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**PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS**

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**Nutritional status of children of identified poor communities in Jaffna divisional secretariat area**

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Nutritional intervention of children from economically vulnerable groups is imperative to improve the nutritional status and living conditions of households. The objective of this study was to determine the nutritional status of children of poor communities in the Jaffna Divisional Secretariat area. A descriptive cross sectional study was used to select the children (n=341) from poor community in Jaffna divisional secretary. A total of eight Grama Niladhari divisions comprised of economically vulnerable groups among 28 Grama Niladhari divisions in Jaffna Divisional Secretariat area were selected based on their living standards classified at Divisional Secretary office. Data were collected using interviewer administered questionnaire and the collection of anthropometric data (weight, height and skinfold thickness). The information on household details, socio-economic factors and demographic information were collected through the questionnaire. The mean age of the children was  $31.2 \pm 15.3$  months and ranged between 01 to 59 months. There were 177 males (51.9%) and 164 females (48.1%). Mean weight and height of the children were  $10.9 \pm 2.7$  and  $85.2 \pm 11.4$ , respectively. The highest percentage of the households (36.7%) received the income between LKR 5000 and 10000. The prevalence of wasting, underweight, stunting and overweight were 16.1 (n=55), 28.4 (n=97), 35.5 (n=121) and 0.3 % (n=1) respectively. This study concludes that undernutrition especially chronic malnutrition was high among children who identified from the poor communities.

**Keywords:** Poor community, stunting, underweight, wasting.

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