BREASTFEEDING, VACCINATION AND VALUATION OF NUTRITION OF THE CHILDREN IN SARAJEVO IN THE WAR - COORDINATION WITH UNICEF

INTRODUCTION

With the beginning of the war and the ghettoization of Sarajevo, nutrition, health, and the lives of the children in Sarajevo were jeopardized. That is mainly related to the most vulnerable part of children's population, newborns and to the children that breastfeed.

Lack of elementary supplies, gas, heating, and elementary instruments for life etc. this is very known to all of you, so let us not repeat it here, we were living through all these times together with the children's parents.

I have to say that the most jeopardized were the children that did not breastfeed, so they needed the adapted milk.

This total situation has lead us, as health workers from the field of children's protection, to systematically solve the problem of children's nutrition. Unfortunately do to the lack of financial needs not all parts of children's population have been included. This was a great handicap, as it shall be seen in the following analysis. Our work was mainly occupied by the most sensitive part of children's population- newborns and the children that breastfeed, children up to 3 years of age, sometimes even up to 7 years of age, and also malnutrition.

We owe a great gratitude to UNICEF for the help to our children that they have shown, their understanding, big humanitarian help that they have provided to us during the period of war, beginning in February 1993 and until now, they have organized that coordination and help in the most efficient way, and also incorporated some other kind of prevention of children's health with the nutrition program. Without that help I have to say that some of our children would not have survived and not to mention the damages and permanent invalides caused by the lack of food.
We have received some help from other humanitarian organizations, but I have to say that that was not systematic and from time to time so this mainly depended on individuals and their connections.

During the entire war the pediatric service has analyzed the health of children. Together with our medical treatment of the sick children we gave our great effort to make this program, the program of nutrition, because we are aware of the fact how much good nutrition is important to the health of a child.

Work and analyzes that will be shown are related to 1993 and 1994, for all ages. The analyzes for 1995 are still in the process so they shall be shown at the end of this year.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF UNICEF'S PROGRAM

The cooperation between the preventive pediatric service and UNICEF has begun in February 1993 /G. Manuel, Dr. Jaganjac, Dr. Ademović, Dr. Pleho/. That cooperation is still alive.

The distribution of food has been continuous during the entire 1994, every month. From the beginning of this year the distribution has changed, it is every second month now due to the well known reasons.

The food has been distributed to every child aged up to 3 years to mothers that breastfeed their children and to pregnant women, this has been done by the nutricionistic concept/the quantity has not been satisfactory in the last times/-by the standards SZO 3,1 kg of milk monthly.

We have to make a remark now. We have to state that the quantity of food in the beginning were more than written by the standards, many other humanitarian organizations were involved, they helped with food and also with clothing. However, in the last months the donations are rather poor, but it is very important to state that a continuous nutrition for children is very important, including milk. Families have became so poor that they ca not provide that for their children.
Great attention has been given to the improvement of breastfeeding, so mothers that breastfeed their children were extra stimulated, this has been shown as a right thing, because with other good factors I have to state that the percentage of the mothers that breastfeed their children has increased. This all shall be shown later.

Every pregnant women from her third month of pregnancy, has been donated by food monthly and also she was given advices about breastfeeding.

Until January 1995 children that do not breastfeed were donated by the adapted milk/3.1 kg monthly/ aged until 6 months. That donation has been stopped this year.

Food for children from 1-3 years of age was satisfactory when talking about its quality/ milk, biskvits, different bottles of fruits and vegetables, and carbohydrates products/ however the quantity was unsatisfactory. If we consider the help that was received from different humanitarian organizations, and also by the enormous help of parents we can say that the children did not starve. It is very clearly stated here how important it is for a child to receive a meal that includes milk.

Distribution of food has been done in the pediatric buildings in the city that included 11 places. This was done in such a way so that the parents and the children would not be endangered by the granades and snypers or better to say less endangered. This year this has been organized in 3 punkts.

Every month a program of distribution has been made. This has been done by the instructions that were given by the UNICEF Office. Monthly the average distribution of milk and biskvits is 30 tons; adapted milk 1 ton, (until 1995) and about 10,000 different boilie foods, and also different kinds of food-juices, margarine, dried fruit. Every month 10,000 -13,000 users have been supplied. In average 2,000 hours have been used up.

PROGRAM AND GOALS