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*Un Kilo de Ayuda’s* nutrition education component: Program delivery and user’s perceptions in Guerrero, Mexico

By

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MPH

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*Un Kilo de Ayuda’s* nutrition education component: Program delivery and user’s perceptions in Guerrero, Mexico

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An abstract of

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**Abstract**

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By Corey McAuliffe

**Background:** Worldwide there are few comprehensive nutrition programs that resemble *Un Kilo de Ayuda’s (UKA)* structure and objectives. *UKA* is an influential non-governmental nutrition organization working within states of Mexico identified as having high levels of undernutrition in children less than five years of age and pregnant women. *UKA*’s vision is to eradicate child malnutrition in Mexico by the year 2023 through incorporating community, company, and state government relationships to support their comprehensive nutrition program. According to staff, nutrition education is considered to be the most important and critical organizational action.The organization recognizes a high turnover rate of health promoters and staff within their attention centers, in addition to a relatively high variability of community participation within specific communities.

**Objective:** To capture the adequacy of program delivery; user perceptions; document programmatic successes, challenges, and barriers; in order to provide recommendations for future activities.

**Methods:** We conducted a qualitative and quantitative review of *UKA’s* nutrition education component in Guerrero, Mexico through: collection and review of component materials; observation and assessment of nutrition education sessions; in-depth interviews with all levels of staff; focus group discussions with community participants; and community surveys.

**Results:** Key themes impacting optimal delivery of the program included: (1) prioritization of other program actions over nutrition education; (2) low levels of job satisfaction and confidence as reported by Health Promoters; (3) ability of Health Promoters to bridge the disconnect between headquarters’ perceptions and actual community needs; and (4) reported barriers to increased participation in sessions.

**Discussion:** *UKA*’s nutrition education component has the potential to affect behavior change and empower women to make healthy and nutritious decisions regarding their own well-being and that of their family. In order to make this a reality, foundational restructuring and prioritization of components, increased support and communication between headquarters and attention center staff, and interventions focused on community needs and desires must be addressed in order to achieve a successfulnutrition education component.

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