

Innovation

ENGAGING FATHERS IN COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING

NIGERIA

Fathers' engagement in complementary feeding of children from 6-23 months can be a determinant of complementary feeding practices. A&T's implementation research in Kaduna State tests an innovation that draws on religious and traditional leaders to promote involvement of fathers in complementary feeding practices, reinforced by enrolling fathers in a program to receive text messages on complementary feeding via mobile, and introducing similarly-focused counseling cards for government community health extension workers (CHEWs) to utilize during home visits.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Pre/post quasi-experimental mixed methods

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Can religious and community leaders/institutions motivate the engagement of fathers/husbands in ensuring complementary feeding?
- Can mobile phone contacts maintain the engagement of fathers to facilitate household availability of diverse foods for complementary feeding?

OUTCOMES

1. Improved knowledge and practices pertaining to:
 - Dietary diversity among children 6-23 months
 - Fathers dietary diversity knowledge, beliefs and support
2. Program learning related to:
 - Facilitators and barriers to community-based interventions and cell phone contacts to engage fathers

TIMELINE

Baseline: December 2019

Endline: January 2021

THE INTERVENTION

- SMS messages sent to fathers on complementary feeding
- Religious sermons related to fathers' role in complementary feeding
- Counseling card to be used during home visits by CHEWs