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NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY IN EMERGENCIES MODULE 2

1. **Discuss rationale for general food distribution**

General food distribution is a food security intervention that is employed when there is acute food shortages and aims at saving lives and protecting the nutrition status of the population. According to world food program, this intervention is short lived and are phased out once the communities are able to regain their self-reliance (Ash, 2017).

1. **Explain different livelihood approaches in emergencies**

Livelihood approaches are aimed at addressing poverty, which is directly linked to food insecurity. In emergencies, people tend to lose their livelihood, stored food and savings and this requires external support to provide lifesaving commodities such as food and restore livelihoods. Some of the approaches used include:

**Food Aid**: this is where food items are distributed to the affected communities. According to World Food Program, food aid is provided to prevent malnutrition and meet the energy requirement for the affected population (WFP, 2018). Food Aid further enables the protection of livelihoods, as assets are not sold for purchase of food items. General food distribution is the main intervention in Food Aid employed in the beginning of the emergencies.

**Income and employment:** This refers to providing monetary or food compensations for work done by the affected populous. The interventions include food –for –work, cash-for –work, cash grants, microfinance and income generating activities. This approach is meant to provide food aid and income for the affected populations.

**Market support:** this refers to interventions that are aimed at providing food aid and restoring the markets. This includes cash vouchers, commodity vouchers and subsidized sales. Use of food and cash voucher enables affected population to diversify their food especially for fruits and vegetables that are not included in the food distribution rations.

**Production support:** This refers to support offered to restore and improve crop, livestock and aquatic production. Interventions include providing farm inputs, fishing equipment, restocking and destocking.

1. What are the best ways of preventing communicable diseases? Explain five

**Provision of safe drinking water and hygiene promotion:** Lack of safe drinking water has a direct impact on communicable disease infections. According to Disability Adjusted Life Year (DALY), diarrheas contributes to 4.1% of global burden of disease and causes 2.1 million deaths per year (Hossain, 2013). By providing safe drinking water, waterborne and water-washed diseases such as diarrhea are prevented.

**Supply of quality food in good quantity**: Lack of food and poor quality food predispose communities to malnutrition that in turn predisposes affected individuals to communicable diseases due compromised immunity. Providing good quality food would therefore enable the affected population to build individual and herd immunity to communicable diseases.

**Nutritional support and management of acute malnutrition:** Persons with Acute malnutrition especially children below 5 years of age and pregnant women are more vulnerable to infections. Ensuring that they are identified and treated for malnutrition, reduces their vulnerability to communicable diseases.

**Immunization:** Providing vaccination against communicable diseases builds the immunity of individuals and protects them from acquiring communicable diseases.

**Health system strengthening**: a strong health system is able to monitor disease trends, predict outbreaks and respond before the disease spread widely. Ensuring that there are essential medical supplies, personnel and infrastructure plays a role in preventing spread of communicable diseases.

1. Discuss thecommon emergencies common in the African content in the past twenty years.

Emergencies can be caused by either natural or man-made disasters. In Africa, the most common emergencies include:

**Chronic emergencies**: These are emergencies that are long-standing e.g. the food crisis in arid and semi-arid areas of Kenya, the war in south Sudan and Somalia. These emergencies has been ongoing for more than 10 years with no solution in sight.

**Acute emergencies**: Acute emergencies in Africa include adverse weather conditions such as flooding, political and tribal clashes and diseases outbreaks like the high magnitude Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

1. Describe the roles of the UNITED NATIONS agencies that are involved in emergency response

**United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)**: It is mandated to take care of refugee affairs all over the world. This includes ensuring that the rights of the refugees are protected and they are able to receive the essential services they require.

**World Food Program (WFP)**: Mandated with providing food aid, logistics and support in food security among the affected populations.

**United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**: Mandated to save lives, promote and protect the rights of children. In emergencies UNICEF coordinates nutrition actors with intervention such as management of acute malnutrition, infant and young child feeding as well us nutrition surveys.

**World health organization**: mandated to saving lives through coordination of health service delivery. This includes reducing the disease burden, preventing disability, setting up disease surveillance systems and promoting recovery.

1. Discuss factors that trigger nutrition emergencies

Nutrition emergencies are triggered by either natural disasters or political and economic shocks.

Natural distress include occurrences that occur without human involvement such as hurricanes, floods, famine e.t.c these calamities lead to deaths, displacement and destruction of livelihood. Where there are some countries with the capacity to respond promptly some other countries are lack the capacity to respond. A good example is the cyclone Idai and Kenneth in South African countries in March and April 2019.

Political and economic shocks refers to emergencies that come because of broken government systems. This includes political wars, financial wars that displace people, destroy property and crash the financial systems. The best example if the protracted war in Yemen that has left many people displaced and led to loss of undetermined worth of property and crash of business system.

**References**

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