

Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems

INNOVATION SUMMARY: SOCIAL & BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING ASF CONSUMPTION

The innovation is a strategy aimed at changing behaviors to increase consumption of animal-source food (ASF) by children aged 12-42 months and pregnant and lactating women. Behavior change messaging targeted to mothers and caregivers is a key way to increase ASF consumption, especially milk. Communicating compelling ASF messages through various channels (interpersonal and print) will result in behavior change that will increase dietary diversity and reduce stunting.



INNOVATION QUICK FACTS

Lead Implementing Institution: International Livestock Research Institute



Category: Cultural Practice



Applied in: Rwanda



Innovation Type: Practice



New/Adapted: Adapted



Created for: Women & Men



Nutrition Linkage: Consumption

THE PROBLEM & ITS IMPORTANCE

In Rwanda, chronic malnutrition among young children remains high. Only 29% of children meet the minimum dietary diversity requirements and only 21% consume fresh, powdered, or tinned milk. After conducting formative research on barriers and facilitators to proper maternal and child feeding practices, especially dietary diversity and consumption of milk, a social and behavior change communication (SBCC) strategy was developed. It aims to (1) increase knowledge and awareness about milk and animal-source foods and (2) promote optimal behaviours related to the consumption of ASF, especially milk, by children aged 12-42 months and their mothers.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Social and behavior change communication (SBCC) related to ASF consumption in households that received a cow through the Government of Rwanda's Girinka program may boost consumption of milk and other ASF. Alongside SBCC, ASF value chain actors should work toward improving the quality, availability, and accessibility of ASF. Stronger ASF value chains together with SBCC to increase consumption of and demand for ASF will lead to reductions in childhood malnutrition and improvements in maternal and child health, ultimately improving national workforce health and productivity.

APPLICATION OF THE INNOVATION

Social and behavior change communication strategies should be context specific and they should include different communication channels; target audiences; barriers, facilitators, and desired changes; positioning and key messages; and implementation and monitoring and evaluation plans.

The strategy developed for this study can be implemented throughout Rwanda among families participating in the Government of Rwanda's Girinka ("One Cow per Poor Family") program. Community health workers, health clinic staff and non-governmental organizations can implement the strategy in families with young children to achieve the desired outcomes.