



AGRESEARCH LEAD



CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Policy Brief 2:

Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition through Focused Support

Issue

Despite high awareness, only 14.5% of pregnant women consume a four-star diet. Similarly, young children consume mainly starchy staples with inadequate intake of vitamin A-rich foods, dairy, and protein.

Policy Objective

To improve maternal nutrition and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) through integrated community-based support and targeted behavior change communication.

Key Findings



Cultural and economic barriers limit maternal dietary improvements.



IYCF practices are weak, particularly in food diversity and feeding frequency.



Pregnant women in the Savannah and North East regions are most vulnerable.

Policy Recommendations



Strengthen behavior change communication (BCC) to address cultural and economic barriers to healthy eating among pregnant women.



Establish community nutrition support groups for pregnant women to plan affordable, nutritious diets.



Train health workers and volunteers to provide household-level monitoring and support for families with children 6–23 months.



Distribute fortified complementary foods in areas with low food diversity.

Policy Actions



Allocate health budgets for community-level BCC and food demonstrations.



Partner with NGOs for fortified food distribution in underserved areas.



Develop IYCF training modules for frontline health workers.