

DIETARY DIVERSIFICATION

Introduction:

- ❖ Deficiencies of micronutrients such as Iron, Vitamin A, Zinc deficiency etc. arise from inadequate intakes, impaired absorption and/or utilization, excessive losses, or a combination of these factors and are exacerbated during



times of greater physiological need such as infancy, pregnancy, lactation and catch-up growth following illness.

- ❖ Diets of many households are based predominantly on cereals and legumes or starchy roots and tubers, which have a lower micronutrient content.



Consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables, egg, meat, poultry, fish, readily available sources of iron, zinc, and preformed vitamin A, is often small because of economic, cultural and religious constraints.

- ❖ Nutrition intervention such as “dietary diversification” is one of the strategy to reduce the occurrence of micronutrient malnutrition.



Dietary Diversification



- ❖ An approach that aims to enhance the availability, access, and utilization of foods with a high content and bioavailability of micronutrients throughout the year.
- ❖ It involves changes in food production practices, food selection patterns, and traditional household methods for preparing and processing indigenous foods.
- ❖ To implement these strategies effectively, knowledge of the local dietary patterns, and food beliefs, preferences and taboos is required, as well as the ability to change attitudes and practices.
- ❖ Dietary diversification may be more sustainable, economically feasible, and culturally acceptable than supplementation or fortification and can be used to alleviate several micronutrient deficiencies simultaneously without risk of antagonistic interactions.



Strategies of Dietary Diversification

Strategies for food and dietary diversification at the community and household levels include a range of food-based activities that can maximize the availability of adequate amounts and greater variety of nutritious foods. These activities include:

- Promotion of mixed cropping and integrated farming systems
- Introduction of new crops (such as soybean)
- Small livestock raising (e.g. poultry)
- Promotion of fishery and forestry products for household consumption (Fish Farming)
- Promotion of underexploited traditional foods and Homestead gardens
- Promotion of improved preservation and storage of fruits and vegetables to reduce waste, post-harvest losses and effects of seasonality
- Promotion of processes like germinating and fermentation
- Nutrition education to encourage the consumption of a healthy and nutritious diet year round



Kitchen Garden



Preservation



Kitchen Garden



Germination



Fermentation



Fish Farming