

Food for thought

Nutrition for challenged children in India



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Friends Indeed
www.friendsindeed.nl

FEMI
www.femi.org

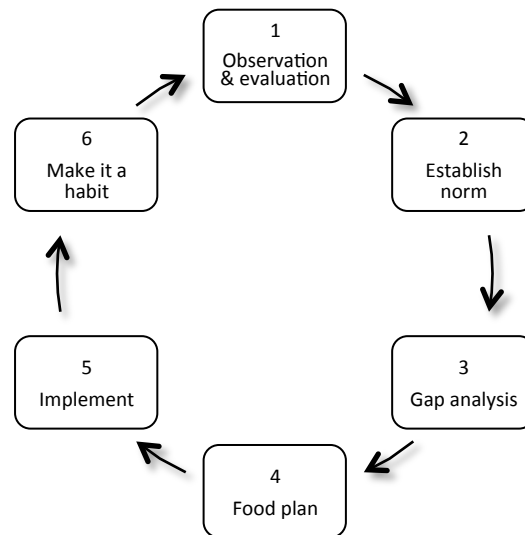
Campus Challenge
www.campus-challenge.org

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Abstract

First aim of the project was to improve the menu of 120 disabled children, aged 8-13 years and their caretakers, all living at 'Campus Challenge' in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. With a well-defined process the project was also able to show health effects of the intervention.

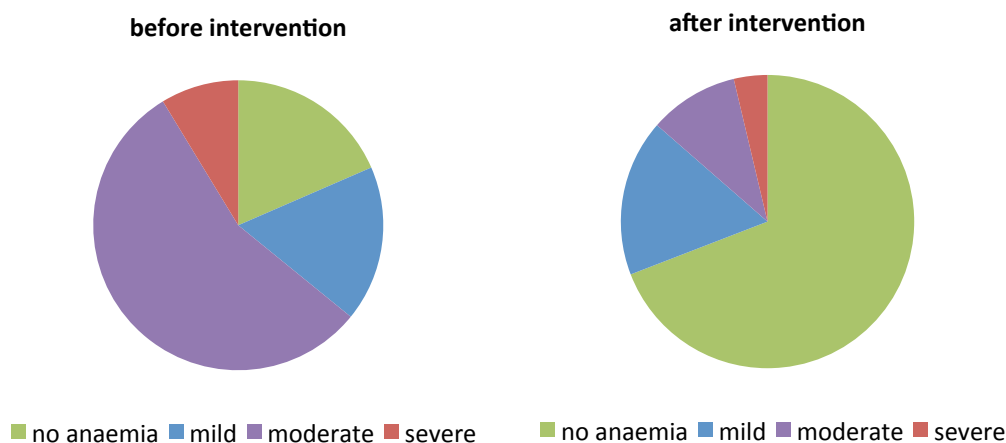
Assessment of the current dietary habits showed that intake of protein, carbohydrates and magnesium was sufficient and that calcium, vitamin D, iron, vitamin C and zinc needed some attention. Strong attention was needed for: overall energy intake, fat, fibres, potassium, selenium, vitamin A and B vitamins.



These findings were confirmed in part by the medical check. More than half of the group and especially girls suffered from stunted growth (too small for age) and more than 80% of the children had anaemia, which reduces well-being, causes fatigue and lethargy, and impair physical capacity and work performance.

Local food availability was assessed and proved to be adequate to ensure improvement of the menu, without the need to add supplementation. The local team implemented a revised menu in 2015, based on the guidelines presented in this document.

Nutritional health of the children was again assessed 3-6 months after implementation of the new menu. Results were above expectations, especially regarding anaemia, which dropped from 82 to 31%.



This intervention shows that improving health through nutrition is neither difficult nor expensive. Supplements, sprinkles or enriched products are often used, but don't contribute to healthier eating habits and are often an expensive alternative.