

Health and Nutrition. Problems and Interventions after 25 years of Democracy

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the main nutritional problems affecting the Argentinean population, and to what extent the National programs have succeeded in improving the nutritional situation. It is proposed to analyze health and socioeconomic indicators by region, using data from the last National Survey of Nutrition and Health from the Argentinean Health Ministry, implemented in 2005 and spread in 2007.

Besides, a review of National nutrition programs in last the two decades in Argentina is carried out, according to available literature and including comments from local specialists and stakeholders. Main objectives were to analyze the universe and beneficiary population selection, the kind of intervention and the source of financing.

The study allows to conclude that alter 25 years of changing policy and interventions, great inequity gaps still exist. Provinces with lower social and sanitary indicators (Argentinean Northeastern and Northwestern regions) present higher percentages of low weight and chronic under nutrition. Besides, obesity presents as a growing problem, and anemia (iron deficit) is still far from being considered under control.

However, the execution of nutritional programs shows a learning process over time, seen as a deeper management decentralization and the use of own financial sources instead of international loans. Also, the presence of civil social organizations in the management and supply within these programs grew during the nineties, and was almost abandoned later in time. Finally, there is still a debate around the intervention mechanisms (direct food provision, community kitchens, money transference, etc.) and a deeper analysis about the cost and efficacy of each intervention needs to be developed.

The articulation between the different actors that participate in the design and execution of the mentioned policies presents as one of the main challenges for public policy decision makers, as well as the definition of efficient mechanisms that could help to transfer diverse capacities to the beneficiaries for time periods that exceed those considered by the duration of the programs.

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