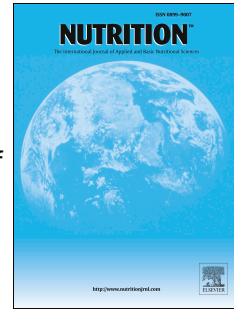


Accepted Manuscript

Energy and nutrient intake of infants and young children in pastoralist communities of Ethiopia

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PII: S0899-9007(17)30062-X

DOI: [10.1016/j.nut.2017.02.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nut.2017.02.012)

Reference: NUT 9938

To appear in: *Nutrition*

Received Date: 18 November 2016

Revised Date: 4 February 2017

Accepted Date: 27 February 2017

Please cite this article as: Mengistu G, Moges T, Samuel A, Baye K, Energy and nutrient intake of infants and young children in pastoralist communities of Ethiopia, *Nutrition* (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.nut.2017.02.012.

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1 **Energy and nutrient intake of infants and young children in pastoralist** 2 **communities of Ethiopia**

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8 **Abstract**

9 **Background:** Nutrient intakes from complementary foods are often suboptimal in
10 subsistent farming households of developing countries, but little is known about this in
11 pastoralist communities.

12 **Objective:** The objective of the present study was to estimate the energy and nutrient
13 intake of children aged 6-23 months living in pastoralist communities of Ethiopia.

14 **Method:** As part of the Ethiopian National Food Consumption Survey, 24h dietary recall
15 data was collected, through in-home interviews, from a nationally representative sample.
16 In this study, we report on the feeding characteristics, energy and nutrient intakes of
17 infants and young children (aged 6-23 months) living in pastoralist communities (n= 896)
18 of Ethiopia. Energy and nutrient intakes were estimated and compared with estimated
19 needs from complementary foods. The nutrient density of the complementary diets was
20 compared with desired densities.

21 **Results:** About one-third of the children were stunted. The diet was predominantly dairy
22 and cereal-based. Dietary diversity score was low (2.0 ±1.2); Consumption of nutrient-
23 dense foods such as animal source foods (other than milk), vitamin A-rich fruits and
24 vegetables was very low. Energy intakes from complementary foods were inadequate.
25 Multiple-micronutrient deficiencies including thiamin, niacin, iron, zinc, and calcium and
26 in some instances vitamin-A and C were observed among young children. The number of
27 micronutrients for which intakes were found deficient increased with child's age.

28 **Conclusion:** Energy and nutrient intakes from complementary foods are inadequate in
29 pastoralist communities of Ethiopia. Interventions that improve knowledge and practice
30 of complementary feeding are needed in this setting.

31 **Keywords:** Complementary feeding, anthropometry, nutrient intake, stunting,
32 micronutrients, breastfeeding

33

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