

Process evaluation of 'Suaahara Programme'

February 2015– November 2015



Programme focused on evaluating and documenting the mechanisms of coordinations at National and Sub national and the challenges and barriers for the same

Project Objectives:

- To understand the roles and responsibilities of multi-sectoral bodies at national, district, and sub-district levels towards nutrition and how these bodies function and coordinate
- To understand Suaahara's contribution to facilitating better coordination for nutrition among government structures at national, district, and sub-district levels
- To discover facilitators and barriers/challenges of coordination among different bodies involved in nutrition programming, including during implementation
- To document the process through which policies, plans, and budgets are designed and implemented for promotion of health and nutrition at national, district, and sub-district levels.

Team Members:

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Project Summary

Suaahara process evaluation advances understanding about whether, how, and why the *Suaahara* intervention is being implemented as planned and program components being utilized. It also helps *Suaahara* identify the weaknesses in the current design with enough time to make mid-course corrections to the program and achieve high-level impacts. This process evaluation is based on the "theories of change" model, which maps the ways in which the flow from interventions through impact is anticipated using program impact pathways (PIP). Based on the PIP, Policy Environment and Governance Structure (PEGS), which is mainly focused on strengthened the coordination between government and other actors on nutrition. This includes coordination with government bodies at different levels and formation of committees and groups to mobilize commitment to improving the nutritional status of women and children at the community level. This study evaluates the processes used and the extent of coordination at different levels of government structures, as well as other agencies and groups working to improve nutritional status.

Methodology

This study was a qualitative study conducted at the national (Kathmandu), regional (Doti, Dhangadhi and Pokhara), district (Darchula, Rupandehi and Sindhupalchowk), and VDC levels (6 VDC). Study methods included in-depth interviews (IDIs) (n=128) and document review (DR) (n=882). The data were collected from government representatives, *Suaahara* partner organizations, and *Suaahara* itself.

Findings

- The Multi Sectoral Nutrition Plan (MSNP) has been understood as bringing different sectors together for addressing issues of malnutrition.
- Regional Nutrition and Food Security Steering Committees (RNFSSCs) committees in both regions were almost non-functional while district and VDC level committees were somewhat functional.
- Unfilled positions, short lasting posts, and some protocol issues relating to seniority and hierarchies all contribute to challenges in organizing such types of meetings.
- There has been improved coordination among different stakeholders because *Suaahara* has created a platform to come together and learn about one another's work through such committees.
- Frequent transfers of staff, lack of elected representatives in the district and VDC level positions, and lack of equal ownership of the program from the government stakeholders were the challenges observed in the multi-sectoral approach.
- *Suaahara* is participating and pushing nutrition forward as an agenda at every stage of VDC planning, to allocate a certain amount for nutrition for 1000 day mothers and their children.
- *Suaahara* has earned the trust of both the government and the Nepali people and has been acknowledging at all levels.
- The MSNP has brought together different sectors working in nutrition and has initiated and facilitated continuous vertical and horizontal coordination for nutrition.