

Agroecology and Seasonal Disparity Nexus with Nutritional Status of Children in Ethiopia

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Abstract : Climate change is impacting nutrition through reducing food quantity and access, limiting dietary diversity, and decreased nutritional food content as well as strongly affecting seasonal rainfall in Ethiopia. Nevertheless, only a few data is available on the impacts of seasonality in Infant, and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices undernutrition among 6-23 months old children in different agro-ecological zones of poor resource settings of Ethiopia. Methods: Socio-demographic, anthropometry, and IYCF indicators were assessed in the harvest and lean seasons among children aged 6-23 months of age randomly selected from rural villages of lowland and midland agro-ecological zones. Results: Child stunting and underweight increased from prevalence of 32.8 % and 23.9 % (lowland & midland respectively) in the lean season to 36.1% and 33.8 % harvest seasons, respectively. The biggest increase in the prevalence of stunting and underweight between harvest and lean seasons was noted in the lowland zone. Wasting decreased from 11.6% lean to 8.5% harvest, with the biggest decline recorded in the midland zone. Minimum meal frequency, minimum acceptable diet, and poor dietary diversity increased considerably in harvest compared to a lean season in the lowland zone. Feeding practices and maternal age were predictors of wasting, while women's dietary diversity and children's age was a predictor of child dietary diversity in both seasons. Conclusion: There is seasonal variation in undernutrition and IYCF practices among children 6-23 months of age with more pronounced effect lowland agro-ecological zone.

Keywords : agroecology, seasonality, stunting, wasting

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