

36th NATIONAL NUTRITION CLUSTER MEETING VIA ZOOM LINK

KATHMANDU, NEPAL

22 Shrawan 2078 (06 August 2021)

After COVID-19 onset, this the 36th meeting of National Nutrition Cluster jointly with Provincial Nutrition Clusters of 7 provinces. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DoHS/MoHP as well as Nutrition Cluster lead of Federal Level Nutrition Cluster and co-chaired by the Mr. Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF as well as Cluster co-lead. Altogether 100 Plus participants from different organizations were invited out of which 65 plus attended via zoom link.

AGENDA FOR NUTRITION CLUSTER MEETING

| Time | Agenda Items |
|--------------------|---|
| 1:00 AM to 3:00 PM | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Chair of the meeting, welcome to the participants: Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, National Nutrition Cluster-lead2. Sharing of meeting agenda: Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF and National Nutrition cluster co-lead3. Major updates of nutrition cluster: Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, National Nutrition Cluster lead4. Updates from the provincial nutrition cluster lead (PHD Directors): - major briefs/key achievements, key issues, and way forwards/action points5. Updates from Nutrition Cluster Technical Working Groups6. Remarks from the Director of Family Welfare Division of DOHS/MoHP7. Speech from the Director General of Department of Health Services of MoHP8. Remarks with the closing of the meeting: Chair of the meeting - Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, Nutrition Cluster lead |

Major Decisions:

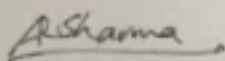
Decision 1: Agreed all provinces to develop action plan of nutrition program considering COVID-19 situation for this Fiscal Year and start implementation.

Decision 2: Agreed government and World Food Program to distribute super cereal in most flood affected areas.

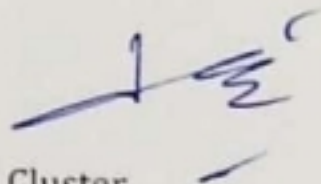
Decision 3: Decision made to request Management Division to accelerate procurement process of MNP which should be made available before 1st round of Vitamin -A distribution Campaign of this FY (Kartik 2nd and 3rd). MNP is distributed to 6-23 months of children along with Vitamin-A campaign.

The next National Nutrition Cluster Meeting (37th Meeting) will be held on 18 Bhadra, 2078 (i.e. 3rd September 2021) from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM via zoom link.

Signed by the Co-Chair of the Nutrition Cluster Meeting: Signed by the Chair of the Nutrition Cluster Meeting:



Mr. Anirudra Sharma
Co-lead, National Nutrition Cluster
22 Shrawan 2078 (06 August 2021)
From: United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF)



Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli
Lead, national Nutrition Cluster
22 Shrawan 2078 (06 August 2021)
From: Government of Nepal (GoN)

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| Major Discussion/Action points |
| Agenda 1: Chair of the meeting, welcome and sharing of meeting agenda |
| <p>Chair of the meeting: Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DoHS/MoHP as well as Nutrition Cluster lead of Federal Level Nutrition Cluster chaired the session with co-chairing by Mr. Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF, and co-lead of National Nutrition cluster</p> <p>Welcome and sharing of meeting agenda: Chair of meeting Mr. Kedar Parajuli welcomed all the participants and Mr. Anirudra Sharma co-chair shared the meeting agenda.</p> <p>This is the 36th virtual meeting of national nutrition cluster jointly with provincial nutrition cluster after the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. Altogether more than 65 Participants participated in the meeting (see annex 1 for details of the participants list)</p> |
| Agenda 2: Updates from National Nutrition cluster |
| MR. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DoHS/MoHP as well as Nutrition Cluster lead provided the brief update on situation of COVID-19 and nutrition status of country. The updates have been included in Annex II: |
| Agenda 3: Updates from the provincial nutrition cluster lead (PHD Directors): – major briefs/key achievements, key issues, and way forwards/action points |
| <p>The Directors/representatives from all 7 provinces presented the overall situation of COVID-19 and progress made by the nutrition cluster of their respective provinces since last meeting, which was held on Friday 21st Jestha, 2078 (4th June, 2021). Following Directors/representatives presented the major highlights, achievements, issues, challenges, and way forward of their respective provinces as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Aditya Shrestha, Public Health Officer Provincial Health Directorate, Province 1 2. Mr. Vijay Jha, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 2 3. Mr. Purushottam Aryal, MSNP Coordinator Bagmati Province 4. Mr. Nani Babu Dani, Provincial Health Directorate, Gandaki Province 5. Mr. Kaushal Bhandari, Nutrition Focal Point, Provincial Health Directorate, Lumbini Province 6. Mr. Man Kumari Gurung, Nutrition Focal Point, Provincial Health Directorate, Karnali Province 7. Dr. Guna Raj Awasthi, Provincial Health Directorate, Sudurpaschim Province <p>Action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue orientation of simplified treatment approach to health coordinators of the local governments and health workers of the OTCs. • Continue service monitoring of ongoing nutrition interventions. • Preposition of Nutrition commodities for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in the most emergency affected areas. • Continue federal government’s presence for OTC reviews. • Identify appropriate way to accelerate implementation of current Fiscal year’s AWPB • Continue regular nutrition program and ensure adequate Nutrition Supplies at all health facilities. • Provincial Health Logistic Management Center to update the logistic information of the health facilities (OTCs/NRH) and timely supply the nutrition commodities as per demand. • Identify the appropriate ways to accelerate to implement nutrition programme as per the AWPB of FY 2078/2079 |

After the presentation and discussion from the Provincial Health Directorates, Mr. Anirudra Sharma visualized the following status of SAM treatment in Nepal from Magh 2077 to Ashadh 2078 (January-June 2021):

| Provinces | Annual burden of SAM | Magh | | Phagun | | Chaitra | | Baishakh | | Jestha | | Ashadh | | Total OTCs | Total NRH | Total SAM admission | Coverage (%) |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | | OTCs | NRH | OTCs | NRH | OTCs | NRH | OTCs | NRH | OTCs | NRH | OTCs | NRH | | | | |
| Province 1 | 37,976 | 19 | 21 | 32 | 24 | 24 | 20 | 17 | 22 | 15 | 3 | 39 | 11 | 146 | 101 | 247 | 0.7 |
| Province 2 | 69,951 | 107 | 41 | 109 | 29 | 292 | 38 | 236 | 61 | 158 | 28 | 759 | 22 | 1,661 | 219 | 1,880 | 2.7 |
| Bagmati Province | 20,308 | 25 | 7 | 37 | 5 | 46 | 7 | 40 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 30 | 21 | 185 | 50 | 235 | 1.2 |
| Gandaki Province | 12,797 | 10 | 15 | 25 | 34 | 49 | 26 | 12 | 16 | 6 | 17 | 23 | 19 | 125 | 127 | 252 | 2 |
| Lumbini Province | 52,361 | 76 | 16 | 92 | 13 | 145 | 31 | 114 | 31 | 65 | 18 | 256 | 31 | 748 | 140 | 888 | 1.7 |
| Karnali Province | 20,242 | 50 | 77 | 67 | 58 | 96 | 43 | 64 | 50 | 45 | 3 | 49 | 9 | 371 | 240 | 611 | 3 |
| Sudurpashchim Province | 30,116 | 94 | 16 | 131 | 13 | 187 | 31 | 145 | 31 | 72 | 8 | 247 | 18 | 876 | 117 | 993 | 3.3 |
| Nepal total | 257,018 | 381 | 193 | 493 | 176 | 839 | 196 | 628 | 216 | 368 | 82 | 1,403 | 131 | 4,112 | 994 | 5,106 | 2 |

Note: Based annual SAM burden, only 1% SAM cases have been admitted in Nepal from Magh 2077 to Ashadh 2078 (January-June 2021):

Agenda 4: Updates from Nutrition Cluster Technical Working Groups (IMAM, IYCF, BCC, Micro-nutrient, Information Management and Assessment TWG.

Presenters:

Ms. Bhim Pun, chair of IYCF TWG
 Mr. Naveen Poudyal, Chair of MN TWG
 Ms. Sangeeta Poudyal, Chair of Information Management TWG
 Mr. Sheela Shrestha, BCC TWG

Action points:

Common to all TWG:

- All TWG are requested to meet before the nutrition cluster meeting and discuss about technical issues/matters of nutrition in emergencies.
- The chairs of all TWG need to attend the cluster meeting and brief their concerned TWG progress, issues/lesson learned and way forwards.

IYCF TWG:

- Finalize IYCF-E checklist /tools in our context that developed by Global Nutrition cluster in Nepal context.
- Revise IYCF-E key messages in context of Emergency.

BCC TWG:

- Broadcast radio PSAs on prioritizing pregnant and lactating women during mealtime and for nutritious food continues.
- Initiate communication interventions to promote breastfeeding during upcoming breastfeeding week.

MN TWG:

- Discuss and document in the Nutrition technical committee (NUTEC) where already separate technical group is working..

Assessment TWG:

- Reinitiate discussion for SMART survey in province number 2.
- Initiate dialogue to adjust altitude for measuring stunting in new population-based surveys like NDHS, NMICS, NLSS to estimate stunting prevalence. This may appear one of major issues in days to come. It was decided to do a presentation on it in the cluster meeting.

IM TWG:

- Continue covid tracking and 3W mapping from all cluster partners. All partners are requested to fill the tracking sheet and back to the Chair of IM TWG.
- Develop nutrition cluster bulletin.
- Follow with provincial nutrition cluster to update cluster member list of all 7 clusters.

Dr. Taranath Pokharel, Director, Family Welfare Division of DoHS/MoHP:

- Dr Pokharel welcome to New Director General of DoHS/MoHP Dr Ram Padarath Bichha and thanked to all participants for their presence in the 36th nutrition cluster meeting. And he asked to Dr Bichha to give his valuable remarks.

Dr. Ram Padarath Bichha, Director General of DoHS provided major highlights as follows:

- Dr Bichha was welcomed first by the Dr Taranath Pokharel, Director of Family Welfare Division of DoHS/MoHP and requested to deliver his speech.
- Dr Bichha highlighted that he was Director of Family Welfare Division few years ago and he mostly thinks that he is at Family Welfare Division also.
- He added that because of his background as senior pediatrician, nutrition is in his heart and wants to hear from all that the programme has been moving very smoothly.
- Malnutrition is not a disease but also a complex result of different consequences. Within the definition of malnutrition, overweight/obesity has been an emerging issue also. Therefore, we need to consider malnutrition as a whole such as; stunting, wasting, micro-nutrient deficiencies and overweight/obesity.
- Whatever the rate of stunting has been reduced, that is not enough to for the reduction of malnutrition. All key indicators of malnutrition should be reduced, and we need to work to reduce all forms of malnutrition.
- We need to work for GAP analysis at macro and micro levels and GAP analysis should be done on based on socio-economic status, coverage, and interventions of nutrition programme etc.
- Dr Bichha also gave several examples of Indian experience "Dalia intervention" to bring the change on nutrition situation of children and women through behaviour change communication and specific interventions by using local available nutritious food. He further added the example of Nigeria to improve the nutrition situation of school going children also.
- Dr Bichha also requested to all provincial health authorities to bring innovative ideas to improve nutrition programme also.
- DG feels that the successes DG position depends on the successes of all divisions, provinces including nutrition programme successes at all levels so that he feels proud on this.
- He appreciated Dr Guna Raj Awasthi and hoped that he would work effectively with all stakeholders at all levels.
- Finally, he wished all the best to all participants of the meeting for successful nutrition programming and stopped his speech.

Agenda 6: Closing of meeting

- Mr. Anirudra Sharma, nutrition cluster co-lead and the meeting facilitator thanked to all participants of the meeting and expressed his gratefulness to the Director General Dr Ram Padarath Bichha, Director of FWD Dr Taranath Pokharel, national Nutrition Cluster lead, Provincial Health Directors and representative, representatives from Development partners and all members of provincial and federal level nutrition clusters. He expressed especial thanks to Mr. Kedar Parajuli, the national nutrition cluster coordinator for his active cluster leadership and national nutrition programme. Finally, he requested to Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli to close the meeting with the announcement of new meeting date.
- Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, the lead of national nutrition cluster and Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DoHS/MoHP thanked to the new Director General from DOHS Dr Rampadarath Bichha, Director of FWD Dr Tara Nath Pokharel, Nutrition cluster co-lead Mr. Anirudra Sharma, Provincial Health Directors and representatives from the PHD, representatives from development partners, all support agencies, provincial and federal level nutrition cluster team members, and all the health personnel attending in the meeting. Similarly, Mr. Parajuli requested to all the provincial participants to participate in the upcoming nutrition cluster meetings regularly.
- The implementation guideline for the implementation of new AWPB has been already forwarded to all provinces and local levels. Therefore, he requested to UNICEF, Suahaara, WFP and other support agencies to make aware to all local levels about to implement AWPB for FY 2078/079. Similarly, he requested to all provincial health team to go through the annual workplan and budget and initiate implementation of nutrition specific interventions on time.
- He further requested to all participants that nutrition is a very important interventions to fight against COVID-19. Therefore, we all need to work together for effective implementation of nutrition specific interventions.

Finally, Mr. Parajuli announced the next nutrition cluster meeting (37th Meeting) will be organized on 18 Bhadra, 2078 (i.e. 3rd September 2021) from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM via zoom link.

Annex 1: List of Participants in the meeting:

1. Dr Ram Padarath Bichha, Director General, DoHS/MoHP
2. Dr Tara Nath Pokharel, Director FWD/DoHS/MoHP
3. Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DOHS/MoHP –Nutrition cluster lead
4. Mr. Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF – Nutrition cluster co-lead
5. Dr. Guna Raj Awasthi, Director, PHD, Sudurpaschim Province
6. Mr. Aditya Shrestha, Nutrition Focal Point, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 1
7. Mr. Vijay Jha, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 2
8. Mr. Nani Babu Dani, Nutrition Focal Point, Provincial Health Directorate, Gandaki Province
9. Ms. Man Kumari Gurung, Nutrition Focal Point, Provincial Health Directorate, Karnali Province
10. Ms. Min Raj Joshi, Nutrition Focal Person, Provincial Health Directorate, Sudurpaschim Province
11. Ms. Sheela Shrestha, NHEICC
12. Mr. Naveen Poudyal, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
13. Mr. Gyan Bahadur Bhujel, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
14. Mr. Uttam Acharya, Nutrition Specialist, FAO/FANSEP
15. Ms. Bhim Pun, SAAHARA II /USAID
16. Ms. Sabina Hora, HKI
17. Ms. Puja Chand, NRH Dadeldhura
18. Mr. Indra Bahadur Bhujel, SAAHARA II /USAID
19. Mr. Jeevan Ghimire, Health Policy Officer, DFID
20. Ms. Sumi Maskey, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
21. Ms. Bindu Panthi, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
22. Mr. Deepak Thapa, NTAG
23. Mr. Harihar Sharma, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
24. Ms. Meena Gautam, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
25. Ms. Kalpana Pandey, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
26. Dr. Salil Rana, FWD/HKI
27. Ms. Anju Acharya, National Nutrition and Food Security Secretariat (NNFSS), National Planning Commission
28. Ms. Anju Adhikari, Nutrition section, FWD/UNICEF
29. Mr. Sher Singh Dahit, UNICEF/MOFA
30. Ms. Elina Sharma (NRH Okhaldhunga)
31. Ms. Rashmi Jha, NRH, Province 2
32. Ms. Rashmi Jha, NRH Rajbiraj
33. Mr. Amrit Gurung, WFP, Karnali Province
34. Mr. Sunil Khatiwada, SAAHARA II /USAID
35. Mr. Suraj Kumar Sharma-USAID/Suaahara II
36. Mr. Debendra Adhikari, Nutrition Specialist, USAID
37. Mr. Sudip Chiluwal, Program Coordinator, NEPHEG
38. Mr. Raj Nandan Mandal, Nutrition Advisor, SAAHARA II /USAID
39. Mr. Chiranjibi Dahal, SAAHARA II /USAID
40. Mr. KP Lamsal, Nutrition section, FWD/WFP
41. Mr. Rajendra Adhikari, Suaahara II/USAID, Surkhet
42. Mr. Bharat Sarma - Program Coordinator/Provincial Focal person Province-1, Suaahara II/USAID
43. Ms. Chitrakala Nepal, intern, FWD, Nutrition section
44. Mr. Suraj Kumar Sharma-USAID/Suaahara II
45. Ms. Gita Bista, NRH, Kailali
46. Ms. Sangita Khatri, Save the Children International
47. Mr. Subhash Gautam - Suaahara II, Province 1 coordinator
48. Mr. Purushottam Aryan, MSNP coordinator, Bagamati Province
49. Mr. Chiranjibi Dahal-program coordinator/provincial focal person, province-3, Suaahara II/USAID
50. Mr. Bhumiswar Sharma, Program Coordinator, Suaahara II/USAID

51. Mr. Deependra Chaudhari, Project Coordinator- Nutrition, Welthungerhilfe (WHH)
52. Ms. Chhamkala Kafle program manager (Bharatpur NRH)
53. Ms. Nisha Sharma, HKI
54. Mr. Gyanendra Dawadi, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Sudur Paschim Province
55. Mr. Man Bahadur Kunwar, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Karnali, Paschim Province
56. Mr. Bhumi Sharma, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Lumbini Province
57. Ms. Pabitra Sapkota, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Gandaki Province
58. Mr. Hemanta Jha, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Province number 2
59. Mr. Sanjiv Ghishing, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Province number 1
60. Ms. Geeta Bista, NRH Kailali
61. Ms. Ganga Limbu, NRH, Bhadrapur
62. Ms. Nirmaya Gurung, NRH Pokhara
63. Ms. Prativa AC, NPC
64. Mr. Lokendra Thapa, Province Coordinator, USAID/SUAAHARA Program, SUDUR PASHCHIM Province

Annex 2: 36th Meeting of National Nutrition Cluster 22 Shrawan 2078 (06 August 2021)

1. Situation of COVID-19 (as of 05 August 2022):

| Indicators | Global Situation | | National Situation | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
| | 15 July 2021 | 05 August 2021 | 15 July 2021 | 05 August 2021 |
| Number COVID-19 positive cases | 189,183,522 | 200,303,590 | 709,437 | 773,870 |
| Number of deaths among the positive cases | 4,074,687 (2.2%) | 4,259,650 (2.1%) | 9,463 (1.5%) | 9,994 (1.5%) |
| Number of Recovered | 172,809,853 (91.3%) | 180,563,030 (90.2%) | 626,468 (94.6%) | 663,663 (93.7%) |
| Number of PCR tested | NA | NA | Total Tested: 3,698,640 (Antigen: 252,054) | Total tested: 3,999,703 (Antigen:343,361) |
| Active COVID-19 cases among the Positive cases | 12,298,982 (6.5%) | 15,480,910 (7.7%) | 73,507 (10.36%) | 34,422 (8.6%) |
| Number of people in Ventilation and ICU | NA | NA | ICU: 164 Ventilator: 62 | ICU: 713 Ventilator: 158 |

Status of past 24 hours of COVID-19 in Nepal:

- Recovered: 2,012
- Deaths: 37
- Total COVID-19 tested: 18,406
- New COVID-19 cases: 3,938
- Total people vaccinated: 117,779

2. Major Progress made after 35th nutrition cluster meeting:

- 1,369 children aged 6-59 months with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) have been admitted and getting treatment in the 768 outpatient therapeutic centres and 22 nutrition rehabilitation homes.
- Ongoing celebration of World Breastfeeding Week (1-7 August) with different programme nationwide.
- Ongoing Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling for caregivers of children under two years in Point of Entry (PoEs) at the Indian borders of Lumbini and Sudurpaschim provinces.
- 1,486 G1000D families received nutritious relief packages from the local governments.
- 25,053 relief packages were distributed in isolation centers by the local government equivalent to NPR 72,28,485.
- 2,550 children aged 6-59 months supplemented vitamin A capsules in P1 and Bagamati province. Similarly, 1,916 children aged 12-59 months were deworm in same provinces.
- 66,473 pregnant and postnatal women received IFA tablets.
- 279,522 Households reached with radio messages on nutrition and IPC measures against COVID-19 through 122 FM radio services.
- 213,802 caregivers reached with SMS messages on Infant and Young Child Feeding and caring practices.
- 1,1096 children aged 6-23 months received MNP for the prevention and control of micro-nutrient deficiencies.
- 203,946 Pregnant & lactating women reached with IYCF messages through SMS.

- 34,100 Pregnant and Lactating Women counselled by telephone.
- Completed field tests of national QI guideline.
- Initiated the revision process school health and nutrition guideline with Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST).
- Circulated adolescent IFA guideline through MOEST to all schools.
- Programme of World breast feeding week celebration was circulated to all provinces and local levels through MoFAGA.
- Initiated procurement process of nutrition commodities and opened the BID.
- Completed orientation on “Simplified Approach” for the treatment of SAM and MAM and AWPB for 2078/079 to provincial health and nutrition stakeholders/cluster members and chief and nutrition focal points of District health Offices (DHO) of all 7 provinces. Similarly, same orientations have been completed in 16 districts with OTC review.

3. Issues and challenges

- Limited capacity of local governments to deliver essential nutrition services, early case findings, referral, and treatment of the under five years children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition.
- Lack of sufficient resources to meet the needs of supplementary food to 6-23 months children, pregnant and lactating women in the most affected areas.

4. Way forward/next steps:

- Complete orientation on Simplified approach to the stakeholders of district health offices; and all health workers and FCHVs for the treatment of the children 6-59 months with moderate and severe acute malnutrition in all 58 IMAM districts.
- Continue service monitoring of ongoing nutrition interventions.
- Ensure preposition of Nutrition commodities including Supercereal for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition in the most emergency affected areas.
- Ensure supply provisions (RUTF) for the treatment of the children under five years with SAM and MAM and increase treatment of SAM and MAM children at the OTCs by using simplified approach.
- Continue federal government’s presence for OTC reviews.
- Identify appropriate way to accelerate implementation of current Fiscal year’s annual workplan and budget (AWPB) of FY 2078/079 for nutrition specific interventions.