

By Jeje Muhinde

Dr. Anita Asimwe, the National Coordinator of the National Early Childhood Development Program has urged district officials from the Northern Province to coordinate in order to eliminate malnutrition.

Dr. Asimwe made the call during the three-day workshop which concluded on Saturday at Musanze district.

“You should teach pregnant mothers to breastfeed their children at an early stage, besides the awareness campaign should be carried through coordination from those in charge of nutrition, social protection, health, gender, hygiene, agriculture and other development partners at the hospitals,” she said.

Malnutrition statistics are reported to be standing at 38 % of children under 5 in Rwanda and Dr. Asimwe believes there is a need for coordination, implementation of the district plan among the officials in each sector in efforts to eliminate malnutrition.



It was agreed that after the workshop, the ECD nutrition program officers from each district will have to submit an analysis and recommendation report on malnutrition.

The district officials who attended the workshop came from Gicumbi, Gakenke, Musanze, Burera, Rulindo as well as others from Nyarugenge, Gasabo, and Kicukiro.

The workshop funded by Netherlands Foreign Affairs Ministry through SNV Voice of Change Partnership (V4CP) project and implemented by SUN Alliance Rwanda.

Jean-Marie Vianney Gatabazi, Northern Province Governor who attended the official opening of the workshop reminded the district officials that elimination of malnutrition should be a culture introduced to families in Rwanda.

He called for aggressive mass mobilization in the elimination of malnutrition, adding that the reason why the government introduced Giranka project is to make sure families can be able to get milk to feed their children.

“Tackling under nutrition effectively is a team effort across health, education, and agriculture and, of course, finance. We can achieve more with greater coordination

at the district level,” Venuste Muhamyankaka the Secretary-General of Rwandan Civil Society Alliance for the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN CSA Rwanda), and the president of Rwanda Nutritionists’ Society also pointed out.

From the Southern and Northern provinces, the same program will be extended to the Western and Eastern provinces in the coming next two weeks.

A new study conducted by the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2018, indicates that rates of chronic malnutrition in Rwanda have fallen significantly in the last three years, but still remain stubbornly high, especially in rural areas.

The Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) report in Rwanda found that levels of stunting among children aged under 5 dropped to 36.7 percent in 2015, down from 43 percent at the time of the last analysis in 2012.

The new CFSVA indicates a geographic nutritional divide, with rural areas being the most affected by child malnutrition at a rate of 40 percent, compared to 27 percent in urban areas.

Good nutrition enables children to develop healthy immune systems, reducing future spending on healthcare throughout their lives. It unlocks the population’s potential.