A contribution to OHCHR report to the Human Rights Council on Children’s right to health

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Save the Children Jordan (SC Jordan) considers iron deficiency to be the main health challenge related to children and this consideration is based on international and national standards, which means that Save the children takes into consideration that nutrition is “*an inclusive right extending not only to timely and appropriate health care but also to the underlying determinants of health”* as adopted by the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) in General Comment Number 14. SC Jordan had also took into consideration A further important aspect inspired from General Comment Number 14 which is the participation of the population in all health-related decision-making at the community, national and international levels.[[1]](#footnote-1)

SC Jordan considers that discrimination in the right to health as a key issue as according to the CRC committee there is a linked concerns about health to discrimination issues in many cases such as discrimination against girls, children living in poverty, children living in rural areas and refugee children.

On the other hand SC Jordan works according to ***everyone campaign: Save the Children is campaigning to end this injustice.***

**Our vision** is that no child under the age of 5 dies from preventable causes,and that public attitudes will not tolerate a return to high levels of child deaths.

**Our goal** is that Millennium Development Goal 4 – a two thirds reduction in child mortality rates by 2015 – is achieved.

**Our objective** is that by 2015 we will have catalysed a breakthrough in governments’ policy and practice that dramatically accelerates sustainable progress towards MDGs 4 and 5.

And based on that SC Jordan had launched a campaign called “Combating Anemia Campaign” , this campaign aims to change dietary behavior in families focusing on 0-5 years children and mothers.

The campaigns duration is 24 months, divided into 4 phases to reach all areas in Jordan. The campaign started in central Jordan, moved on to the second and third phase in Southern regions in Jordan and will be wrapping up and finishing the campaign in the Northern regions of Jordan.

The campaign aims to directly screen for Anemia and medically intervene for more than 20.000 mothers and children, and indirectly reach out to 80.000 individuals.

More on that, the campaign distributes Iron Supplements for those diagnosed with Anemia and will raise awareness and educate children & mothers about the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

However many barriers still exist in implementing the right to good nutrition in Jordan , and the barriers are explained in the following points;

* Financial and economic status of families, many families has low income and cannot afford providing their children with health food.
* Lack of proper and quality medications, Iron supplements in general are not available for people and if available they are expensive.
* Cultural and traditional practices , as many cultural practices causes ill nutrition of children,
* Proper food availability in the Market
* Lack of qualified staff in medical centers and hospitals, especially in rural areas.
* Lack of nutritionists and pediatrics in most of the health centers in jordan
* Lack of awareness among families in regard to health and nutritional aspects , and this is one of the most significant factors , that have a long term impact on children’s health
* Illiteracy level and educational level among families.
* Lack of statistical date on malnutrition
* Need to improve legislation for the right to health

As For SC jordan , the “Combating Anemia Campaign” had worked on the protection and prevention level , which means that the campaign is an example of good practices to promote the right to health , as the campaign provides awareness sessions for mothers on the proper nutritional practices for a better nutritional balance and also the campaign provides Screening and then treatment of Anemic cases and follow up for such cases.

After the screening, Doctors review patients diagnosed with Anemia files and the advanced medical test results tests individually and prescribes the most convenient therapy; either Iron Supplements or to advise beneficiaries to follow instructions given by the nutritionist on the day and follow the recipes provided to them by Save the Children.

Medical stakeholders, who are partners in the campaign, Prepare prescribed supplements as requested by the Doctor on site for the Anemia team to provide the patients with.

For each patient there are at least 3-6 follow up appointments according to the Doctors diagnosis.

Each follow up includes: handing supplements enough for 1 month, nutritional focus groups, surveys, in addition to doctor assessment and follow up tests.

Moreover, SC Jordan has its own protection policies when dealing with children, as each medical personal involved in providing health services for children is obliged to sign a protection policy that guarantees the safety of the child in need. And parents also are respected and treated in dignity, as each parents has to be fully agreed on taking part in this campaign and participating the awareness sessions of the campaign.

1. Ibid., CESCR General Comment 14,para 9 and 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)