

31<sup>st</sup> NATIONAL NUTRITION CLUSTER MEETING VIA ZOOM LINK

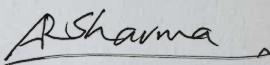
KATHMANDU, NEPAL

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> Chaitra, 2077 (26<sup>th</sup> April, 2021)

The Nutrition cluster was officially activated, led by the Family Welfare Division (FWD) of Department of Health Services (DoHS) of Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) to initiate nutrition preparedness and response actions to address nutrition issues in existing COVID-19 targeting to under five years children, pregnant and lactating women and elderly (50 years plus) population. This is the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting after activating the nutrition cluster for COVID-19 preparedness and response. 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 People from different organizations were invited out of which 55 plus attended via zoom link.

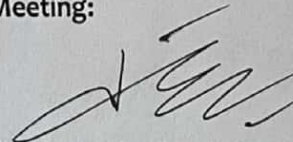
AGENDA FOR NUTRITION CLUSTER MEETING	
Time	Agenda Items
11:00 A.M To 1:00 P.M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chair of the meeting, welcome to the participants: Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, National Nutrition Cluster-lead</li><li>• Sharing of meeting agenda: Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF and National Nutrition cluster co-lead</li><li>• Major updates of nutrition cluster: Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, National Nutrition Cluster lead</li><li>• Updates from the provincial nutrition cluster lead (PHD Directors): – major briefs/key achievements, key issues, and way forwards/action points</li><li>• Updates from Nutrition Cluster Technical Working Groups (IMAM, IYCF, BCC, Micro-nutrient, Information Management, Assessment)</li><li>• Remarks from National Planning Commission</li><li>• Remarks from the Director of Family Welfare Division of DOHS/MoHP</li><li>• Remarks with the closing of the meeting: Chair of the meeting - Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section, Nutrition Cluster lead</li></ul>
<b>Major Decisions:</b> <b>Decision 1:</b> Focuses will be given for the protection, promotion and support for breast feeding through different media. <b>Decision 2:</b> All provincial clusters will draft the nutrition in emergency preparedness and response plan (monsoon) considering current COVID-19 context. <b>Decision 3:</b> All technical working groups will meet immediately and come up with specific actions points to address the nutrition issues in current COVID-19 context. <b>Decision 4:</b> Provincial nutrition clusters to be attentive at point of entry and isolation centers for the treatment of acute malnutrition of the children under five years of age and IYF counselling. <b>Decision 5:</b> Next meeting is schedule on 31 <sup>st</sup> Baisakh, 2078 (14 <sup>th</sup> May 2021)	

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



Mr. Anirudra Sharma  
Co-lead, National Nutrition Cluster  
13<sup>th</sup> Baisakh, 2078 (26<sup>th</sup> April 2021)  
From: United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Signed by the Chair of the Nutrition Cluster Meeting:



Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli  
Lead, national Nutrition Cluster  
13<sup>th</sup> Baisakh, 2077 (26<sup>th</sup> April 2021)  
From: Government of Nepal (GoN)

Major Discussion/Action points

**Agenda 1: Chair of the meeting, welcome and sharing of meeting agenda**

**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

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.

This is the 31<sup>st</sup> virtual meeting of national nutrition cluster jointly with provincial nutrition cluster after the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. Altogether more than 55 Participants participated in the meeting (see annex 1 for details of the participants list)

**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 has 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**

- The representative from Province 1, Province 2, Bagmati Province, Gandaki Province, Province 5, Karnali Province and Sudurpaschim Province presented the progress made by the nutrition cluster in the concerned provinces including major highlights, achievements, issues, challenges and way forward. The name of the presenters are as follows:
- Mr. Gyan Bahadur Basnet, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 1
- Mr. Binod Yadav, Director, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 2
- Mr. Ramesh Adhikari, Provincial Health Directorate, Bagmati Province
- Mr. Nani Babu Dani, Public Health Officer, Provincial Health Directorate, Gandaki Province
- Mr. Anirudra Sharma Gautam, Nutrition Cluster co-lead presented on behalf of Provincial Health Directorate, Lumbini Province (due to the heavy COVID-19 caseload, no one could attend in the meeting from provincial nutrition cluster of Lumbini province)
- Ms. Man Kumari Pun, Community Nursing Officer, Provincial Health Service Directorate, Karnali Province
- Mr. Min Raj Joshi, Public health officer, Provincial Health Directorate of Sudurpaschim Province

**Action points:**

- Focus for the protection, promotion and support for breast feeding and facilitate to stop “untargeted distribution of infant formula breastmilk substitute” in this emergency due to COVID-19 context.
- Prepare joint statement with FWD/DoHS/MoHP, UNICEF and other partners considering COVID-19 context.
- Focus more to identify and admit more SAM children to the OTCs and NRH for treatment services. Community/family-based approach for identification of acutely malnourished children need to be adopted effectively so that more children can be found and refer to the OTCs/NRH for therapeutic treatment and care services on time.
- Continue nutrition messaging through different media considering COVID-19 and nutrition.
- Coordinate with concerned authorities/communities to apply interim nutrition guideline prepared for COVID-19 context.
- Complete submission of the report of national Vitamin A campaign conducted on last 6 and 7 Baisakh 2078.

- Prepare/revise nutrition in emergency response plan (monsoon) in all 7 provinces before the end of Baishakh 2021.
- Identify more nutrition resources to focus the most vulnerable groups for the prevention and management of malnutrition in the COVID-19 context.
- Nutrition cluster technical working groups (TWG) to meet immediate.
- Initiate SMART survey in province number 2 by using protective equipment.
- Provincial Health Directorate (PHD) of province number 1 to revitalize the IMAM programme of Sunsari, Morang and Jhapa districts. Initiate SMART survey in province number two to collect the pre-monsoon information on nutrition
- Information management TWG to continue timely completion of 3 W mapping and COVID-19 tracking sheet
- Publish nutrition bulleting in each quarter mentioning of progress, issues, difficulties way forward

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

- **No progress updated from Nutrition cluster technical working groups**

**Agenda 5: Updates from National Planning Commission**

**Ms. Laxmi Ghimire, Director of Health and Nutrition Program of NPC provided major highlights of nutrition activities:**

- She thanked to the cluster lead and co-lead including all cluster member agencies for continuing nutrition cluster coordination mechanism more effective and action oriented
- Organized a meeting of task group led by Mr. Kedar Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DoHS/MoHP to prepare country commitment for Nutrition & Growth conference in Japan in December 2021.

**Dr. Tara Nath Pokhrel, Director of FWD provided major highlights as follows:**

- Nutrition cluster has been working actively jointly with provincial nutrition clusters from all 7 provinces and the cluster coordination mechanism has been mobilizing all stakeholders to initiate nutrition programme throughout the country
- Currently, Ministry of Health and Population has been working to develop AWPB for upcoming fiscal year, if somethings are very urgent those can e included in the AWPB. Similarly, provincial, and local levels are also working for AWPB planning process and whatever is required for effective implementation of nutrition programme in Nepal can be included in the AWPB.
- We need to find more children with acute malnutrition and bring them to the OTCs and NRH for therapeutic treatment and care services for this action we need to work together.
- The frequency of nutrition cluster meeting should be increased, and it would be appreciated if nutrition cluster meeting is organized in each two weeks.
- We (federal and provincial cluster) need to work together with local levels for the management of nutrition issues in emergency considering the current COVID-19 context.

**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 towards Dr Tara Nath Pokharel, Director of FWD and Mr. Kedar raj Parajuli for the great leadership of FWD for nutrition response through cluster coordination mechanism in the

COVID-19 context; and 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 thanks to the Director of FWD, Provincial Health Directors, all support agencies and provincial and federal level nutrition cluster team members, National Planning Commission and all the health personnel. Similarly, Mr. parajuli requested to all the provincial participants to be present in the upcoming nutrition cluster meetings regularly.
- **Finally, Mr Parajuli announced the next nutrition cluster meeting to be organized on 31<sup>st</sup> Baisakh , 2078 (14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021) and closed the meeting.**

## **Annex I: List of Participants in the meeting:**

1. Dr Tara Nath Pokharel, Director, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
2. Mr. Kedar Raj Parajuli, Chief of Nutrition Section of FWD/DOHS/MoHP –Nutrition cluster lead
3. Mr. Anirudra Sharma, Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF – Nutrition cluster co-lead
4. Mr. Gyan Bahadur Basnet, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 1
5. Dr. Binod Yadav, Provincial Health Directorate, Province 2
6. Mr. Ramesh Adhikari, Provincial Health Directorate, Bagmati Province
7. Ms. Laxmi Ghimire, National Planning Commission
8. Mr. Nani Babu Dani, Public Health Officer, Gandaki Province
9. Ms. Man Kumari Pun, Provincial Health Directorate, Karnali Province
10. Ms. Karan Courtney Haag, chief of Nutrition, UNICEF Nepal
11. Mr. Phulgendra Prasad Singh, Nutrition Specialist UNICEF Mr. Naveen Poudyal, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
12. Mr. Gyan Bahadur Bhujel, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
13. Mr. Binod Nepal, UNICEF
14. Mr. Jeeban Ghimire, Health Policy Officer, DFID
15. Ms. Naomi Saville, Nutritionist, consultant to DFID
16. Ms. Sumi Maskey, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
17. Ms. Bindu Panthi, Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
18. Mr. Harihar Sharma, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
19. Ms. Meena Gautam, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
20. Ms. Kalpana Pandey, Nutrition Section, FWD/DoHS/MoHP
21. Ms. Anju Acharya, National Nutrition and Food Security Secretariat (NNFSS), National Planning Commission
22. Ms. Anju Adhikari, Nutrition section, FWD/UNICEF
23. Mr. Amrit Gurung, WFP, Karnali Province
24. Mr. Sunil Khatiwada, SUA AHARA II /USAID
25. Mr. Debendra Adhikari, Nutrition Specialist, USAID
- 26.
27. Mr. Sudip Chiluwal, Program Coordinator, NEPHEG
28. Mr. Amrit Gurung, WFP, Karnali Province
29. Mr. Raj Nandan Mandal, Nutrition Advisor, SUA AHARA II /USAID
30. Mr. Chiranjibi Dahal, SUA AHARA II /USAID
31. Ms. Sangeeta Paudel, WFP
32. Mr. KP Lamsal, Nutrition section, FWD/WFP
33. Mr. Yam GC, SUA AHARA II /USAID
34. Mr. Sunil Khatiwada, SUA AHARA II /USAID
35. Mr. Rajendra Adhikari, Suaahara II/USAID, Surkhet
36. Mr. Bharat Sarma - Program Coordinator/Provincial Focal person Province-1, Suaahara II/USAID
37. Mr. Chiranjibi Dahal-program coordinator/provincial focal person, province-3, Suaahara II/USAID
38. Mr. Deependra Chaudhari, Project Coordinator- Nutrition, Welthungerhilfe (WHH)
39. Ms. Chhankala Kafle program manager (Bharatpur NRH)
40. Ms. Nisha Sharma, HKI
41. Mr. Gyanendra Dawadi, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Sudur Paschim Province

42. Mr. Man Bahadur Kunwar, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Karnali, Paschim Province
43. Mr. Bhumi Sharma, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Lumbini Province
44. Ms. Pabitra Sapkota, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Gandaki Province
45. Mr. Purushottam Aryal, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Bagamati Province
46. Mr. Hemanta Jha, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Province number 2
47. Mr. Sanjiv Ghishing, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Province number 1
48. Mr. Purushottam Aryal, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Bagamati Province
49. Ms. Geeta Bista, NRH Kailali
50. Ms. Nirmaya Gurung, NRH Pokhara
51. Mr. Nabaraj Paudel, PHA (PHLMC, Gandaki)
52. Mr. Uttam Acharya, FAO
53. Prativa AC, NPC
54. Mr. Hemanta Jha, MSNP coordinator, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Province number 2
55. Sushma Chhetri, MDI, District Nutrition Coordinator, Kalikot
56. Mr. Niraj KC,

**Annex II: Briefing from nutrition cluster lead:**

**1. Situation of COVID-19 (as of 25 April 2021):**

Indicators	Global Situation of COVID-19 Pandemic		National Situation of COVID-19 Pandemic	
	18 March 2021	25 April 2021	18 March 2021	25 April 2021
Number COVID-19 positive cases	121,305,617	146,276,262	275,625	300,119
Number of deaths among the positive cases	2,682,804 (2.2%)	3,115,018 (2.1%)	3,015 (1.09%)	3,164 (1.05%)
Number of Recovered	97,824,410 (80.7%)	124,075,915 (84.8%)	271,610 (98.5%)	277,573 (92.49%)
Number of PCR tested			2,227,547	2,405,017
Number people in quarantine camps			52	69
Active COVID-19 cases	20,798,403 (17.1%)	19,232,268 (13.1%)	1,000 (0.36%)	19,382 (6.46%)

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

- Recovered discharged: 450
- Deaths: 28
- Total COVID-19 tested: 10,078
- New COVID-19 cases: 3,122 (30.98%)

**2. Major Progress made after 30th nutrition cluster meeting:**

- 959 children under five years with severe acute malnutrition were admitted using ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF) in the past one month.
- A total of 408,933 pregnant and lactating women received telephone counselling on maternal, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and care. .
- A total of 1,120,146 households were reached with nutrition messages and IYCF messages reached more than 245,328 households through SMS.
- 534,112 households reached with telephone counselling on IYCF and maternal nutrition.
- A total 429,938 Households were reached with COVID-19 and nutrition messages through 175 FM station throughout the country.
- On behalf of nutrition cluster, nutrition in emergency training was organized by the family Welfare Division of Department of Health Services of MoHP from 13-18 April 2021 into two batches. Altogether 42 participants were trained representation 7 Provincial Nutrition Cluster, federal level nutrition cluster, nutrition cluster technical working groups and nutrition and dieticians from different federal level hospitals. At the end of training, all participants developed an action plan for to develop nutrition in emergency preparedness and response plan that should be completed by running Nepali months.
- National Vitamin A campaign as well as deworming campaign was conducted nationwide on 6 and 7 Baishakh 2078 (19-20 April 2021) targeting 2.7 million children aged 5-69 months for Vitamin A dosing and 2.3 million children aged 12-59 months children for deworming. The

campaign went very well nationwide. Detail information will be reported in next SitRep once the information of the campaign will be reported through HMIS.

- Completed MBFHI orientation and assessment in 10 federal and provincial level hospitals namely, Koshi, Mechi, Hetauda, Bheri, Seti, Maternity, TUTH, Patan and Bhaktapur.
- Ongoing CNSI training in different provinces and local levels.
- Ongoing transportation of necessary nutrition commodities to different provincial medical stores.

### **3. Challenges and concern**

- Due to COVID-19, community based active MUAC screening has been seriously disrupted which has been a barrier to identify 6-59 months children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and refer them to the outpatient therapeutic centre (OTC) for treatment. Alternative methods are urgently needed to find more SAM children through community/family-based screening by using MUAC.
- Due to lack of enough personal protective equipment for Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs), community-based nutrition activities are seriously disrupted.
- Lack of supplies to address the needs of supplementary feeding programme in emergencies

### **4. Way forward/next steps:**

- Monitoring and control of untargeted distribution of breastmilk substitute.
- Revise nutrition cluster contingency plan (monsoon) in all provinces by end of Baishakh 2078 (it was agreed in nutrition in emergency training in Kathmandu conducted from 29 Chaitra 2077 to 3 Baishakh 2078 (11-16 April 2021)
- The process of annual workplan and budget has been ongoing and nutrition Family Welfare Division has been working to plan programme and budget for upcoming fiscal year (2078/79).
- The budget supported by EU for MSNP (nutrition specific and sensitive) implementation has been released. We need to implement the funds effectively also.
- Complete ongoing implementation of the activities mentioned in the AWPB for 2077/2078
- Initiate SMART survey in province number 2
- Initiate family MUAC approach in four districts (Pachthar, Saptari, Kavre and Jumla) with MoHP/UNICEF collaboration
- Approval of five year costed plan for nutrition specific interventions and national IMAM guideline
- Finalize NRH guideline and treatment protocol
- Submission of BMS act to the cabinet as soon as possible from MoHP
- Continue implementation of nutrition programme as per the approved budget for Fiscal Year 2077/078
- Continue service monitoring of nutrition interventions