

Innovation

FOR ADOLESCENT NUTRITION

ETHIOPIA

The federal government adopted a package of adolescent nutrition interventions in the Ministry of Health's national guidelines, including health education with nutrition content delivered through education and health platforms. Yet, the delivery and effectiveness of these school-based interventions are uncertain. A&T's implementation research in 31 schools in Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) and 23 schools in Somali Region tests the feasibility and impact of implementing a package of locally tailored adolescent nutrition interventions through schools, health and community platforms.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Two-arm cluster-randomized, two cross-sectional surveys with a sub-sample panel of in-school adolescent girls

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Is it feasible to integrate locally relevant adolescent nutrition interventions through school-based platforms?
- What are the barriers and opportunities for strengthening school-based nutrition interventions for adolescents?
- What are the impacts of these interventions on adolescent girls' nutrition and health knowledge and practices?

OUTCOMES

1. Improved knowledge and practices of adolescent girls and their parents pertaining to:
 - Dietary quality (dietary diversity; micronutrient, protein and energy intake)
 - Adequate energy consumption (three diversified meals plus health snack)
 - Consumption of soda and other unhealthy foods
 - Handwashing
2. Improved school teacher, principal and health extension worker knowledge of:
 - Benefits of and interventions for dietary diversity, healthy foods/snacks, and handwashing

TIMELINE

Baseline: December 2019

Endline: March 2021

THE INTERVENTION

In schools

- Nutrition education and skills for adolescents provided by principals and teachers
- Support for adolescent nutrition in peer-to-peer support groups
- Promotion of adolescent nutrition practices, including with parents
- Post-quarterly BMI measurements and counseling sessions
- Adolescent nutrition messages integrated into extracurricular activities
- Monthly school visits by health extension worker (HEWs)

Through health facility and in homes

- Counseling on adolescent nutrition for parents during health facility visits
- Support for HEWs and community health workers to provide nutrition education to adolescents and parents during home visits

In the community

- Monthly community gatherings on adolescent nutrition
- Training and provision of materials to community leaders and others in the community
- Biweekly supportive supervision and monthly data review sessions