

# Process Evaluation of Suaahara: Frontline Workers (FLW) Study

August 2014—July 2015

An entirely qualitative study to document the mid-level impacts of Suaahara programme

## Project Objectives:

- To assess whether Suaahara's key messages, tools and materials have reached frontline workers and the extent to which Suaahara knowledge and skills have been retained
- To assess the extent to which frontline workers use the knowledge, skills and materials provided by Suaahara to provide better services to 1000-day mothers
- To understand what factors motivate or de-motivate (incentives, supervision, workload, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, etc.) FLW performance, specifically of Suaahara-related sectors (HFP, nutrition, WASH, etc.)
- To evaluate service delivery including the quality of interactions provided by FLWs to 1000 day mothers.
- To discover the types and level of exposure to Suaahara messages among FLWs and what influences this exposure.
- To understand FLW's perception re: demand for FLW services by 1000 day mothers.
- To assess FLW cross-sector collaboration.

## Team Members:

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## Project Summary

The *Suaahara* programme supports the Government of Nepal to tackle the poor nutritional status of women and children in the first 1,000 days of life in 25 districts over five years. The programme focuses on improving health and nutrition behaviours at the household level through promotion of Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA), particularly Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), and addressing other determinants of under-nutrition, such as availability of and access to food, hygiene, quality health care, child spacing and socio-cultural factors including gender and marginalisation. The five main programme areas under *Suaahara* are: maternal and child nutrition; maternal, newborn, and child health services; family planning; water, sanitation, and hygiene; and agriculture and homestead food production.

### Methods

Qualitative Data collection methods were used which included Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and Shadowing. The study sample was 40 FGDs and 80 Shadowing in 4 districts: Darchula, Rupandehi, Sindhupalchowk and Syangja. The data was collected in each of the 20 VDCs (5 per sampled district). The study participants were *Suaahara* field supervisors, Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV), Auxiliary Health Workers (AHW), Assistant Nurse Midwives (ANM), traditional healers, *Suaahara* peer facilitators and the representative from VDC level nutrition and food steering committee, representative from Ward Citizen Forum (WCF), Homestead Food Production (HFP) mothers group representatives, village model farmers, community hygiene and sanitation facilitators, representatives from livestock and agriculture office and Citizen Awareness Centre (CAC) representatives.

### Findings

- FLWs seem to be retaining the information gained from orientation and trainings provided by *Suaahara* and have been imparting the information to the beneficiaries as well.

- The health workers and FCHVs come in frequent contact with *Suaahara's* target group and they have already been raising awareness on different aspects of health regularly.
- The non-health FLWs who generally comprised of WCF members, VDC representatives, CAC members, SMs, WASH representatives and occasionally members from LSC and ASC were aware of specific *Suaahara* messages.
- Most of them think that the program has brought positive changes in the lives of people, but there seems to be a need for greater engagement of the non-health FLWs and encouraging of collaboration across the sectors in dissemination of information and also to promote ownership of the program.
- While the program's multi-sectoral approach has been identified by most FLWs as its strength and while it has initiated and facilitated interaction among FLWs of various sectors, the coordination mechanisms are not as strong as expected.
- Since the FLWs have acknowledged the value of the multi-sectoral approach, the program needs to find ways to more consistently engage with FLWs from all sectors.
- Additionally, the program seems to be facing challenge in managing expectations of the beneficiaries, especially related to the physical inputs.