by Liesbeth Speelman, Marga Baaijens and Inge de Kroon, Child Development office, Help a Child, The Netherlands

For more information, please contact Help a Child

P.O. Box 40169

8004 DD Zwolle

The Netherlands

Phone: +3138 460 4648

Mail: childdevelopment@redeenkind.nl

Web: www.redeenkind.nl or www.helpachild.org

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| Information for the Facilitator

Goal of the Module

At the end of the module parents:

- will understand the value of nutritious food for children and know about the effects of malnutrition,
- have discussed about the food security status of their community and know better how to easily access nutritious food,
- and learn together in practice how to prepare more nutritious food for their children.

Introduction to the theme

Nutritious food is very important for healthy growth and development of children. In the first session parents will learn why children need nutritious food and how a healthy and balanced diet exactly looks like.

Many common sicknesses come from not eating enough or not balanced. A child who is weak or sick because it does not eat enough, or does not eat what the body needs, is suffering from *malnutrition*. The second session will focus on the signs and the harmful effects of malnutrition.

Often parents are not able to feed their children well. What are the reasons? How can we come up with solutions? How can we access nutritious food? Together with the parents we will try to find out in the third session.

Finally, this module will also help parents how to prepare healthy food for their children. With some examples of practical activities parents can encourage each other to prepare healthy meals.

Important to know

There are some exercises in the sessions that need some preparations. Read the key messages (resource information in the text boxes) carefully before you start the sessions and make sure this information is shared with the parents during the sessions. Information for this module is used from a guide for community mobilisers from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and social development of Uganda.¹

¹ Ministry of Gender, Labour and social development Uganda (2013), Community mobilization on food and nutrition security.

Session build up

Session Title	Content of the session
1. Good nutrition	Learning why children need good nutrition and what nutritious food is.
2. Malnutrition	Creating awareness on malnutrition and its risks.
3. Food security	Finding solutions to access easily and cheap nutritious food.
4. How to prepare healthy meals?	Put in practice what parents have learned.

Session 1: Good nutrition

Goal: To raise awareness on the importance of good nutrition for children and increase the knowledge on how a balanced diet looks like.

Materials: A flip chart, paper, markers, pencils

Duration: About 2 hours



| Introduction for the Facilitator

Introduction to the theme

Nutritious food is very important for healthy growth and development of children. In the first session parents will learn why children need nutritious food and how a healthy and balanced diet exactly looks like.

Important to know

Appreciate the answers of the parents and encourage everyone to participate. Prepare yourself well for this session, make sure you have read the key messages (text boxes) and be ready to answer the questions of parents about nutrition or knowing how to refer them in case you don't have the answers.

Textbox 1: Household Nutrition

- Good nutrition means eating the right food, at the right time, in the right amounts (quality and quantity) to ensure a balanced diet. It should be prepared in a clean, safe way and stored safely.
- To ensure good nutrition, household members need to eat a variety of foods from both crop and animal sources on a regular basis. These may include: animal sources such as chicken, goat, beef, liver, eggs, milk, fish (including mukene and nkejje), edible insects, and edible rats; staple foods like millet bread, matooke, and sorghum; other starchy foods like potato, pumpkin, posho, cassava, and rice; beans and lentils; vegetables of various colours such as carrots, nakati, dodo, and pumpkin leaves; and fruits such as mango, pawpaw, avocado, sweet banana, guava, and pineapple. Some foods can be produced by the household while others can be accessed through the market or community social support systems.
- It is good for all members of the family to participate in activities that contribute towards good nutrition.
- For good nutrition, a household needs to eat a combination of crop and animal-based foods whether produced or bought.
- It's important for infants 0–6 months of age to be fed breast milk because it contains what they need to grow and develop.
 - From 6 months to 2 years of age children should be given food in addition to breast milk. Gradually increase the amount and thickness of food and the number of meals a day as children get older.
 - From 6–8 months: 2 to 3 meals/day and 1 or 2 snacks if needed.
 - From 9–11 months: 3 to 4 meals/day and 1 or 2 snacks if needed.
 - 1–2 years: 3 to 4 meals/day and 1 or 2 snacks if needed.
 - From 2 to 5 years of age children should eat 3 meals and 2 snacks with increasing amounts as needed.
- Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers need to eat at least an extra meal each day.
- The sick may need to be fed more frequently per day from a variety of foods.

Textbox 2: Functions of food

Functions of food

- Food gives energy.
- It builds our body and helps in growth
- Builds immunity against diseases.

Nutrients:

1. **Protein:** Meat, Fish, Egg, pulses etc.
2. **Carbohydrate:** Rice, wheat, corn, etc.
3. **Fat:** Oil, Butter, etc.
4. **Vitamins:** Vitamin A, B, C, D, E, K
5. **Mineral salts**
6. **Water**

Balanced food is made up of proper proportion of different types of food which are required by the body. A balanced diet consists of food and nutrition which gives energy and prevention of diseases.

Food according to major functions:

A. Energy giving foods:

- i) Cereals like rice, wheat, corn and millets, sugar, molasses, potato, honey etc.
- ii) Fats like ghee, butter and oil.

B. Body building and repairing foods:

- a. Foods from animal origin like milk, eggs, fish and meat.
- b. Foods from vegetables origin like pulses, beans, and nuts.

C. Protective foods:

Vegetables-green-leafy type. Yellow and orange colored of fruits and vegetables, like carrots, papaya, tomato, lemon, lemon and mango.

| Exercises

Welcome

This is our first session of the module Feeding our Children from the Parenting series. Welcome everyone. We are very happy to see you again!

This module will be about food. Food is very important to us all. We like it and we can enjoy it a lot! Also for our children food is very important. We want to feed them enough and in a healthy way. A child who is well nourished, develops better and will less likely become ill. Sometimes it might not be easy to feed our children, because there is not enough food or find not enough variety of food. In this module we will explore the opportunities we have to feed our children in the best possible way.

In this first session we will look at why our children need healthy food. What if we feed them well? How does a healthy and balanced diet look like?

Before we really start, let's talk through our basic rules again to refresh. What is important to make sure the sessions will go on smoothly?

- Be there at every session. If you are not able to come, make sure people know and will inform you about what happened
- *(Bring up the rules you set up with the group at the very first gathering)*

Ok, now that we all know again what is being expected, we can really start. We will start with a small exercise to get to know what we and our families are usually eat during the day!



Exercise 1: What do we eat?

Time: about 10 minutes

1. Ask everyone to stand in a circle and take a ball to the center.
2. Explain that you will throw a ball to someone, naming a meal, for example, 'midday yesterday', 'last night' or 'breakfast today'.
3. The person catching the ball says what he or she ate, and immediately throws the ball to someone else, naming a different meal.
4. Keep the speed, play this game fast!

Feedback to the group

Well, this was our first exercise and we are now aware of the food we eat. What did you notice?



Exercise 2: Why do we need nutritious food?

Time: about 15 minutes

1. Divide the group in smaller groups of around 6 parents per group.
2. Ask the groups to discuss about the question: why do we need nutritious food?
3. Let the group brainstorm and write the answers down on paper.
4. Ask one person of each group to share the findings with the bigger group.

Feedback to the group

Now we know that we need food for different functions. Food creates heat and energy in our body, keeps the growth of the body, prevents diseases and as a whole makes our body fit.



Exercise 3: The different food groups

Time: about 20 minutes

1. Draw the picture of the next page on a big paper.
2. Explain the importance of every group: balanced food is made up of proper proportion of these different types of food which are required by the body. So every group is needed for a good health!
3. Explain the pyramid: we don't need the same quantity of every group.

Feedback to the group

In this exercise we have learned about the different food groups and nutrients. Do you have any questions? Was this new for you?

African Heritage Diet Pyramid



Illustration by George Middleton

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Exercise 4: What is nutritious food?

Time: 15 minutes

1. Ask to the group: what is a nutrient? (*A substance found in food that our bodies need for health every day*)
2. Write 'Nutrients' at the head on a flip chart with this definition underneath.
3. Ask: who can name some nutrients? (*Carbohydrates or energy foods; proteins or building and repair foods; fats for more energy, vitamins and minerals to protect from disease, water and fibre. Note that some nutrients, such as carbohydrates, are required in large quantities, while others, such as vitamins, are needed in smaller quantities.*)
4. Ask: how do we know what to eat? (*by dividing foods into groups that are associated with different nutrients*)
5. Ask: does each food group supply just one nutrient? (*No. Different groups supply mainly one nutrient, but most foods provide a mixture of nutrients.*)



Exercise 5: Draw a plate

Time: about 15 minutes

1. Draw a plate on the flip chart and ask the group what an ordinary meal looks like.
2. Draw the food on the plate.
3. Ask: what nutrients does this meal supply?
4. Ask: do we need changes to make this ordinary meal more nutritious? (*Vitamins and minerals?*)
5. What changes? Invite suggestions.
6. Draw a new plate with the suggestions. More variety? Good! Could we eat less staple food and eat something else instead?
7. Ask: do we need more protein? Yes! How can we get more protein? (*Chicken or rabbit, legumes and nuts*).

Feedback to the group

In this exercise we have talked about what we usually eat and if we need to change anything. Think for yourself: do I need to change something in the meals I usually prepare for my family? If yes, what need to be changed?



Exercise 6: Story about good nutrition

Time: about 45 minutes

1. Ask four participants to read the paragraph below.
2. Prepare the group to present a short play based on the paragraph. Alternatively, you may choose to go straight to the discussion of the key issues without the play.

A farmer named Oringo and his wife Akia are living with their three children. Oringo had participated in a training session. Oringo said that they always produced enough food from crops such as bananas, maize, beans, pumpkins, soybeans, a variety of fruits, and milk from cows (replace with related foods common in your area). But, before the training, he was selling all the milk and now he leaves some milk for the family to drink, especially the children. In addition, he used to buy a quarter kilo of beef each Saturday for himself, but now he buys two kilos so that all members of the family can eat it, and discusses food purchases with his wife, who cooks all the meals. Meanwhile Akia says that since the training, she has supplemented their crops with green and orange/red vegetables around the house. As the cook of the house, she makes sure the family is able to eat bananas (replace with any other local staple), vegetable crops grown by the family, and food from animals like meat, fish, eggs, and milk, some of which they buy. She is also careful to wash her hands before preparing or eating any food and feeding her children, and keeps raw meat away from cooked food. The family only drinks water that she pours from a clean, covered container that she treats with water guard. The man adds that since this enlightenment, he has noticed that the children have not been sick, are happier and active, and have improved in their academic performance.

3. Ask the parents to reflect on the story and follow up with these questions:
 - a. What have you learnt/noticed in the story?
 - b. What specific points in the story show that the household eats a number of different foods?
 - c. How do the household members look? Are there signs that they 'eat well'?
 - d. Why do you think they find it possible to eat a number of different foods?
 - e. Apart from food, what good practices can be said about this household?

Closure

Thank you everyone for working together today. We have talked and learned a lot about food. I hope to see you for the next session which will be about malnutrition and its effects. Till then!

Close the gathering with a song, dance or prayer.

| Homework

Until we have a next session, have a look at the food you prepare for the family. Do you think the food is nutritious? Why? And if not, why not? How can you make the food more nutritious?

The next session will be about malnutrition.

Close the session by thanking the participants and remind them about the date, time and venue of the next session.

Session 2: Malnutrition

- Goal:** Creating awareness on malnutrition and its risks.
- Materials:** A flipchart, markers, pencils
- Duration:** About 2 hours



| Introduction for the Facilitator

Introduction to the theme

Many common sicknesses come from not eating enough or not balanced enough. A child who is weak or sick because it does not eat enough, or does not eat what the body needs, is suffering from *malnutrition*. This second session will focus on the harmful effects of malnutrition. What if a child does not eat enough or doesn't eat what the body needs? How can we see a child is malnourished?

Important to know

Appreciate the answers of the parents and encourage everyone to participate. Prepare yourself well for this session, make sure you have read the key messages (text boxes) and be ready to answer the questions of parents about malnutrition or knowing how to refer them in case you don't have the answers.

Textbox 3: What is Malnutrition?

Malnutrition is a condition that develops when the body does not get the right amount and kinds of food needed to stay healthy.

- Acute malnutrition is when a person is very thin (also called wasting or low weight for-height) because they are not eating enough food or because of sickness. People with acute malnutrition may also have two swollen feet. Children with severe acute malnutrition are at high risk of death and need urgent medical care.
- Chronic malnutrition happens when a person has had long-term lack of food or repeated illness that has affected their growth, so they are short for their age (called stunting). Stunting can begin in the womb, and children are at the highest risk of stunting from within the womb until they are 2 years of age. Once children have lost growth, it is hard to correct, especially after 2. It should then be prevented with a healthy diet and good medical care.
- Micronutrient deficiencies occur when people do not eat enough food with the right quantity and type of vitamins and minerals, or their body does not absorb the vitamins and minerals. This makes them more likely to get sick and may hurt children's growth and brain development. Eating many different foods like animal flesh (such as beef, goat, chicken, liver), beans & nuts, red and orange fruits & vegetables and iodized salt will help.

Textbox 4: Causes of Malnutrition

Household food insecurity

- Poor access to different foods, not enough variety of foods, and low agricultural production Not eating enough food or different kinds of food
- Eating fewer times than needed
- Eating too many staples and not enough vegetables, fruits, and animal foods like eggs, meat, dairy, and fish
- Not enough money to buy different types of food
- Not enough money to pay for health care
- Inadequate access to good land for farming
- Unable to afford planting and stocking materials Inadequate care for mothers and children
- High daily workload for women resulting in not enough time for nutrition and health needs
- Limited knowledge on good nutrition and caring practices
- Having frequent pregnancies very close together

Poor access to health care and healthy environment

- Poor sanitation and hygiene, increasing risk of illness
- Poor food handling practices, increasing risk of illness
- Poor access to health care and nutrition support services
- Not seeking health care when necessary illnesses (chronic and others)
- Poor appetite and not eating enough food when sick, even though the body needs more food to fight illness
- Unable to properly absorb/use the food eaten when sick
- Too weak to grow own food when sick
- Cost of managing illness, which reduces money that would have been used to produce food or buy it in the market

Textbox 5: Consequences of Malnutrition

Sickness and death

- Malnourished mothers are more likely to have low birth-weight babies
- Such babies are more likely to be sick and are more likely to die from illness than well-nourished babies and children
- Not having enough blood (anaemia), which is associated with malnutrition and affects many women and children, can lead to death
- Increased chances of loss of pregnancy (spontaneous abortion), pre-mature births, and still births
- Children who are malnourished are also more likely to get sick and more likely to die from sickness
- Malnourished people are weak and may not have as much energy to work in agriculture as well-nourished people
- Malnourished individuals get sick more often, and during time of their illness they may not be able to work
- Other household members will have less time to work as they spend time looking after the sick or dealing with death and its effects

Poverty

- Money that would have otherwise been invested is spent on managing malnutrition and associated illnesses
- Severe malnutrition itself is a disease which is expensive to manage/treat
- Households have less income because they have less time and energy to spend on farming
- Malnourished individuals are generally less productive

Poor education outcomes

- Malnourished children miss classes because they are weak and sick
- Malnourished children have trouble concentrating in class
- Malnourished children are more likely to repeat classes or drop out of school

Poor mental and intellectual ability

- Malnutrition starting in the womb to 2 years of life (known as the first 1,000 days) leads to poor and irreversible mental and physical development of an individual

Exercises

Welcome and recap

Welcome everyone! It's good to see you all again! Last time we have talked about nutritious food and how this looks like. In this session we will learn about malnutrition. What does it mean when a child is malnourished? How do we know if a child is malnourished? What are the causes and what are the effects?



Exercise 1: Discussing our homework

Time: 10 minutes

1. Our last session was about nutritious food. Did you observe the food you were preparing for your family since then?
2. What did you eat? What did you observe?
3. Do you think the food is nutritious? Why? And if not, why not? How can you make the food more nutritious?

Feedback to the group

Thank you for sharing your findings! That was very interesting! It is very important to be aware of what we eat and ask ourselves: do we need to improve to make the meals more nutritious?



Exercise 2: What is malnutrition?

Time: 15 minutes

1. Explain the text in textbox 3 (what is malnutrition?) to the group. You can use the flipchart to write down some keywords.
2. Ask the parents to formulate questions while they are listening.
3. After reading the text, ask if they have questions about this information.
4. Try to let the other parents answer the questions which are raised.

Feedback to the group

In this exercise we have heard about malnutrition. We see that many common sicknesses come from not eating enough. A child who is weak or sick because it does not eat enough, or does not eat what the body needs, is therefore suffering from *malnutrition*.

In the next exercise we will discover how you can know when a child is malnourished.



Exercise 3: How to recognize malnutrition

Time: 15 minutes

1. Ask the group: how can we know when a child is malnourished?

2. Write the answers of the parents on a big paper.
 3. Try to make the list as long as possible.
 4. Make sure these problems are mentioned:
 - Failure of a child to grow or gain weight normally
 - Slowness in walking, talking or thinking
 - Big bellies, thin arms and legs
 - Common illnesses and infections that last longer, are more severe, and more often cause death
 - Lack of energy, child is sad, and does not play
 - Swelling of feet, face and hands
 - Thinning, straightening, or loss of hair, or loss of its color and shine
 - Poor vision at night, dryness of eyes, blindness
 - Loss of appetite
 - Anemia
 - Sores in the corners of the mouth
-

Feedback to the group

Now we know how we can see if a child is malnourished. Do you think children in our community might be malnourished? Why, or why not?



Exercise 4: Causes and effects of malnutrition

Time: 30 minutes

1. Split the group in two groups of parents.
 2. Give each group a big paper.
 3. Ask the first group: write down the possible causes of malnutrition (why is the child not eating enough or not balanced enough, what are the reasons?)
 4. Ask the second group: write down the possible effects of malnutrition.
 5. Ask one member of each group to present their findings to the bigger group.
 6. You can check the information in text box 4 and 5 to give additional information when important factors are not mentioned by the parents.
-

Feedback to the group

During the presentations it became clear that malnutrition can have many causes. It is often not because of one reason only when we are not able to feed the children well. Often the different causes are also linked to each other. Malnutrition has also many effects. Of course in the first place it effects the health of the child, but also to their education and in the long run on the opportunities to make a living for themselves.



Exercise 5: Story about malnutrition

Time: 45 minutes

1. Ask four participants to read the following paragraph. Prepare the group to present a short play based on the paragraph. Alternatively you may choose to read the story for the group and go straight to the discussion of the key issues without the play.

Last week a social worker visited a village and went to the home of Tadaaki and his wife Jacintha. Tadaaki's wife said that she is responsible for producing millet, simsim, and beans (replace with crops of the same category applicable to your area). There is not enough produced for the food needs of their family of six children and themselves and, as such, there is nothing to sell. This is made harder by the little land that the family possesses. The man said that he has nothing to do with growing crops and, as a group employee of the nearby secondary school, he earns money that he uses to go to the bar daily and also buy a kilo of beef for the family once a week. In the middle of the conversation, four children who were playing around the compound, near where the neighbors' goats and chickens walk, came closer and asked for a drink of water. Tadaaki dipped a cup into an uncovered bin of water and gave it to the children to share. One of the children belongs to Tadaaki and his wife and the rest belong to his brothers. Upon asking about the ages of these children, the extension worker learnt that three of them, including Tadaaki's are four years old, the difference between them being a few weeks. But Tadaaki's child has curly sparse brown hair, looks weak and smaller than the rest, and falls sick often. The social worker seeks to know what Tadaaki's family typically eats and is told the family eats one meal a day of mostly millet and beans but they are in small quantity.

2. Ask the parents to reflect on the story and follow up with these questions:
 - a. What have you learnt/noticed in the story?
 - b. What specific points in the story show that the household eats only a few types of foods?
 - c. How do the members or some of the members look? Are there signs that they don't 'eat well'?
 - d. In a household are there members who are likely to eat less well than others?
 - e. What causes some households to not 'eat well'?
 - f. Apart from malnutrition, are there any signs of bad or risky practices in the household?
 - g. What do you think are the consequences of 'bad eating'?
 - h. At the household level, what can be done to address malnutrition?
 - i. At the community level, what can be done to address malnutrition (refer to your action plan)?

Closure

Close the session with this caution:

The time when a child is most likely to become malnourished is from 6 months to 2 years old. This is because breast milk by itself does not provide enough energy for a baby 6 months of age. For a child of this age to be healthy we should:

- Keep feeding him/her breast milk, as much as before
- Feed him/her other nutritious food also, always starting with just a little
- Feed him/her at least 5 times a day and give her healthy snacks between the meals
- Make sure the food is clean freshly prepared
- Filter, boil, or purify the water he/she drinks.
- Keep the child and her surroundings clean
- When the child gets sick, feed him/her extra well, and more often, and give him/her plenty of liquids to drink.

Close the gathering with a song, dance or prayer.

| Homework

The next session will be about food security. Try to formulate questions in advance on food security and take these questions to the next session. Let's find out together if we can answer the questions!

Close the session by thanking the participants and remind them about the date, time and venue of the next session.

Session 3: Food security

Goal: Creating awareness on the food security status of the community and finding solutions to access easily and cheap nutritious food.

Materials: Flip chart, big paper, markers, pencils

Duration: About 2 hours



| Introduction for the Facilitator

Introduction to the theme

Often parents are not able to feed their children well. What are the reasons? How can we come with solutions? How can we access cheap and easily nutritious food? Together with the parents we will try to find out in the third session.

Important to know

Appreciate the answers of the parents and encourage everyone to participate. Prepare yourself well for this session, make sure you have read the key messages (text boxes) and be ready to answer the questions of parents about malnutrition or knowing how to refer them in case you don't have the answers.

Textbox 6: Food Security at the Household Level

- Food security means that a household has enough quality food for the household to eat at all times. Households are food secure when they have year-round access to the amount and variety of safe foods their members need to eat to lead active and healthy lives.
- Food security can be achieved through a household's own production, buying food, exchanging non-food for food items, or any other means available and acceptable in the community.

The definition of food security is based on three important pillars:

- food availability
- food access
- food utilization.

Food availability in a country, region or local area means that food is physically present because it has been grown, manufactured, imported and/or transported there. This is food that is visible and in the area.

Food access is the way different people can obtain the available food. Normally we access food through a combination of home production, stocks, purchase, barter, gifts, borrowing or food aid. Food access is ensured when communities and households and all individuals within them have adequate resources, such as money, to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.

Food utilization is the way people use the food and is dependent on the quality of the food, its preparation and storage method, nutritional knowledge, as well as on the health status of the individual consuming the food.



Textbox 7: Effects of Food Insecurity

- Domestic conflict/violence due to stress on the household
- Children may leave school to find work or income to buy food
- Families may sell household assets to buy food, leaving them more vulnerable
- Some families may find it tempting to eat some or all of the seed if they don't have enough food, which reduces production in the coming season
- Environmental degradation as affected families encroach on wetlands and forests, which further complicates the food situation
- Family and communal conflicts over land that is viewed as public
- Family or community conflicts resulting from food insecure households stealing from food secure households
- Family members traveling out of the community to look for work
- Inability to work because individuals are malnourished

Textbox 8: Causes of Food Insecurity

Low agricultural productivity

- Poor methods of farming
- Inefficient production technologies
- Low-quality planting and stocking materials
- Inadequate knowledge and information
- Sickness leading to loss of valuable labour
- Land degradation
- Low soil fertility and quality
- Poor post-harvest and storage practices and facilities

For livestock: disease, lack of access to vet services, theft/raiding

Climate/weather/environment

- Drought, floods, and other natural disasters
- Environmental degradation Emphasis on market-oriented production
- Selling most food produced in the market and income not invested in alternative food
- Cash crops grown at the expense of food crops and income not invested in food

Low levels of education/literacy

- Limited information on farming
- Lack of confidence to seek relevant advice and support
- Low pace of adoption of efficient methods and technologies of production

Textbox 9: Causes of Food Insecurity

Traditional beliefs and practices

- Cultural beliefs that food production is the domain of women
- Restrictions on certain foods for children and women
- Cultures in which men eat first (if food is not adequate this will negatively impact the rest of the household)
- In female-headed households, lower literacy among women, higher burden of work, and lower income
- Limited rights for widow who may lose access to land
- Land ownership, control, and access mainly dominated by men

Land shortage and/or fragmentation

- Very little land available for food production
- Large families without matching resources coupled with lack of family planning
- Limited family investment in farming

Domestic violence

- Physical and emotional trauma that affects women's ability to work, care for themselves and others
- Depression, helplessness
- If spouses separate: living costs become more expensive, making it harder to provide enough food

Poverty

- Not enough money to invest in farming
- Need to sell surplus harvest right away, when prices are lower
- Poor attitude by some members of the community towards work and farming
- Not enough money to buy food to make up for shortage in production

Death or incapacity of parents/adults/caregivers

- Child-headed households are vulnerable

Rural-urban migration

- Households are deprived of agricultural labour

Exercises

Welcome and recap

Welcome everyone! It's good to see you all again! Last time we have learned at malnutrition, and today we are going to talk about food security.

Let me first explain a bit about food security. What do we mean with it?

Read textbox 6 for the group of parents and ask if they have any questions. Use a flipchart to write keywords.



Exercise 1: Raising questions on food security

Time: 10 minutes

1. Ask the parents if they have formulated questions about food security (homework).
2. Write the questions on a big paper and let them be visible during this whole session.
3. Do not try to answer the questions by now.
4. At the end of this session (exercise 5) you will discuss the questions with the parents.

Feedback to the group:

Ok, this was our first exercise. We might have a lot of questions about the food security in our community. At the end of this session we are hopefully able to answer the questions!



Exercise 2: Story about food security

Time: 40 minutes

1. Select four people to read the paragraph below. After they read the paragraph, have them act it out in a short play. Alternatively, you may choose to go straight to the discussion of the key issues without the play.

A community mobiliser has a discussion with a man and a woman who introduce themselves as husband and wife. After greeting each other, they tell him that on this particular day they have no breakfast and lunch but are going to have supper later in the day. On seeking to understand why, the wife tells the mobiliser that even though they have more than five acres of land, only a small portion has been allocated for food production and she single-handedly produces bananas, potatoes, and beans (replace these with crops applicable in your area). Most of the harvest is sold by the husband. He spends the income from crop sales on some household necessities, but also beer and other non-essential items, and the household does not have enough food. The man confirms this and says it is the responsibility of the woman to provide food for the family. He further justifies allocation of a small portion for food production reasoning that the rest of the land is meant for coffee (replace with a cash crop relevant to the area) to get money for beer.

2. Ask the parents to reflect on the story and follow up with these questions:
 - a. What is this story about?
 - b. What have you learnt/noticed in the story? Are there specific points in the story that show that the household does not have enough food?
 - d. What is the effect of leaving household food production to only women?
 - e. Are there members of the household who are more likely to have less food than others? Why?
 - f. If the household does not produce and/or access enough food, what are the likely effects? (see textbox 2 for additional info)
 - g. How can household members, including men, support food production and/or access to food so that it is a shared responsibility?



Exercise 3: Talk about food security status of our community

Time: 40 minutes

1. Use the following discussion guide and flip chart to conduct a dialogue:
 - a. What food do you mainly eat in your home?
 - b. How is it acquired?
 - c. Who in the household participates in producing this food?
 - d. How much is produced?
 - e. Does the food you produce take you to the next harvest?
 - f. Do some families keep livestock?
 - g. If so which animals? What are they used for?
 - h. Do the foods you eat in your home form a balanced diet?
 - i. If not, what are the likely consequences for children, women, and families?
 - j. If not, what are the causes? (see textbox 3 for additional info)
 - k. What can we do to produce and consume a balanced diet in our households?
 - l. As a community, what actions can be undertaken to promote food security?

Feedback to the group

Thank you for this discussion! This was really good, now we have a better idea of the food security status of our community. We also talked about the causes and what we possibly can do as parents and as community as a whole.



Exercise 4: Questions answered

Time: 10 minutes

1. Look at the questions we have formulated in exercise 1 on food security.
2. Are all questions answered?
3. Which are not yet answered? Can we try to answer them as a group?

Close the gathering with a song, dance or prayer.

| Homework

Close the session by thanking the participants. The next session will be about doing activities together as a group. Explain the different options of activities. Let the parents decide what they would like to do together. Let them choose if they would like to do one or more or even other activities. Most important is that parents feel they are able to make nutritious and to share a good time with each other. To avoid any misunderstanding, make clear that parents themselves are responsible for any costs involved (travelling, food etc.). Try to settle the dates.

Session 4: How to prepare healthy meals?



Goal: To put in practice what we have learned: to prepare a healthy meal for our family.

Duration: About 2 hours

| Introduction

Introduction to the theme

It is important that what you learned so far will be put in practice. In this session you can choose an activity (or do them all!) to make it happen, bind the group together, and to enjoy nutritious food!

| Exercises

Welcome and recap

Welcome back everyone! Welcome to the last session of this module about Nutrition. We have heard a lot about nutrition in the former sessions. With this session we are going to put in practice what we have learned. Let us enjoy together!



Exercise 1: Kitchen garden

1. Go and visit a family in the community with a kitchen garden (if there is any).
2. Let the parents ask questions to that family: what is needed for a kitchen garden, how to maintain it, what are the costs and the benefits?
3. Encourage parents to think about to start a kitchen garden as well.



Exercise 2: To the market

1. Try to find a date to go the market together as parents group.
2. During the visit, discuss together what is healthy, what is not healthy.
3. Try to buy something which is healthy and you have never bought before.
4. During the visit you can exchange ideas on how to prepare the food.
5. Maybe someone knows a nice recipe? 😊



Exercise 3: Create a meal together

1. Try to find a date to cook a healthy meal for each other as families.
2. Try to encourage new things they have learned in this module.
3. Every parent can cook the normal quantity of food as normal, ask them to bring it to the group meeting.
4. Put the different kind of prepared foods on a large table.
5. Every member of the family, including the children, can choose whatever he/she likes!
6. Bon appetite! Enjoy your meal!

Closure

I think it was a good decision to go for this module. We have learned a lot about nutrition. You know there are more modules we can follow. We would love to see you all back for the next module.

Close the gathering with a song, dance or prayer.

Group Evaluation

At the end of the module, evaluate the module together with the parents. Discuss these questions below and write down the answers that come forward.

- 1. What have you learned from this module?**
- 2. Did you miss anything? What else would you have liked to learn about this theme?**
- 3. Do you already use something you have learned in this module in your daily life? If so, how and what were the results? If not, what is keeping you from using it?**
- 4. What can you do after this module as parents in your family?**

5. Question for all parents: what can you do after this module as a group?

Other comments:

Please share this document with the Child Development Desk: childdevelopment@redeenkind.nl. We want to hear about your experiences so we can optimize the Parenting Modules.