

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

Introduction:

This guidance is intended to support nutrition workers in continuing to safely deliver Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) interventions during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Disease Background:

COVID-19 (also referred to as Corona) is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered **coronavirus** and presents with symptoms including fever, fatigue and a dry cough. Some people become infected but do not develop any symptoms and may not feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. The incubation period extends from the 14th day (meaning the time period from infection to the time the symptoms appear).

People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

The virus is spread mainly **from person to person** through:

- Close contact with persons who have contracted the virus
- Respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- COVID-19 may also spread by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching your own mouth, nose or possibly through your eyes

Nutrition Programming in the Field

Although the number of cases in Sudan is currently low, it is important to take precautions and appropriate preventative measures to stop any potential spread of this virus and to ensure safety of the nutrition workers and communities.

For now, the Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) programmes will continue with the following measures:

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

At Nutrition Centres/ Health facilities level

- ✓ To ensure that nutrition centre staff do not expose themselves or community members to COVID-19, please wear face masks, rubber/plastic hand gloves and regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with water and soap. If a hand sanitizer is available, you should also use that.
- ✓ Ensure the nutrition centre and surroundings are kept clean and all equipment (including anthropometrics) and all contact surfaces are regularly and adequately disinfected.
- ✓ Existing CMAM programmes should be supported to continue during the COVID-19, however the programme expansion with new CMAM sites is not recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Ensure that handwashing facilities have adequate amounts of soap and water available in the nutrition centres.
- ✓ Minimize overcrowding by controlling the number of people allowed to enter the nutrition centre premises. Do not allow for more than 20 people to enter at a time.
- ✓ Have a triage station at the nutrition/healthcare facility entrance, prior to any waiting area to screen patients for COVID-19 symptoms such as cough, fever and difficulty of breathing. This limits potential infection throughout the health care center.
- ✓ During triage, if a handheld thermometer is available, take the temperature of all persons entering the nutrition facility/site to determine if they have a fever. In the absence of a handheld thermometer, ensure that you ask community members if they have a fever and if they do, refer them to the doctor/medical assistance for further checks.
- ✓ If a person is identified with COVID-19 symptoms, he/she should be placed in a separate room (isolated) and the health worker should IMMEDIATELY call the state helpline or the national helpline on 9090.
- ✓ To facilitate crowd management, temperature checks and referral, please ensure additional, appropriately trained staff are made available.
- ✓ Ensure everyone washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water (at the gate) before entering the nutrition centre premises.
- ✓ Ensuring adequate (open, well-ventilated) waiting space is made available, implement physical distancing (1.5m) measures between each person.
- ✓ For all children admitted in Stabilization Centres, ensure adequate & well-ventilated space is available and physical distancing of 1.5 meter (when possible) is maintained.
- ✓ ONLY one care giver should be allowed to inter the health/nutrition facility with the community member.

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

- ✓ It is important to reduce stigma and maintain privacy of any persons that may be referred to testing for COVID-19 or have confirmed cases. As health care workers, patient confidentiality should always be maintained.
- ✓ If you, as the health care provider, develop COVID-19 like symptoms (fever, fatigue, dry cough), immediately report your illness to concerned authorities & follow their guidance.
- ✓ Disseminate the Sudan Ministry of Health approved messages on the prevention of the coronavirus to all those present in the nutrition centres.
- ✓ ONLY refer to approved and endorsed messages and materials from the Sudan Ministry of Health. **DO NOT** use any other sources of messages.
- ✓ Ensure proper hand washing for the caregiver before appetite test done
- ✓ Ensure proper hand washing for the lactating mother during IYCF individual counselling.
- ✓ To minimize contact, these messages can be delivered via loudspeakers (including from the mosques/local radios). Group gatherings and close contact is not encouraged.
- ✓ Post information, like posters and flyers, that remind communities to practice hand washing in a proper way, keep physical distance as well as appropriate nutrition messages.
- ✓ You are advised to adjust the number of distribution days (increase it from once a week to up to 3 times a week) in order to reduce the number of people you daily interact with.
- ✓ You are encouraged to provide a bi-weekly ration for OTP and monthly ration for TSFP beneficiaries with a strengthened home follow up visit.
- ✓ It is critical to ensure that the community members and caretakers are made fully aware of the importance of NOT SHARING or OVERCONSUMING the nutrition rations. The rations serve a treatment purpose and MUST ONLY be consumed by the intended persons in the correct amounts.
- ✓ Advise caregivers to avoid bringing any **additional** children or family members (especially elderly and chronically ill) except for those receiving nutrition services. This is to avoid exposing them to the threat of disease transmission.
- ✓ The patient visiting times must be strictly controlled at the Stabilization Centres in order to reduce overcrowding
- ✓ Encourage all to leave the nutrition centre as soon as possible following services for management of acute malnutrition or Infant and young children feeding or food distributions conducted.

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

Community Based intervention

Community Nutrition Volunteers (CNVs) & Mother support groups (MSGs) to avoid yourself or the community from being exposed to the coronavirus, please follow below guidelines;

- ✓ Wear face masks, rubber/plastic hand gloves and ensure you regularly wash your hands with water and soap. If a hand sanitizer is available, you should also use that.
- ✓ When undertaking community outreach and MUAC screening, please ensure that you wash your hands prior to & after each measurement and maintain minimum contact.
- ✓ When undertaking any interpersonal communication and small group discussions, please ensure that you and those being communicated to are maintain a physical distance of 1.5m from each other at all times.
- ✓ Ensure that you always carry soap and an adequate amount of water to be able to regularly wash your hands.
- ✓ DO NOT shake hands with anyone in the community. Although it may be culturally inappropriate, it helps reduce potential transmission of the coronavirus.
- ✓ DO NOT screen any child or PLW if they or anyone in their family has any symptoms (fever, fatigue, dry cough) related to coronavirus.
- ✓ Deliver the Sudan Ministry of Health approved key messages on maintaining preventing the spread of coronavirus, proper nutrition, practicing good hygiene and physical distancing to the household. Refer to the message sheet provided.
- ✓ Advise community members NOT TO COME TO THE NUTRITION CENTRE if they or anyone in their family experiences symptoms such as a dry cough, fever (high body temperature) or difficulty in breathing. These symptoms could be indicative of COVID 19 which spreads quickly in communities. With the large number of people at the nutrition centres, the chances of it spreading to others are especially high. Please ask them to alert their local health clinics.
- ✓ If a case of COVID-19 is identified in the community, screening should NOT be undertaken in the identified household and any other household that members of the infected household may have met.
- ✓ The Community Nutrition Volunteers should work closely with the Mother-to-Mother Support Groups (MTMSG) to ensure that mothers are able regularly to take MUAC measurements and they can support in the case identification and referral, in the event that the CNV is not be able to access the community.
- ✓ Advise community members to report all suspected cases to the state helpline or the national helpline on 9090.

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

- ✓ Advise community members to stay at home as much as possible and AVOID social gatherings such as wedding, funerals and sporting events etc. to minimise contact and potential spread of the coronavirus.

Food Distribution Related Measures:

- ✓ Ensure that there are clearly marked entrance and exit points in the distribution area.
- ✓ Separate the food storage from the food collection points where possible.
- ✓ Advise community members not to pass through the distribution point more than once.
- ✓ Ensure that only one person is responsible for the handling of food and that he/she thoroughly sanitizes their hands and wears gloves during ration distributions.
- ✓ To avoid delays and minimize the time required for people to stay at the centre, kindly prepare monthly supply needs in batches so they can be readily distributed without the need for counting sachets each time.
- ✓ Food distributors should place the food rations on the tarpaulin/table at the distribution point and step back, permitting community members to each collect the ration.
- ✓ One-meter area around the desk to be cordoned off (with a rope or tape) at the collection point if possible. This will ensure that the collection point is accessible to only one person at a time.
- ✓ Remind all individuals to practice good hygiene when consuming the specialised nutritious food, including washing hands before eating, ensuring the sachets are cleaned and not sharing rations/sachets with non-beneficiaries.

IMPORTANT NOTE

These guidelines are designed for use ONLY during the COVID-19 emergency and will CEASE to be applicable once the emergency has been declared over by the Government of Sudan. Implementing partners should then revert to using the National CMAM & IYCF guidelines

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Messages for Mothers

- Practice respiratory hygiene during feeding and ensure that you wash your hands thoroughly with soap or sanitizer before and after contact with your child.
- If you experience any symptoms such as a dry cough, fever (high body temperature) or difficulty in breathing IMMEDIATELY alert the local health clinic and for further guidance call the state helpline or the national helpline on 9090.
- All mothers confirmed (and suspected) to have COVID-19 should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to her child, including washing her hands before and after breast feeding or touching the infant, wearing a protective face mask and regularly cleaning/disinfecting all surfaces you come into contact with.
- If you are severely ill with COVID-19 or suffer from other complications that prevent you from caring for your infant or continuing direct breastfeeding, express milk to safely provide breastmilk to your infant.
- It is not known if the coronavirus can be transmitted via breastmilk so mothers with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should continue breastfeeding while taking the necessary precautions to prevent transmission to their child.
- If you are too unwell to breastfeed, consider expressing your milk using a pump (manual or automatic) or directly into a clean container.
- Always remember to wash your hands before touching any pump, container or bottle parts and ensure proper pump cleaning after each use.
- The expressed breastmilk should be fed to the child using a clean cup and/or spoon, and general precaution measure should be followed
- For children who are under the complementary feeding period, general precaution measures such as regular hand washing & cleaning food containers should be followed.
- Ensure that children are receiving a diverse and healthy diet made up of vegetables, meats and fruits.
- Ensure children are well hydrated with water and non-sweetened fruit juices.
- If your child displays any symptoms of cough, fever or difficulty breathing IMMEDIATELY alert the local health clinic and for further guidance call the state helpline or the national helpline on 9090.

NUTRITION SECTOR GUIDANCE ON CMAM & IYCF SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AT COMMUNITY & FACILITY LEVELS MARCH 2020

Messages for community;

- Nutritional care during COVID-19 is vital and depends on drinking regular fluids (cold and warm) and eating a balanced, healthy diet to raise and strengthen the immune system in order to ensure good health which reduces the risk of morbidity and death with COVID-19.
- Eat a variety of fresh and unprocessed foods every day to get the vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, protein and antioxidants your body needs.
- Choose white meat (e.g. poultry) and fish, which are generally low in fat, rather than red meat.
- Limit your daily salt intake to less than 5 g (approximately 1 teaspoon) and use iodized salt. Drink 8 – 10 cups of water every day to stay hydrated and support your body to function well.
- You can also consume other drinks like unsweetened fresh fruit and vegetable juices.
- Be careful not to consume too much tea and coffee as it can dehydrate.
- Avoid consuming soft drinks or sodas and other drinks that are high in sugar.
- Choose fresh fruits (like guava, bananas, oranges) instead of sweet snacks such as biscuits, cakes and chocolate.
- Avoid eating out! Eat at home to reduce your rate of contact with other people and lower your chance of being exposed to COVID-19.