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Topic: Community health and nutrition programs

Title: Addressing Stunting through Multi-Sectoral Approaches: Challenges and Opportunities in India.

Presentation Type: Poster

The latest data indicates 38.7% of India's children aged 0-59 months are stunted. Stunting is a complex problem which requires multifaceted approach and timely interventions. Recent evidence informs that poor feeding practices among children during the first year of life, poor nutrition among women before and after pregnancy and poor sanitary practices at the household level are main drivers of childhood stunting. India has existing policy and programme environment to facilitate at-scale delivery of nutrition interventions but implementation challenges limit progress.

The paper examines the challenges and issues of national flagship programmes and policies to identify key actions needed to prioritize stunting while leveraging multi-sectoral approaches. For example, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) , National Health Mission being implemented by two separate Ministries aimed to implement nutrition interventions across the country. Challenges include programme implementation gaps , the burden of multiple responsibilities of frontline workers, operationalizing multi-sectoral convergence, lack of clarity of roles,inadequate training, and weak supportive supervision. Setting clear goals and targets, designing clear policies and tracking progress through routine monitoring systems are few recommendations. Multi-sectoral interventions are essential to reduce stunting along with a strong political commitment to enable scale-up of integrated nutrition-specific and sensitive interventions across sectors. A greater emphasis on creating an enabling environment is critical to support nutrition leadership,improving financing and performance across sectors. It suggests priority areas for strengthening implementation of existing programmes and build convergence to prevent stunting in India.