AID FOR AFRICA ENDOWMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TUFTS UNIVERSITY

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TUFTS FRIEDMAN SCHOOL OF NUTRITION

- Established in 1981, one of the few schools of nutrition in the country
- Mission is to bring together biomedical, social, political, and behavioral scientists to conduct research, educational, and community-service programs to improve the nutritional health and well-being of populations throughout the world
- A little over 100 entering students every year (Masters and PhD level)
- Policy master's degree programs in Food Policy, Nutrition Communication, and Agriculture, Food and the Environment
- Masters students are required to do a summer internship....
AID FOR AFRICA ENDOWMENT FOR FOOD AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

- The endowment supports a graduate student at Friedman undertaking research in Sub Saharan Africa regarding how agriculture and nutrition can improve food security and reduce poverty.

- In its second year, with a third recipient selected soon.

- In line with Aid for Africa’s belief that programs should be evidence based.
2012 ENDOWMENT RECIPIENT

- Katrina Brink travelled to Mwanza, Tanzania to contribute to a study with HKI
- Project focused on improving nutrition for women of child bearing age and children under the age of two, mainly through improved gardening and poultry husbandry techniques
- Katrina was heavily involved in developing an M & E plan for the project.
**My Experience**

- For 3 months, worked with ACF to better understand why malnutrition continues to persist in two regions in Warrap State, South Sudan

- Food Habits and Food Utilization Study among the Dinka population living there.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To map the major wild food resources in the local environment and their seasonal availability, and to assess their contribution to the household economy and diet,

2) To identify food storage, processing, preservation, and preparation practices of households and how they vary by season,

3) To identify the cultural perceptions attached to different essential foods, including food habits, taboos, and interdictions,

4) To analyze the food sharing practices and priorities, with regard to age, gender, health, and working status,

5) To analyze the seasonal variation of the type of foods available and accessed by households and communities

6) To provide recommendations for capacity building and training curricula related to food habits and utilization
**Methodology**

- Literature Review
- Initial Key Informant Interviews
- Initial Community Interviews (40)
- Focus Group Discussions (20)
  - In community, at OTP sites, cattle camp, and with fishermen
- Formal Interviews on IYCF Practices (60)
- Household Questionnaire (143)
- Key Informant Interviews (10)
- Direct Observation
- Market Visits
RESULTS

- The Hunger Gap
- Low Crop Yield
  - Lack of knowledge and technology
- Lack of Dietary Diversity
- Poor Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices
- Cultural Beliefs, Practices, and Food Taboos
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

1) Encouraging diet diversity, especially through promoting the consumption of wild foods in the area.
2) Promoting proper breastfeeding practices according to UN guidelines, and discouraging the use of powdered milk and/or breast milk substitutes.
3) Promoting the timely initiation of complementary feeding, to start after 6 months, with a variety of appropriate foods in order to ensure a balanced diet during the critical time after six months.
4) Encouraging mothers to boil milk, especially for young children, in order to prevent gastro-intestinal infections.
5) Encouraging households to leave cows behind at the homestead, in order to access milk throughout the year.
6) Promoting proper hygiene practices, especially hand washing before food preparation and consumption.
7) Promoting sanitary food processing and storage practices.
8) Encouraging pregnant women to eat eggs and fresh fish in order to increase their access to protein and iron.
9) Encouraging mothers to feed young children more than two meals per day, in order to ensure they receive sufficient nutrients throughout the day.
10) Educating on the proper farming techniques such as intercropping and crop rotation.
CONCLUSIONS

- This experience solidified my desire to continue to do field research in the future
- Continuing on at the Friedman School for my PhD starting in the Fall
- More opportunities should exist that allow students to gain this type of experience
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