

STAWISHA MAISHA BASELINE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Intended Respondents: Mothers/caregivers who are PSSN recipients and Stawisha Maisha II participants (N=8)

Number of beneficiaries per group: 6-8

Demographic Information:

Region: Mwanza/Arusha

District name:

(ii) Interview date:

(iii) Number of respondents:

(iv) Name of interviewer:

(v) Interview time: from..... to

(vi) Age of child(ren):

Introduction

Thank you very much for joining us all today. I would like to remind you again that participating in this discussion is voluntary. We are eager to learn more about your community, what you know about food choices for yourself and your young children, where you learn about nutrition, other child health information including early childhood development, and what barriers you perceive to getting healthy food for your family. This is an informal conversation and there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in anything that you want to share with us to help us learn more about you and your family.

1. To begin, I would like to learn about your community. How would you describe this community to me?

- What do most people do in this community?
- What is interesting about this community?
- What are the main challenges faced by people living in this community?

2. Information Seeking

Next, I would like to understand where you learn about nutrition and maternal and child health from in your community.

- Where do you and other community members get most of their knowledge/information on nutrition for both themselves and their child(ren) from?
 - *Probe: other mothers, your own mother, mother-in-law, clinic staff, NGOs, other village members, or other interventions*
- Please describe the information you get about nutrition, maternal and child health.
- What makes this information source reliable/unreliable?
- What did you know about nutrition before becoming a mother?
- What have you learned about nutrition since becoming a mother?
- When you listen to the radio, how do you feel about the information you receive from it?

Probe:

- do you trust the information from the radio?
- *How do you listen to the radio? Please describe*
 - *With whom do you listen to the radio?*
 - *What makes information trustworthy (or not)?*
- What information regarding nutrition, maternal and child health do you miss when listening to the radio?

3. Perceived self-efficacy for MIYCF (maternal, infant, and young child feeding) practices: group differences and similarities

Next, I would like to ask you about your knowledge of and access to nutritional food, including for your children, antenatal care, and breastfeeding.

General Nutrition Information:

What kind of food do you typically eat in your house? Please elaborate.

- Follow up questions –
 1. What do young children typically eat?
 1. How about adults?
 2. What does nutritious foods mean to you?
 3. How confident do you feel about feeding your child enough nutritious food? Tell me more.

- In general, what kind of challenges do you face when feeding your young children? [Probe: *is there enough food, do you think the food is nutritious enough, other issues such as clean water, etc.*]

Antenatal care

I would now like to discuss about antenatal care.

- What is the right time for others to know when a woman is pregnant? Who should know? At what stage of the pregnancy?
- Please tell me what you know about antenatal care.

- In your knowledge/experience, why do you think it is important for pregnant women to seek antenatal care?
- When should a woman seek antenatal care? How often? Please share your experience.
- Where are you and others in this community most likely to seek antenatal care?
- Who are you most likely to seek advice, care and support from regarding caring for your child(ren) or yourself during pregnancy? Why? [Probe: *who do you count on for support in your community? e.g., support with child care, someone you can turn to for family advice, who can help you with food or money if you are having trouble*]
- What are some barriers that prevent women in this community from seeking timely antenatal care? [Probe: *cost, distance to facility, superstition, lack of trust of doctors, husbands controlling medical care, too busy with other children at home etc.*]
 - Follow up questions –
 1. Please share an experience you or someone you know faced to make you feel mistrustful or uncomfortable with a nurse or other medical staff?

Breastfeeding

I would now like to discuss about breastfeeding:

- In your opinion, what are some of the benefits of breastfeeding?
- How long should babies be breastfed without supplementing with water or other foods?
- What has been your experience with breastfeeding? Tell me about this...
 - Follow up question –
 1. What kind of support did you get when you were breastfeeding *e.g., support with breastfeeding, support with chores and household tasks*?

2. Who supported you when you were breastfeeding? [*Probe: other mothers, your own mother, a nurse*]
 - What challenges do you or other women in the community experience with breastfeeding?
 - Follow up questions –
 1. What did you do when these challenges occurred?
 2. What are some traditional beliefs that prevent mothers to exclusively breastfeed their baby for the first 6 months? Please elaborate.
 3. According to traditional beliefs, when should a child stop breastfeeding?
 - Can you tell me about your experience with mixed breastfeeding (combining breastmilk with formula or other liquids) compared to exclusive breastfeeding?
 - Who gave you advice or support while you were breastfeeding? [*Probe: other mothers, your own mother, a nurse, a friend, neighbor*]
4. **Signs of good growth / development:** I would now like to discuss about signs of good development for young children.
- How do you know if your child is growing well? Please elaborate the signs.
 - What are the signs if a child is not growing well?

Openness to learning and change: group differences and similarities

Now, I would like to get an idea of what your community is like and how it might support or hinder better access to nutritional food and overall health for your family.

Gender, Community Norms and Household Dynamics

I would now like to hear your perceptions about *Gender, Community Norms and Household Dynamics*.

- How do people get along in this community? [*Probe: e.g., are people supportive of and helpful to one another, does it feel like everyone keeps to themselves*]
- In your households, who makes decisions about large, unusual purchases (e.g., a new roof)? [*Probe: please elaborate how this decision is made?*]
 - Follow up questions –
 1. What happens if you have differing opinions from others in your household (e.g., your husband)?
 2. What kind of support do you get in the decisions you make in feeding your children?
- In instances when you disagree with the information you've been given about antenatal care or feeding your child, what do you do?
- How comfortable do you feel asking questions/advocating for yourself and/or your child if you disagree? [*Probe: what if it's a family member versus a doctor who you disagree with?*]
- What skills do you need in order to become more so?
- Who else in the community or your family influences decisions about antenatal care or feeding your child?
- How do you think you influence people around you to make decisions? [*Probe: do your friends look up to you for information, do you have a peer group that leans on each other for support?*]

General barriers/facilitators to change

I would now like to discuss about the *general barriers/facilitators to change in adapting maternal, infant, and young child feeding practices*

- What do you see as the biggest challenge related to *maternal, infant, and young child feeding practices* affecting your community right now? [*Probe: lack of access to food, not knowing where to obtain healthy food, not understanding which foods are healthy, lack of autonomy/decision-making in the household*]
- What would you need to ensure that your children receive proper nutrition at every stage of development from 0-5 years? [*Probe: more financial stability, accessibility to clean water & sanitation, better decision-making power at home, more education about nutrition, access to food*]
- What barriers do you face to providing enough nutritious food to yourself and your young child(ren)?
 - Follow up questions –
 1. What skills/information do you possess to overcome these barriers?
 2. What else you need to overcome these barriers *in adapting maternal, infant, and young child feeding practices*

5. Aspirations for self and child: similarities and differences in group

At this point, I would like to discuss what you think is important to the health and future goals of both you and your young child(ren).

- What do you think is the most important thing you can do to *adapt maternal, infant, and young child feeding practices*?
- What skills or knowledge do you need to achieve this goal?
- What is your wish for your child when they grow up? Probe: What job do in the future in terms of work and family?
- What are your long-term aspirations for your children's education? Health? Nutrition? Relationships, Etc.

6. Solutions/skills and how head of households influenced these

Last, I would like to discuss the kind of skills you have for planning and goal setting about your health and that of your young child(ren).

- How do you plan and set goals about the nutrition and health of your young child(ren)?
- Who in your household is involved in the planning and goal setting about the nutrition and health of your young child(ren)? Please elaborate.
Probe: The involvement of husband, parents/in-laws, elders, other community members, nurses
- Which skills do you need for analysing and solving problems related to the nutrition and health of your young child(ren)?
- How can you improve skills for analysing and solving problems related to the nutrition and health of your young child(ren)?

Does anyone have any final thoughts or questions?

Thank you for your time!