

WISHH – PSF MOTHER & CHILD NUTRITION PROJECT, BANGLADESH

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

20th June 2008



As a part of the Soy for Socio-economic Development in Bangladesh Project, a nutrition intervention program was carried by ASA-IM and WISHH under title Bangladesh Mother and Child Nutrition Project. This project was commenced on 1st March 2008. This was a two month pilot project operated by Palli Shishu Foundation, a local Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) and funded from resources donated by the United States Department of Agriculture under the Quality Sample Program.

Main objective of this project was to evaluate the efficacy of soy protein in controlling the Protein Energy Malnutrition (PEM) among the 2-5 years old children and as high protein supplement for the pregnant and lactating mothers. Soy Flake based soymilk (fortified with sugar and food grade flavor-Banana and Mango) and Isolated Soy Protein fortified high protein biscuits were in this project as nutrition supplements.

A total of 1300 children (Girl: Boy 50:50) and 400 pregnant and lactating mothers were selected through a screening process which was based on few specific characteristics. As screening process started in the month of August 2007, thousands of children and their parents came to the screening centers located in various slums of Mirpur area in Dhaka city. 6 Field Officers were employed by PSF and all of them were women. They were well educated and experienced in social work.





ASA-IM developed a form for collecting information. Following information were collected through the prescribed form:

1. Name of the client:
2. Father's Name:
3. Mother's Name:
4. Height, Weight, Color of hair
5. Address
6. Family size and family income.

The appointed Field Officers interviewed approximately 5000 children in the age range 2-5 years and approximately 1000 pregnant and/ lactating mothers. Finally they selected 1300 children and 400 mothers among them 250 were lactating and 150 were pregnant. Among the selected children, boys and girls ratio was 50:50. During selection process, emphasis was given in the family income, family size and the nutrition requirement of the client. Preference was given to the severely malnourished children and mothers.

The project was inaugurated on 1st March 2008. Soy Flake based soymilk (fortified with sugar and food grade flavor-Banana and Mango) and Isolated Soy Protein fortified high protein biscuits have been using in this project as nutrition supplements. Soy Flakes was produced in the USA by MicroSoy Corporation, Iowa and Isolated Soy Protein was produced by the Solae Company, St. Louis.

The project was aimed to provide 25 gm soy protein biscuit and 100 ml fortified soy milk to a total of 1300 children (Girl: Boy 50:50) and 400 pregnant and lactating mothers for six days in an week.

During first month of the project, on an average 1650 clients came to 6 feeding centers in the Mirpur area of Dhaka city. These children and mothers are living in various medium to large slums and their monthly average family income is below 80 US Dollar. The children are at the 2-5 age range and most of them are severely malnourished. Vitamin deficiency is most common and many of these children have been suffering from diseases caused by malnutrition.





At the beginning of the project, the parents of the selected clients requested for medical (treatment and medication) support for the children and mothers. Therefore, Palli Shishu Foundation has carried a Health Support Program aside the WISHH supported nutrition project. In this program, primary diagnosis and medical support were provided to 3000 children and mother of the project area. Under the nutrition project, counseling on Nutrition, Health & Sanitation was being provided to the slum

dwellers by the trained personnel recruited by the project.

During second and final month of the project, number of clients increased in large numbers and it was so tough for the Field Officers to control the crowd of children gathered to collect either soy protein biscuits or fortified soymilk. Finally, during the last week of April 08, a total of 2300 (1800 children and 500 mother) clients were provided with soy protein biscuits and fortified soymilk.

At the end of the project, an opinion survey was conducted among the parents of the clients who received the soy protein biscuits or fortified soymilk as regular basis and following opinions were expressed:

1. The children like the taste of soymilk and soy biscuits
2. Positive changes have been observed in the physique of most of the children
3. They became disciplined as they have been taught to stay in cue while waiting for biscuits and soymilk.
4. Most of the pregnant mothers reported that they are getting more energy after consuming the biscuit and soymilk.
5. The parents of the children reported that 100 ml fortified soymilk and 25 gm soy biscuits are acting as a full meal for the children.





6. Positive changes in the behavioral pattern in the children were observed.
7. Children became more active and functional.
8. Lactating mothers reported that soy protein biscuits or fortified soymilk helped them in nourishing their infants.

The final phase of the pilot project was completed 30th April 2008. Though the project was carried only for two months, it was able to create a positive response to the soy food products especially soymilk and soy biscuits. ASA-IM is now expecting the commercial production and marketing of soy flake based soymilk within very short period and soy protein fortified biscuits are already in the market. Therefore, ASA-IM has been planning to develop a new program as Bangladesh Nutrition Campaign by which the concept of low cost but effective nutrition through SOY will be promoted among the mass people of Bangladesh.