Lactation management in Nepal: A scalable model for increasing early and exclusive breastfeeding

Global Maternal Newborn Health Conference, Mexico City, October 19, 2015
Suaahara: Overview

Goal: Improve the nutritional status of women and children < 2 years

Result 1: Household nutrition, health and hygiene behaviors improved

Result 2: Use of quality nutrition and health services by women and children increased

Result 3: Consumption of diverse and nutritious food by women and their families increased

Result 4: Coordination on nutrition between government and other actors strengthened
Suaahara Interventions

• Promoting of health, nutrition and hygiene behaviors at home through social behavior change communication (*Bhanchhin Aama* radio program & interpersonal communication delivered by volunteers and health workers)

• Training health workers in nutrition, family planning and hygiene (plus counseling, group facilitation and other skills) to improve quality and increase demand

• Homestead food production, material support for gardens and latrines, radio groups
Suaahara: Intervention districts

**Suaahara**
A 5-year (2011-2016) multi-sector nutrition project in 41 districts to reach over 625,000 households
Objectives of the process evaluation study:

• Assess overall program exposure to various *Suaahara* platforms
• Understand the frequency with which households are exposed to front line workers and the content of these interactions
• Understand whether the strategy targeting disadvantaged households was implemented as designed
• Assess update of *Suaahara*-promoted health and nutrition behaviors
Ward Level Sampling

- 1 DAG pregnant women
- 1 Non-DAG pregnant women
- 1 DAG mother of <2y child
- 1 Non-DAG mother of <2y child
### Sample Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intervention (n=232)</th>
<th>Comparison (n=240)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (in completed years)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Hindu</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% with electricity</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of animals owned</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mothers’ knowledge of early and exclusive breastfeeding

- **Initiate BF within one hour of birth***: Suaahara 91% vs. Comparison 73%
- **Give colostrum***: Suaahara 88% vs. Comparison 95%
- **Definition of EBF***: Suaahara 16% vs. Comparison 68%

*p < 0.05; **p<0.001*
Use of ANC and delivery care

- Any ANC*: 86% (Comparison), 95% (Suaahara)
- Institutional Delivery*: 48% (Comparison), 68% (Suaahara)
- Skilled attendant at delivery: 52% (Comparison), 67% (Suaahara)

*p < 0.05
Breastfeeding related support immediately after delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Suaahara</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling on breastfeeding</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration of BF</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration of positioning**</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with positioning***</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration of attachment**</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with attachment***</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
Breastfeeding practices

Fed colostrum*

- Comparison: 75%
- Suaahara: 94%

Exclusive breastfeeding (alternative)*

- Comparison: 51%
- Suaahara: 77%

*p<0.05
Breastfeeding practices in 16 districts at baseline

- Fed colostrum: 89% (Comparison) vs. 93% (Suaahara)
- Exclusive breastfeeding: 53% (Comparison) vs. 46% (Suaahara)

* *p<0.05; data collected by IFPRI*
Conclusions

• High levels of breastfeeding knowledge can be attained in a short period of time, using multiple intervention strategies

• Achieving high rates of early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding is possible at a large scale in a relatively short period of time

• Proper support immediately after delivery seems to be key in achieving early and exclusive breastfeeding success
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