**TO: PROFESSOR ROB MOODIE (MPH)**

**FROM: MYNESS KASANDA**

**PATRICIA SHAWA**

**CC: ASANTE SAJIWA (MPH COORDINATOR)**

**TITLE: BARRIERS TO ATTAINING ADEQUATE NUTRITION DURING PREGNANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD (LEARNING BY LIVING).**

**DATE: 25th AUGUST, 2016**

**INTRODUCTION**

Nutritional needs are greatest during the period of 0 to 2 years for a human being. However, barriers exist for pregnant mothers and children to attaining adequate nutrition which poses a risk to a healthy life. It is against this background that this assessment was conducted in Kwilembe village T/A Jalasi in Mangochi to uncover the barriers.

**OBJECTIVE**

* To identify barriers contributing to malnutrition during pregnancy and childhood ( 0 – 2 years)

**METHODOLOGY**

In order to obtain the information, this assessment used focus group discussions, individual interviews and observation.

**RESULTS**

The following were the barriers identified;

* Poverty – lack of adequate resources to enable them access basic needs including food and diversify diets.
* Culture and religion- pregnant women being forbidden to take eggs and religious beliefs not allowing them to eat pork and mice.
* Pica – a condition where pregnant women prefer nonfood items e.g. soil.
* Unequal access to relief food items due to political influence with other vulnerable people like pregnant women and children being left out.
* Climate change effects – has resulted in poor yields contributing to inadequate access to food and limited dietary diversity.

**REFLECTION**

* Despite the barriers, there also exists opportunities for enhancing good nutrition such as basic understanding of nutrition issues, availability of Government Health Surveillance staff and local knowledge and skills in food preparation.
* Based on the findings, it is also clear Obtaining a comprehensive picture of the nutrition situation depends on both internal and external factors such as the physical, socio cultural, political and economic environment.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, people in the community possess basic knowledge and understanding of nutritional issues. However, there are other factors that hinder them from putting the knowledge into practice necessary for attaining adequate nutrition.