



Development of Integrated Nutrition Messages for Schools

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Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are prevalent among schoolchildren in Bangladesh, causing poor school performance and compromised nutritional and health outcomes. Available estimates corroborate the prevailing double burden of malnutrition, both in girls and boys. The school environment offers promising opportunities to communicate integrated nutrition messages to groups of students, parents, teachers and the larger population. Nutrition education can improve knowledge, behaviour and practices with optimal nutrition effects. Healthy diets and nutrition are also influenced by hygienic practices, adequate physical activity and healthy environment. Educational messages thus should be bundled into a package for motivating schoolchildren to adopt healthy food behaviour and life style.



BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health undertook the study under the Ministry of Food, Government of Bangladesh with the support of FAO and European Union. The integrated nutrition messages were generated by reviewing the existing textbooks/curricula of different grades of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) under the Ministry of Education and relevant nutrition policies, and evidence obtained from key informant interviews, knowledge assessment, comprehension and aesthetics of the messages and trials of improved practices among students, parents, and teachers. A set of impactful, culturally-appropriate pictorial and narrative messages on **having at least five food groups daily of the globally recommended ten food groups; functions of food groups; drinking adequate water; washing hands with soap before eating and after defecation; wearing sandals or shoes at appropriate places; brushing teeth twice a day; trimming nails; daily bathing; cleansing households; sleeping adequately; participating in sports and physical activity; and planting trees in the household or community** were developed. Overall, the messages are concise, integrated and are detailed in two pages with pictorial images and narrative illustrations.

The draft integrated nutrition messages were arranged in a logical sequence to be conveyed to the students according to their age following the suggestions of the key informants. Comprehension and Aesthetic tests were also carried out among students, mothers, and teachers, which helped fine-tuning the messages. Thereafter, the developed messages were modified and finalised based on the feedback of the members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The final integrated nutrition messages were a set of simple, practical, and culturally appropriate

regardless of the age of students. A two-week pre and post-tests trials of improved practices was carried out to validate the newly framed integrated nutrition messages among the students. Findings of the study suggested that sensitisation on the integrated nutrition messages improved both knowledge and practices on healthy diet and lifestyle among the students of different grades.

The students encompassed classes pre-primary to 10, segregated into three groups. The first group included pre-primary to class-2, the second group from class-3 to class-7 and the third group from class-8 to class-10. The content of the integrated messages was thematically the same across the three groups such as, **healthy diets, nutrition, immunity, sanitation and hygiene, lifestyle and environment**. The set of thematic messages was logically developed with progressive addition of contents for students of primary, middle, and high school. The comprehensiveness of the narratives in the messages increased considering the cohorts from lower to higher groups, and the images were matched according to the age and learning ability of the student groups.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

- Simple, practical, and culturally appropriate messages on integrated nutrition issues can serve as some of the keys to educate and motivate students and parents for fostering good food habits, eating healthier diets, and practicing sustainable lifestyles.
- Reinforcing the messages on the visible pages of the textbooks by the NCTB might prove to be an effective way to bring about changes in nutrition knowledge and practices among the students
- The integrated messages could also be communicated in schools through digital media, posters, cartoons, and other web-based platforms.
- The integrated messages, which are applicable to all school age groups, can be suitably implemented by the different ministries of the government especially National Nutrition Services of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, non-governmental organisations, UNICEF and development partners through various platforms to reach out to the same population cohorts across national and sub-national levels.

Integrated Nutrition Messages for Group 1 (Pre-primary to Class 2)



Integrated Nutrition Messages for Group 2 (Class 3-7)



সম্মিত পুষ্টি বাতী

স্বাস্থ্যকর খাদ্য, পুষ্টি এবং জল সেবিতকরণ কয়ডা

- পুষ্টিগত পুষ্টি ও সঠিক খাদ্যের, খেপকুটিয়ে ও জল পীতকর খাদ্যকরণ থেকে পীতকর পুষ্টি পুষ্টিগত ১০ বছরের খাদ্যের থেকে ও খাদ্যের খাদ্যের পুষ্টি
- জেড পুষ্টিগত খাদ্যের সঠিক পুষ্টি খাদ্যের পুষ্টি ও খাদ্যেরপুষ্টি এবং পুষ্টি খাদ্যের জেড পুষ্টিগতকরণ পুষ্টি পুষ্টি
- পুষ্টিগত ১-১১ পুষ্টি পুষ্টি

শিক্ষণ জল ও পুষ্টিগত-পুষ্টিগত

- পুষ্টি পুষ্টি ও পুষ্টিগত জল পুষ্টি পুষ্টি
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