

Nutrition International - Kenya - Vitamin A supplementation

Programme: Nutrition International - Kenya

Programme Data

Programme Description

Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) is a public health problem all around the world, affecting more than 100 countries [1]. A lack of vitamin A weakens the immune system, putting a child at greater risk of disease and early death; and it is also the leading cause of preventable child blindness. The solution for correcting vitamin A deficiency lies in improving the child's diet through increased consumption of vitamin A-rich foods, naturally rich or commercially fortified foods such as processed oils or sugar.

In countries where this remains a public health problem, and while food-based solutions are gradually being implemented and scaled-up to reach those populations, giving children 6 to 59 months of age two doses of vitamin A per year can impact a child's health. Specifically, the range of impact on deaths averted can range from a lower bound cause-specific effect size of 28% (diarrheal deaths averted) to an upper bound of 12%-24% all-cause mortality reduction [2].

Nutrition International is committed to supporting vitamin A supplement (VAS) programs for children 6 to 59 months of age in settings where VAD is a public health problem, as one of the most cost-effective ways to improve child survival.

The main aims of Nutrition International (NI)'s VAS program in Kenya are to:

- Support the government with provision of donated Vitamin A Capsule (VAC) supplies through the In-Kind Assistance Program.
- Provide technical assistance on a national level for the revision of key policy, guidelines and strategy documents through participation in the VAS Technical Working Group.
- Provide support to select counties to improve capacity of country level health teams to implement the biannual child health day (named *Malezi Bora*) strategy, and optimize the necessary outreach services for high coverage such as VAS delivery at early childhood development centres (ECDs).

These activities are being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Health Division of Family Health, the VAS Technical Working Group which includes the MOH and VAS stakeholders including NI and UNICEF. This work is being completed on a national level and on a sub-national level by providing targeted support to 25 counties, selected for their recurrent low VAS coverage. NI support to Kenya's VAS program began in 1999 and is ongoing.

Program type

National

References

[1] WHO. (2013). Micronutrient deficiencies. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/vad/en/>

[2] Imdad A, Herzer, K, Mayo-Wilson E, Yakoob MY, Bhuta ZA. [Vitamin A supplementation for preventing morbidity and mortality in children from 6 months to 5 years of age](#). Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2010, Issue 12.

For more information:

- <https://www.nutritionintl.org/what-we-do/by-micronutrient/micronutrientv...>
- <https://www.nutritionintl.org/about/contact-us/>

Implementing organisations

- Government
 - Health
 - Women, children, families
 - Details:

more
Ministry of Health, Division of Family Health

Funding sources

- UN agencies
 - United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- International NGOs
 - Nutrition International
 - Other
 - Details:
more
MAP International
- Bilateral and donor agencies and lenders
 - Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

Action data

Start date
Country(ies): Kenya
Topic: Vitamin A supplementation

Typical problems **Solutions**

Links to policies in GINA

[National Nutrition Action Plan 2012-2017](#)
[National Plan of Action for Nutrition](#)
[Child survival and Development Strategy](#)
[National Food and Nutrition Security Policy](#)