

ABSTRACT

Malnutrition is associated with a lot of morbidity and more than one-third of all deaths in children under 5 years globally. A majority of those who suffer from the brunt of malnutrition are in developing countries. Kenya is one of the countries with the greatest burden of malnutrition associated with economic and social transitions. However, there is a paucity of data on malnutrition and the factors related to it in children in rural settings. Therefore, this study examined the prevalence, socio demographic and household's factors associated with nutritional among children aged 6-59 months in Trans Mara East sub-county in Narok County. Data was collected using descriptive cross-sectional study design among 350 children from Trans Mara East Sub County, an area with a high level of food insecurity. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect information on the following: demographic characteristics, household socioeconomic status (SES), and child health status. The associations between malnutrition and potential determinants were examined by bivariate and multivariate stepwise logistic regression analysis using STATA version 13.0. Of the 350 children enrolled in this study 31%, 22% and 8% of the children were stunted, underweight and wasted, respectively. Analysis also revealed that 9% and 4% of the children suffered from overweight and obesity respectively. Further analysis revealed that the determinants of stunting were number of children in the household (adjusted Odds Ratio (aOR); 1.86; 95% confidence interval [C.I], 1.01-3.43), mother being a house wife (aOR; 3.63; 95% C.I, 1.08-12.24), and being poor (aOR,3.33; 95% C.I; 1.44-7.68). For obesity, the predictors were child age with 12-23 months (Crude Odds Ratio; 2 (95% C.I; 0.175-22.8), 24-35 months (odds ratio of 2.22(95% C.I; 0.22-22.3), child gender with males more likely to be obese relative to females (Odd Ratio; 3.27; 95% C.I; 0.856-12.5). The study indicates that there is both over and under malnutrition in children in rural settings as demonstrated by the results. The results of this study will be useful for the Ministry of Health and other development partners targeting child nutrition in formulating context-specific interventions or policies.

Interventions to improve on socio-economic status and empowerment of women at households' level will help address malnutrition in this area. Therefore a multi sectoral approach is appropriate in instituting the nutritional interventions.