



January 2009

Dietary Pattern and Nutritional Status of Adults

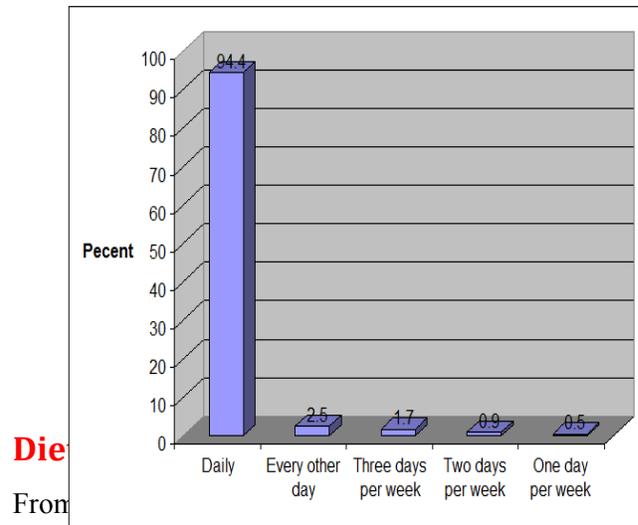
This policy brief examines dietary pattern and nutritional status of adults in KDS-HRC, Kersa District, Eastern Hararge, Eastern Ethiopia March 2008.

Introduction

Adult population needs to get nutritionally balanced food to maintain his/her level of physical activity particularly in Ethiopian rural setting where physical work is common. Diversified dietary intake practices are directly related to well being and can influence health status. It is very essential in prevention of diseases and reducing progression of ageing. Recent studies revealed that excessive alcohol consumption and khat chewing have adverse effect health. Since nutritional status of adults directly affects productivity, work performance and well-being of the community. It should receive more attention in both methodology and practice.

Khat chewing practice

Khat chewing has a deleterious effects on the food intake of individuals. The chewing habit of the respondents showed that majority (69.9%) of them were chewing khat. Among these, 64.7% of the chewers were involved in daily practice of khat chewing .



Dietary Frequency

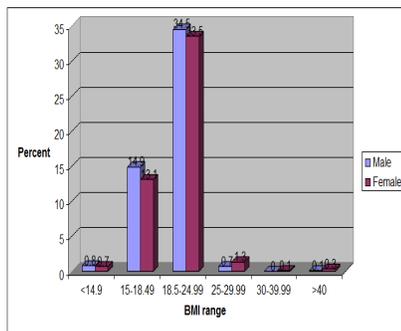
for the highest proportion with daily consumption as it was reported by 86.9% and 42.5%.of the adults respectively. Only 17 %, 11.4% and 7% of the respondents replied daily consumption of cabbage, potato and pumpkin respectively. More than 40% and 30% of adults indicated consumption of sweet potato and rice at least once per week respectively.

The majority (51%) of the respondents indicated that intake of kidney beans at least once in a week. However few respondents; 27%, 27% and 22% indicated consumption of peas, broad beans and cowpea at least once per week respectively.

Consumption patterns of respondents showed almost no intake of any type on a daily basis. Only 10% of the respondents showed intake of one or more of the following fruits; mango, guava, banana and avocado once in a week. Dietary pattern of meat and meat products also showed that 14% of the respondents took once per week. None of the study participants reported intake of fish and fish products.

Nutritional status

Around one third of the adult Body Mass Index (BMI) is below 18.5.



Policy

Recommendation

Dietary intake of study participants indicated that food consumption is not diversified to meet the needs a for balanced diet. Intake of fruits and vegetables are far below the recommended level for specific age and sex group. Meat and fish consumption were also not to the daily recommended levels. Therefore, immediate policy intervention has to be given due attention since these group of population constitutes the most productive segment of the society. Dietary diversification and promotion of vegetable gardening should be focused.

Kersa Demographic Surveillance and Health

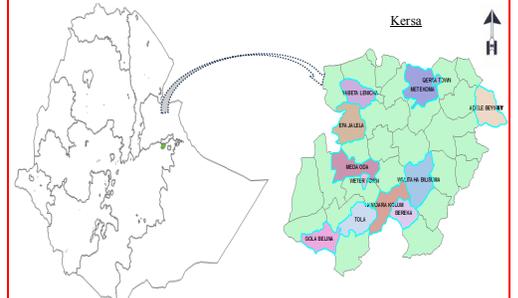
Research Center (KDS-HRC),

Haramaya University:

The surveillance site was established in September 2007 in Kersa district, Eastern Hararge of Oromia region, East Ethiopia with aim of tracking demographic changes like death, birth, migration and marital status change. The surveillance activities further extended by adding surveys in Nutrition, Reproductive Health, Environmental Health, HIV/AIDS, Morbidity/health seeking behavior and health care utilization during the month of January-March 2008.

The surveillance activity is instituted in 12 kebeles (the smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia with approximate population Size of 4-5 thousand). Two of the kebeles are semi urban and the remaining 10 are rural kebeles.

According to the first census there were 10,256



households and 53,482 people in the study site with an average household size of 5.2 and sex ratio of 104.5. In the study area the crude birth and death rates were 26.8 and 9.2 per 1000 population. Infant and under five mortality rates were 44.9 and 108.2 per 1000 live births respectively.

The activities of the surveillance are lead by a coordinator and a group of six staff members from the College of Health and Medical Sciences.

