

**EFFECTIVENESS OF STRENGTHENING INFANT
AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING EDUCATION,
GROWTH MONITORING AND PROMOTION
FOR UNDER TWO YEARS OLD CHILDREN
IN LOIKAW TOWNSHIP, KAYAH STATE**

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ABSTRACT

A quasi experimental study by qualitative and quantitative methods was conducted to determine the effectiveness of strengthening Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Education and Growth Monitoring and Promotion (GMP) in Loikaw Township, Kayah State during 2018 and 2019. It included 166 pairs of mother and their under two children at baseline assessment. The level of knowledge and practice on IYCF among mothers and nutritional status of their children in intervention group and control group were assessed before and after strengthening IYCF education and GMP in intervention area for six months. Qualitative results from discussions with Basic Health Staff explained their ability to conduct IYCF education and GMP, barriers and facilitators for these services and their advice. Discussion with mothers explored the accessibility to health services, availability and affordability to get food, traditional belief and food taboos and their advice for implementing IYCF education and GMP. At end line assessment, IYCF scores were higher in intervention group with double mean difference of 7.4 for breast feeding knowledge, 3.5 for complementary feeding knowledge, 2.2 for breast feeding practice and 1.4 for complementary feeding practice. Moreover, mothers with high IYCF score levels were greater in intervention group than the control group for high breast feeding knowledge score (20.7% vs. 2.6%), good breast feeding practice score (95.1% vs. 87.2%), high complementary feeding knowledge score (57.3% vs. 15.4%) and good complementary feeding practice score (98.8% vs. 96.2%). Within intervention group, the significant difference before and after intervention were present in breast feeding knowledge score ($P<0.001$), breastfeeding practice score ($P<0.001$), complementary feeding knowledge score ($P<0.001$) and complementary feeding practice score ($P<0.001$). Within control group, the significant difference were present only in breastfeeding knowledge score ($P=0.002$), complementary feeding knowledge score ($P<0.001$) and complementary feeding practice score ($P<0.001$), and no significant difference was found in breastfeeding practice score ($P=0.213$). Moreover there was significant interaction between intervention and assessment time for breastfeeding knowledge ($P<0.001$), breastfeeding practice ($P=0.040$), complementary feeding knowledge ($P<0.001$), and complementary feeding practice ($P=0.046$). At end line

assessment, the significant difference between intervention group and control group was present in breast feeding knowledge score (($P<0.001$), complementary feeding knowledge score ($P<0.001$) and complementary feeding practice score ($P<0.001$). Breastfeeding practice score was not significantly different between groups at end line ($P=0.058$). Although significant differences in all anthropometric measurements of weight ($P<0.001$), length ($P<0.001$) and Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) ($P=0.016$) were present within intervention group, only weight ($P<0.001$) and length ($P<0.001$) were significantly different within control group and no significant difference in MUAC ($P=0.122$) was present. No significant interactions between intervention and assessment time were found for weight, length and MUAC measurements. And also these anthropometric measurements were not significantly different between intervention group and control group at end line assessment. The findings point out the significant effectiveness of the strengthening IYCF education and GMP in improving the knowledge and practice on IYCF among mothers.

KEY WORDS: IYCF, GMP, Knowledge, Practice, Weight, Length, MUAC