

Pwani Lishe Bora

P R O J E C T

Newsletter

Issue 1 Vol. 1



ENHANCING MATERNAL AND CHILD
HEALTH IN MOMBASA COUNTY



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H.E Ali Hassan Joho, Governor of Mombasa, officiating the launch of the Pwani Lishe Bora Project in 2016 accompanied by Nutrition stakeholders in the county

Launch of the Pwani Lishe Bora Project

Nutrition is often termed a maker and marker of development, yet often receive little attention in the national and counties agendas. Malnutrition is a major public health concern in Mombasa County, with the last four consecutive demographic health surveys projecting poor indicators for stunting, wasting and underweight compared to the National statistics.

According to UNICEF in their publication, *Progress for Children*, Undernutrition, particularly in children, is a vice locked around humanity, preventing individuals and even whole societies from achieving their full potential. Children who are undernourished have lowered resistance to infections and are more likely to die from common childhood ailments such as diarrhea and respiratory infections. Those who survive may be locked into a vicious cycle of recurring sickness and faltering growth, often with irreversible damage.

Nutritional status segregated by sex shows a higher proportion of boys being undernourished compared to girls, with the malnutrition index declining with the increase in wealth. For example, 20 percent of children from low wealth index households are underweight compared to 11 percent of those from high wealth index households. A similar pattern is also observed with respect to educational level of the mothers and the children's nutritional status (KDHS 2014).

The European Union delegation in Kenya, in accordance with the EU action plan to reduce the number of stunted children by 7 million by 2025, sought to improve nutrition outcomes by funding several nutrition projects among them the *Pwani Lishe Bora project*, to be implemented in Mombasa County for 3 years (2016-2018). This was in line with their goal to enhance CSOs' contribution to the governance and development processes as partners in promoting social development. The project sought to empower Civil Society Organizations to address maternal and child malnutrition through improving the nutrition of mothers and children (including improving the nutritional status of adolescent girls and women of reproductive age). This was through a multi-sectoral approach targeting populations and geographic areas with high rates of malnutrition including (stunting, wasting and micro-nutrient deficiencies).



L-R: H.E. Ali Hassan Joho , Governor of Mombasa accompanied by Allan Ragi, Executive Director - KANCO and other nutrition stakeholders, inspecting a cooler and being taken through a food pyramid during the project launch

The project sought to reach 200,000 children aged 0-5 years, 50,000 adolescent girls and pre-pregnancy women, 100,000 women of reproductive age (15-49 years), 150,000 young people, 300,000 men and fathers, 200 County and Sub-County officials, 50 Members of the County Assembly, 20 Civil Society Organizations, the Ministry of Health at national and county level, the National Government, Community elders, and religious leaders.

This led to the Launch of the Pwani Lishe Bora project in September 2016, supported by EU and implemented through a tripartite consortium comprised of: KANCO, Grassroots Alliance for Community Education (G.R.A.C.E Africa) and Scaling up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA). The project sought to improve the nutrition outcomes for children under-five years and women of reproductive age, including adolescent girls and women before pregnancy, in six sub counties of Mombasa County.



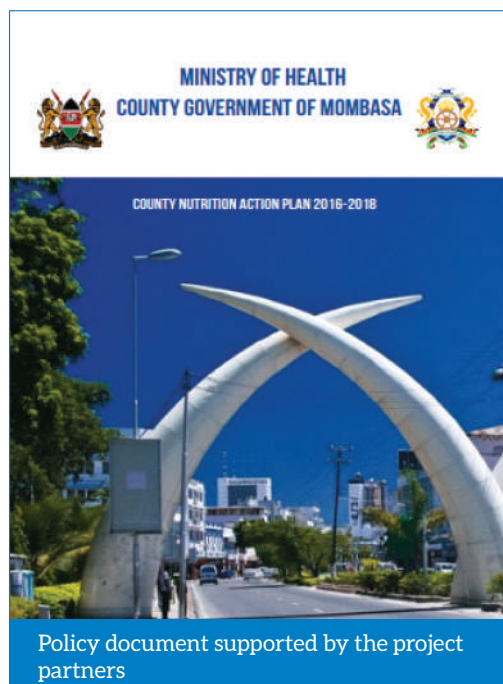
Mombasa County residents and Nutrition stakeholders following proceeding during a community engagement for the Pwani Lishe Bora Project

Project Milestones and Interventions

The project focused on both nutrition specific and sensitive interventions towards improving maternal and child health as well as community health outcomes in the county driven by three overarching milestones

- Strengthening Political Commitment and nutrition advocacy in Mombasa County
- Increased demand and uptake of nutrition services and commodities, scale up of nutrition specific and sensitive actions to reduce child and maternal malnutrition in Mombasa County
- Improved Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and the knowledge-base)

Milestone 1: Strengthening Political Commitment and nutrition advocacy in Mombasa County



The project focused on nutrition advocacy towards creating political good will and commitment to address nutrition related issues in the county. This was done through nutrition advocacy initiatives; active and sustained engagement and advocacy targeting policy makers, media houses and stakeholders with the aim to increase budgetary allocation for nutrition by 10% and mainstreaming nutrition in all sector plans.

Among the activities towards the achievements of this milestones was the launch of the project that saw multi-stakeholders come together including the county government led by the Governor, the ministries of health, education and other nutrition players. From the forum, the governor pledged the support of his government to the project reiterating his commitment to lead Mombasa to become a leader in matters nutrition.

Further the project trained 25 journalists on nutrition issues and reporting, to enhance learning and knowledge sharing on nutrition matters. Further the project partners participated in the development and printing of the County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP) 2016-2018.

Milestone 2: Increased demand and uptake on nutrition services and commodities, scale up of nutrition specific and sensitive actions to reduce child and maternal malnutrition in Mombasa County

The project focused on scaling up of nutrition specific and sensitive interventions programming as well as strengthening systems, institutions and human resource for improved nutrition outcomes. The project further under this milestone, the project sought to increase access to and utilization of quality nutrition services, increas access to and uptake of nutrition commodities, improve uptake of family planning services, and improve household incomes as well as reaching target beneficiaries with community nutrition promotive and preventive actions.



Mombasa County receiving IFAS from Pwani Lishe Bora Project Team

Milestone 2 successes:

- Observance of the World Breastfeeding and Malezi Bora weeks under the theme 'Breastfeeding key to sustainable development'
- Supported 50 community units for improved maternal, Infant and young child nutrition
- Initiation of mother to mother dialogue sessions. 30 mothers in their 20s who worked at the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) factories in Changamwe sub-county were reached.
- Through the Malezi Bora week, 46,991 children were reached through the deworming exercise.
- The formation and strengthening of the SUN-CSA Mombasa County chapter critical for advocacy and continued engagement.

Milestone 3: Improved Knowledge for nutrition (strengthening the expertise and the knowledge-base):

- The project undertook training and strengthening linkages and referral systems as well as training of 220 health care workers under the Continuous Medical Education (CME).
- The project also conducted CSOs mapping where 20 were identified as working in Nutrition in the county.
- The project identified gaps in the health referral system; For example, the project facilitated the printing of the '100 referral tool' that had ran out in year 2 of the project implementation cycle.
- The project supported the use of data to inform nutrition interventions by conducting a knowledge assessment survey that helped identify nutrition knowledge gaps in health workers in 43 public facilities, county and sub county offices. The information helped in designing the subsequent Continuous Medical Educations (CMEs) trainings. Further the KANCO team worked closely with



A County Nutritionist facilitating a father-to-father dialogue session at Kadongo grounds

the county quality assurance team to ensure that nutrition issues were incorporated in their quality improvement plans. This ensured that the community accrued better nutrition services at the facilities.

- Strengthening School health programmes – in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries , KANCO supported establishment of kitchen gardens in eight schools; two per Sub County. The intention was to gradually scale up the demonstration gardens to all primary schools in the county in phases. Further, 2 teachers from 12 schools were trained on WASH and in turn passed on the knowledge to fellow teachers

Project Achievements Highlights

Partnerships and Stakeholders Engagement

Health stakeholders drawn from different sectors were brought on board including county departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and cooperatives, Health, department of water and sanitation, county department of Education, the Private Sector and Community Organizations all working towards improving health through nutrition engagements in the county.

Supplementation

The project focused on expectant and lactating mothers ensuring they received Iron Folic Acid Supplements (IFAS) tablets, critical to increasing the flow and volume of blood in pregnant women as well as for fetal development. Over 200,000 pregnant and lactating women and around 40,000 women of reproductive age across the 6 sub counties in Mombasa benefited from this IFAS supplementation program.

Vitamin A supplementation:

By the end of the project, Mombasa County had achieved a 90 % vitamin A supplementation uptake against 50% at the start of the project

Breastfeeding Campaigns

The consortium championed exclusive breastfeeding campaign which became one of the biggest successes of the project with most mothers exclusively breastfeeding their children for the first six months following sensitization and henceforth becoming ambassadors for the campaign.

Supporting the HIV Program

The program targeted people living with HIV, reaching them with nutrition interventions for enhanced treatment outcomes

Food Supplementation

The Pwani Lishe bora Project implementing partners played a pivotal role in funding and championing the food supplementation program and promotion of uptake of healthy diets.

Continuous Medical Education Training

The program also trained health workers, towards improving the nutrition knowledge levels in the county.

Improved overall Nutrition outcomes

The projects actions contributed to the drop in stunting levels from **26% in 2012 to 4.1% in 2018**

Innovations

The project introduced community nutrition forums: i.e. mother-to-mother and father-to- father dialogue forums to encourage male involvement in health and nutrition issues. Further, they introduced the use of grassroots advocacy and champion creation for enhanced nutrition outcomes at the community level.

Media and Visibility

From the onset of the project, partners were deliberate in enhancing the visibility of the projects work and leveraged on various platform to showcase the project benefit, through stakeholders engagement, including profiling nutrition in the context of development and subsequently galvanizing wide media coverage culminating to over **30 media features** (online, print and broadcast) as well as huge social media coverage. The project also developed a communication strategy to guide the partners engagements and continued to develop and distribute Information Education and Communication Materials (IEC Materials) in line with the EU branding and marking guidelines

Lessons Learnt

From the design and implementation of the project, key lessons were drawn as follows:

- **Fostering Political commitment** is critical for nutrition projects for creation of both government ownership and a conducive implementation environment as well as enhancing sustainability of the project beyond the grant cycle. Through engagements with the county government policy documents were developed such as, the County Nutrition Action Plan enhancing uptake of nutrition sensitive interventions across different sectors. This enforced the convergence of the efforts of all relevant sectors to foster implementation of nutrition policies.
- **Promotion of a multi-sectorial** approach to nutrition is critical to address all forms of malnutrition in any setting; Adoption of a multi-sectorial strategy for nutrition was critical in support of the government-driven nutrition policies and strategies. This is also in appreciation of the complexity of nutrition, thus a need for all stakeholders coming together to realize the desired outcomes.
- **Rights based approach to nutrition;** helps broaden the scope and effectiveness of nutrition interventions towards the realizations Article 43 (1) and Article 53 of the constitution as well as global goals such as SGD 2.
- **Building knowledge for nutrition** helped scale up actions through informing decision-making and strengthening health workers and institutions capacity.
- **Data Driven programming is critical:** Evidence based programming has promoted learning in nutrition. Baseline and mid-term evaluations were used to inform the promotion of interventions such as, exclusive breastfeeding and community action on nutrition. Disaggregated data collection systems and analysis helped improve coverage and equity in nutrition related programs and continued to enhance county nutrition planning and budgeting.
- **There is need for flexible project design in addressing nutrition:** The project midterm review informed the need to accelerate progress and adjust project indicators to be in line with the county nutrition indicators. As Mombasa County geared towards addressing health investments, new opportunities to incorporate nutrition in the CIDP and other sector plans were introduced and strengthened such as the Public Private partnership (PPP) for nutrition interventions e.g food fortification. The private sector can be leveraged to improve nutrition outcomes, but deliberate actions need to be taken to increase the impact on nutrition outcomes whilst ensuring profitability for key actors.
- **Project ownership:** It is important to sensitize and advocate the project agenda to all stakeholders, by strengthening their involvement and actions towards the realization of the project goals, from the community/beneficiary level to the government level for enhanced sustainability of the projects objectives.



Ongoing engagements on maternal, infant and young child feeding during the project

Special Thanks



G.r.a.c.e.
Grassroots Alliance for
Community Education

KANCO
Healthy people, empowered communities



COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OF MOMBASA

ScalingUp
NUTRITION
Civil Society Alliance - Kenya



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