Adaptation by a large-scale integrated nutrition program in the context of COVID-19 in Nepal

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A multi-sector nutrition project (2016-2023) operating at scale in 42 districts to reach over 900,000 households (2 million women & children).

About this project:

Suaahara or Integrated Nutrition Project’s objective is to improve the health and nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women and children under two years of age, thereby directly addressing the vulnerable points of development which result in chronic undernutrition or stunting.

The project aims to prevent stunting in children and increase the health and nutritional status of women and children under two years of age by improving: nutrition; maternal, newborn and child health services; family planning services; water, sanitation and hygiene; and home based gardening. The project also supports provincial and local governments to strengthen multi-sector nutrition governance.
COVID-19 and Nepal

47,000+ positive cases

Movement restrictions

Nutrition and Health services disrupted

- Loss in remittances
- Psycho-social problems
- Food insecurity rising
- 60,000 additional children at risk of malnutrition
Virtual trainings and follow-up
28,677 community service providers

Interpersonal communication on COVID-19 via tele-counselling
2.4 million people

Counseling on maternal and child nutrition
669,817 families

Diversified social media
4 million views

Personalized SMS messages
1.7 million people

Referral to health facilities and humanitarian programs
72,153 households

Nutrition commodity tracking and support
3,103 health facilities

Digital innovation is reaching millions of people
Helping vulnerable communities manage during COVID-19

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<th>Target</th>
<th>Empower</th>
<th>Strengthen</th>
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<td>• Focus on reaching the most marginalized</td>
<td>• Invest in families to assess malnutrition</td>
<td>• Scale-up nutrition interventions for equity, accessibility and quality</td>
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<td>• Link households to existing food aid and social protection services</td>
<td>• Maintain homestead food production</td>
<td>• Support health workers through use of information, communication &amp; technologies</td>
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<td>• Inform and support for behavior change</td>
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What we’ve learned!

- **Prioritize** links to services by frontline workers

- **Intensify** targeted support to protect the most vulnerable children and their families

- **Respond** more effectively by using program data insights

- **Listen** to clients and **adjust** the program to need
USAID’s funding is helping millions of families in Nepal.

Suaahara II gratefully acknowledges the Government of Nepal for their leadership.

Thank you!