

SUN CSA News

Nutrition advocacy training in Kenya

By TITUS MUNG'OU

Summary

Kenya's Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance (SUN CSA) second nutrition advocacy training was the first of its kind, fully supported and facilitated by the Alliance. The training held from 30th July to 1st August 2014 at Lukenya Gateway, in Machakos County, brought together 24 representatives of SUN CSA, SUN Business Network, academia and journalists.

Main story

The facilitators, who were trained by ACTION Results Initiative in Zambia and Kenya, were Titus Mung'ou (Action Against Hunger), Manaan Mumma (Kenya Aids NGOs Consortium), Lina Njoroge (Total Lifestyle Change) and James Adede (Grassroots Alliance for Community Education Africa).

Nutrition sensitive programming was introduced in the training by Jacob Korir (Action Against Hunger). With support from the Food Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the CSA will include nutrition sensitive topics in the county nutrition advocacy training agenda.

By the end of the training in Lukenya, participants had developed four advocacy objectives to be implemented at national and county level. The objectives were:

- To allocate 10% of Kiambu County Health budget to nutrition.
- To scale up exclusive breastfeeding in Wajir County.
- To improve micronutrients intake among under-fives in Kenya.
- To establish Human Nutrition Research Centre in Kenya.

Irene Ogada, a lecturer at Kenyatta University observed: "The training was participatory and equipped trainees with skills to package information, possible challenges in advocacy and how to tackle the challenges. Basically, the why, what, where, when and how of effective nutrition advocacy."

The key recommendations from the training included the need to allocate more time for practical sessions, involvement of nutrition advocates, coverage of nutrition policy framework issues and implementation of advocacy objectives that were identified by participants.

"The training was very educative and informative. I will use the skills to educate my listeners on nutrition issues. In future, you need to include more nutrition experts and case studies to help us write good stories," said Patrick Mutisya, a reporter with Radio Salaam.

After coordinating her first major SUN CSA activity, the network's National Coordinator Grace Gitau could not hide her joy: "At the foot of Lukenya hills, it was great to see 24 participants learn nutrition advocacy and nutrition sensitive programming. Their enthusiasm during the training was breath-taking. I am confident members of SUN networks have been empowered to shape the nutrition agenda in Kenya."

The CSA will hold county level nutrition advocacy trainings from August to October, targeting representatives of civil societies and government, who interact directly with beneficiaries at the grassroots.

The training brought together participants from three SUN networks, among them Maria Limo of Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) who represented the Business Network, the Government network had Grace Kihagi from MoH, while Irene Ogada, Faith Ndungi, Dorothy Othoo and Judith Munga represented the academia, and two journalists Thomas Bwire (Pamoja FM) and Pratrck Mutisya (Radio Salaam) represented the media.

Photos/by Titus Mung'ou



Participants listen to a youth advocate

Jackline Wambui. Right, Joan Nyaki presents her group's power map



Participants arrange nutrition building blocks. Right, a group recaps previous day's work.