WASH & Nutrition: Successes, Challenges, and Implications for Integration

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Outline

• **Background**
  – WASH & nutrition activities
  – Evidence from the literature

• **Methods**
  – Participant demographics
  – Coding & analysis

• **Results**
  – Barriers to integration
  – Needs for integration

• **Discussion**
Background
Nutrition

- Nutrient supplements
  - Micronutrients
  - Food fortification
- Dietary diversification
- Exclusive breastfeeding
- Infant and young child feeding
- Ready to use therapeutic foods (RUTF)
Source: Wikimedia Commons
Evidence from the Literature

• Cyclical relationship

  – Lack of WASH increases undernutrition through diarrheal disease and environmental enteropathy (Checkley et al. 2008; Lin et al. 2013)

  – Undernutrition is a risk factor for infection and diarrheal disease (Walker et al. 2013)
Figure 1. The “vicious cycle” of enteropathogens, malnutrition, and impaired childhood development, and multifaceted opportunities for intervention.

http://www.plosntd.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pntd.0002125
• Both are necessary to achieve improved child health outcomes

• Most effective interventions combine nutrition with infection control and prevention (Dewey & Mayers 2011)
Objective

• To explore the integration of WASH and nutrition programming in order to identify barriers to and necessary steps for successful integration of WASH and nutrition programs.
Methods
Qualitative Interviews

- Conducted 16 in-depth, semi-structured interviews
- Interviewees purposively recruited from 10 organizations
- Nineteen invitations sent (84% response rate)
- Interviews conducted between October-December 2013
- Interviews in person, over the phone, and over Skype
Participants’ Areas of Expertise

- **WASH** - 7 (44%)
- Nutrition - 7 (44%)
- Behavior Change - 1 (6%)
- Integrated Rural Development - 1 (6%)
Coding and Analysis

• All interviews transcribed, de-identified, coded and analyzed using NVivo 10
• Revealed emerging themes through grounded theory
• In total, 74 codes were created, under 7 categories:
  – Barriers to integration
  – Ideal integration
  – Integrated projects
  – Levels of integration
  - Needs for integration
  - Nexuses for integration
  - Plans for integration
Results
Entry Points

- WASH access at health and nutrition facilities
- Hand and food hygiene
- Infant and young child feeding and hygiene/clean water
- Baby WASH
- Water fetching and care practices
- Harmonize WASH and nutrition messaging to promote the same behaviors
- Coordination between sectors to co-target communities
- Nutrition education in WASH projects
- Inclusion of malnourished in WASH projects
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>14 (87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>13 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>13 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>10 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>9 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors</td>
<td>9 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>8 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>8 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-faceted sectors</td>
<td>6 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>5 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community health workers</td>
<td>5 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>4 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>4 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries’ knowledge</td>
<td>3 (19%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff

• Low capacity and/or interest

   “Sometimes...people are just doing what they know how to do best. And so they just focus on their work and [are] not...looking at the bigger picture.”
Funding

• Siloed funding streams

– “You get specific types of funding, and then when you get that funding there are restrictions on what you are and are not allowed to use it for.”
Knowledge

• Lack of training and knowledge sharing among sectors
  – “It’s amazing to find out how little those who work in WASH might know about nutrition and how little people in nutrition know about WASH.”

• Lack of strategy for integration
  – “I think we don’t know the highest value times or...how to prioritize...I don’t know that we know the value of the different behaviors and the different interventions.”
• Little evidence on impact of integrated programs
  – “We don’t have any evidence at the moment, in my opinion, that clearly tells this is the impact you could get from sanitation, this is the impact you could get from nutrition, and if you combine them, this is the impact level.”

• Insufficient examples of successful integration
Time

- **Lack of extra time on the part of program staff**
  - “And then you have issues with, for example, health staff who have a million things to do and don’t have time to appropriately consult...WASH isn’t even on their radar.”

- **Short funding cycles**
  - “Our development projects usually aren’t that long and we know it takes a little bit longer to make any change to behaviors.”
Identified needs for integration by study participants in 16 in-depth interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>13 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>11 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>9 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>8 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>8 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>7 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>5 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time</td>
<td>5 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>4 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation criteria</td>
<td>4 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>2 (13%)</td>
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Strategy

• Defined method for integrating programs

  – “Step by step, this is what it means, this is what it will look like, and this is how it can be implemented on the ground.”
Coordination

• An enabling environment for collaboration, not competition

   “We would not see the different sectors as standing on their own...you need to bring in people from other sectors so that they can see things from different angles.”
Funding

• Integrated funding streams

• Donor support and encouragement
  – “Donor directives, donors allowing more integrated programming and providing funding for more integrated programming, that will be a very strong driver.”
Evidence

• Operational research to demonstrate impact of integrated programs

• Examples of successfully integrated programs
  – “You can have a model of how it would work and people would be using it instead of...figur[ing] out how to do it yourself.”
Leadership

- Champions to lead the effort

- Approval from program leadership
  - “You have to have leadership that understands the importance and is willing to...have their staff spend more time than anticipated on the coordination that’s required.”
Current methods of integration specified by participants in 16 in-depth interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Messaging</td>
<td>16 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior change programs</td>
<td>11 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target same beneficiaries</td>
<td>11 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-training</td>
<td>7 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>4 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>3 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated teams</td>
<td>3 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated meetings</td>
<td>2 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint monitoring</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
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Discussion
Implications for Integration

- Operational research
- Integrate funding streams where appropriate
- Improve knowledge sharing
- Design incentives for sectors to work in collaboration
Thank you!

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