

GOAL Niger Learning & Review Paper Department: Nutrition / June 2016

IMPORTANT: A learning review should be carried out for each individual project. Do not mix findings from different projects

General Background Information:

GOAL Niger aims to reduce malnutrition in target populations through an integrated project by minimizing behavioral causes and strengthen management of malnutrition in the government health institutions and improving food security and diet diversity through livelihoods training and support. GOAL Niger is implementing Nutrition Impact and Positive Practice (NIPP) in Mirriah District under Irish Aid 2014 HPP. The 2015/16 project was implemented to build upon gains made last year in Mirriah as well as expand this intervention to Gouré. The total number of villages addressed has expanded from 40 to 65. The NIPP circle promotion is expanded from 1 to 2 per year. In each village 2 promotions of Female and Male NIPP circles were conducted. Hence, 3900 female and male beneficiaries were targeted. However, this learning review is only about 1950 female and male beneficiaries addressed in the 1st promotion of NIPP circles, because the outcome of 2nd promotion is not finalized.

Title of Project / Date and Objectives]

Title: Strengthening resilience and reducing malnutrition through increased capacity for community and health facility prevention and treatment of malnutrition and improved food security in Mirriah and Gouré.

Project Dates: 1 June 2015 to 31 May 2016

Select Activity type (select only 1): NIPP

Impact: Reduced child malnutrition and mortality in Niger (contributing to MDG 4)

Outcome1: Women child feeding practice is getting improved.

Indicator1: Number and % of children 6-8 months with timely introduction of complementary food.

Out of total number of children (45) aged 6 – 8 months enrolled into NIPP circle, 22 (49%) were female and 23 (51%) were male. The practice of timely introduction of age appropriate complementary food has increased from 89.3% at baseline to 100% at graduation from NIPP circle. The late introduction of introduction of age appropriate complementary food has decreased from 10.7% of baseline to 0% of graduation.

Challenge:

- Missing of retrospective exclusive breast feeding practice data.
- Mothers with infants <6months of age were not enrolled in the program. This may be due to lack of awareness of field technicians and community volunteers to include infants <6 irrespective of their anthropometric measurement.

Lessons learnt:

- Sensitization of the field technicians and the community on the enrollment of mothers with infants <6months of age should be done as part of strategy for the prevention of malnutrition irrespective of their nutritional status.

Indicator2: % children 6-59 months with adequate dietary diversity i.e. children 6-59 months consuming 4+ food groups.

62% women who already feed 4+food groups maintain their practice throughout baseline and graduation, 2.1% of women who used to feed their children <4 food groups continue the same practice throughout baseline and graduation, while 32.5% of women change their child feeding practice from feeding <4 food groups to 4+ food groups between baseline and graduation period. Generally, among households with children 6-59 months enrolled into NIPP circle, 94.5% have been adequately fed diversified foods.

Challenges:

- The barriers that hinder mothers' behavior change or make them maintain and even changed from positive to negative practice of feeding their children 4+ groups throughout NIPP circle were not identified.

Lessons learnt:

- The barriers that make women to stick to their unacceptable feeding practice should be analyzed. A barrier analysis on adequate dietary diversity in children 6-23 months is planned in 2017.

Outcome2: Improved availability of handwashing facilities (HWFs) and latrine at HH level.

Indicator1: % of HWFs and latrine constructed from locally available materials at HHs level

The availability of HWFs (Tippy tap) at HHs level has dramatically increased throughout NIPP circle formation from 10.9% at baseline to 99.8% at graduation. Construction of latrine at HHs level from locally available materials has also increased from 14.6% at baseline to 52.4% at graduation.

Challenges:

- Traditional latrines collapsed in several villages, especially during the rainy season. As a result, the motivation of some GOAL field staff and some participants has decreased towards the construction of the traditional latrines.
- Difficult to keep the momentum among GOAL staff and NIPP participants on the no-input approach of GOAL in areas where other organisations were providing cement and per diem for modern latrines constructions.

Lessons learnt:

- An intensive sensitization of the community contribute to maintain buying regarding the no-input approach of GOAL and willingness of the communities to adopt and maintain positive WASH behaviours and facilities. .
- It is crucial to identify with the relevant local authorities and promote a more resistant design of traditional latrines.

Summary Breakdown:

Materials Needed

- a) Food Flesh cards
- b) Seed starter pack for micro gardening
- c) Vehicles for regular supervision and transporting materials.

Personnel Required

- 1. GOAL Niger:**
- 1 Nutrition Project Manager
 - 2 Project Officers
 - 8 Nutrition field technicians
 - 2 Regional Nutrition trainers
 - 2 District Nutrition trainers
 - 3 Drivers

2. MOH and Sector offices

- District Health/Nutrition Department have participated on supervision of mass screening in the villages and referral of children discharged cured from OTP to NIPP circles and is providing accommodation to GOAL Field technicians.
- Regional Health/Nutrition Department (DRSP) conducting joint supervision, giving feedback accordingly and showing buy in NIPP approach.
- Regional Agriculture Department have given training on food processing and preservation technique to GOAL staff.

Planning & Implementation Timeframes (planning time includes non-implementation time used to plan project activities)

Planning: - 2nd and 6th months and 12th month Longitudinal follow up of 1st promotion.

Implementations: 2 months, (April – May 2016), 1st NIPP cycle longitudinal follow up will continue.
3 months, (April – June 2016), 2nd NIPP circle promotion were finalized.

Problems Encountered

1. Delay of community volunteers training due to slow launch of the project and delays in financial processes.

2. Irregular participation of male in Male circle due to overlapping field activities.
3. Some villages couldn't implement micro gardening due to shortage of water.
4. Monitoring of some male circles was difficult due to their meeting was scheduled in the evening.
5. Some illiterate community volunteers have faced some limitations to manage peer lead training sessions.
6. Some partners with handover approach have overlapped in some villages by giving cement and per diem latrine construction. This did not prevent NIPP beneficiaries from building traditional latrines which are also not expensive, easy to realize and appreciated but it was challenging to keep the momentum among NIPP participants and our own field staff for the promotion of traditional latrines and the no-input approach of GOAL.
7. Home garden is a new approach and have face resistance from participants and even some GOAL staff. This was due to water scarcity and high level of heat especially during the dry season and participants therefore believe a home garden will be most difficult to maintain.
8. Volunteers still continue expecting incentives.
9. Conducting ENA/SMART survey as means of programme evaluation to know GAM and SAM rate at district level is not allowed by the authorities.

Solutions Employed

1. Timely decision to establish NIPP circles using previous year trained community volunteers by giving short on job refreshment.
2. Some Male NIPP circles have decided to conduct their meeting in the evening. GOAL field technicians continue to encourage male participants to strengthen their participation by doing supervision at their off hours and help them to discuss and find convenient time rather than quieting participation.
3. Bag micro-gardening and a small plot micro-gardening were introduced in some villages. The micro-garden built in a small plot is more appreciated and easy to be realized as little watering is required.
4. Field technicians were monitoring Male circles after normal working hour.
5. A special support was given by field technicians to the volunteers who could not read and write on how to lead peer discussion using pictures on IEC materials.
6. Continuous discussion with the village leaders were done to convince on sustainability and affordability of traditional latrines latrine. As NIPP is focused on behaviour change and promotion of use of construction and use of latrine, when some of NIPP beneficiary received from other organisations support for the construction of modern latrines, we emphasized through repeated sensitizations the messages about the use of these latrines.
7. Discussion and awareness creation on how to introduce bag gardening was done using different staff meetings. As a result some field technicians have started to introduce bag gardening as an alternative to communal micro-gardening in villages that have shortage of water.
8. Strengthened sensitization on the indirect benefits the volunteers are getting e.g. training allowance, knowledge and skill from training.
9. Discussion with MOH and other concerned body needs to be continued, to conduct KAP, barrier analysis and other types of nutrition survey.

In Hindsight – What Should Have Been Done Differently

1. Field technicians have arranged appropriate supervision programme to increase male participation in male NIPP circle.
2. Model of latrine construction has been modified to be cheaper and durable.

List any Unintended Outcomes (positive or negative) from the program

- Community conversation has improved due to interaction in NIPP circles.

Overall Success of the Program

- Across the entire spectrum of the 2 districts the number of beneficiaries has increased from 360 under HPP 2014 to 1950 (975female and 975male) under HPP 2015.
- Introducing new model of latrine has increased the availability of latrine at the household level.

- Non-participants in immediate and surrounding areas have adopted the tippy-tap and latrine construction.
- Some participants are getting income from their gardening activities.
- Villages used to produce only sugarcane traditionally and used to sell it cheap but they have started to produce diversified vegetables, feed their children and sell it to relatively best price since NIPP circle is established
- Some mothers trained on MUAC measurement (MUAC by mother) have started to monitor themselves the nutritional status of their children.
- Non-negotiable NIPP components implementation has improved as compared to last year practice.
- Knowledge of the causes of malnutrition and child feeding practice has improved among NIPP participants.

Lessons Learnt:

- April - June seasons are not convenient to practice micro-gardening.
- NIPP approach should be implemented under a long-term development programme rather than as part of an emergency response.
- Screening of children for chronic malnutrition should be improved in collaboration with CSIs.
- Promotion of NIPP approach to government and other partners needs to be planned and monitored.

What Recommendations Would the Team Make in Relation to Lessons Learned?

- Redesign the NIPP approach in future proposals for development programmes rather than the usual emergency HPP programmes.
- Introduction of Bag gardening need to be strengthened in villages with serious shortage of water.
- The analysis of NIPP data (promotion 1) shows that the beneficiaries have changed their practice of early introduction of complementary foods. But still late introduction of complementary foods is practiced by significant number of care givers. Hence, effort has to be exerted to change late introduction.
- Promotion to enroll mothers with infants <6months of age should be done as part of strategy for the prevention of malnutrition irrespective of their nutritional status.