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Topic: The first 1000 days, infant feeding, and early childhood development

Title: LONG TERM EFFECTS OF GUATEMALAN REFUGEES EXPOSURE TO FAMINE IN CHIAPAS, MEXICO Higher risk of chronic diseases as result of metabolic programming during pregnancy and early childhood

Presentation Type: Oral

In 1982, the flow of Guatemalan refugees to Mexico reached its peak as a result of the "scorched earth" policy implemented by the military against the indigenous peasant population, accused of supporting insurgent organizations. One of the main actions of this policy was the destruction of homes, food and crops. This added a far greater number of victims caused by hunger and disease to the deaths and suffering caused solely by armed actions.

Higher risk of developing hypertension, obesity, dyslipidemias and type 2 diabetes is being studied as a long term effect of the nutritional stress experienced by Guatemalan refugees in Chiapas, Mexico who were either in utero or less than two years of age during the years of the worst humanitarian Guatemalan Civil War crisis (1982-1983). Prevalences are compared with those of Mexican individuals of the same range of ages of the same regions who were not exposed to the same nutritional stress. The results of the project are expected to contribute to review the current emergency interventions protocols, and to strengthen protection of pregnant and breastfeeding women and children younger than 36 months old.

The project also analyzes the social representations of obesity, diabetes, dyslipidemias and hypertension. The results will contribute to implement a prevention program, that will include the training of community members to follow-up and advice newly diagnosed individuals.