

Approaches to connecting the dots around food systems and nutrition: Evidence to policy and action

Perspective from the multi-sectoral nutrition programming world

Dec 05, 2024





Nepal: Food system realities

Diverse

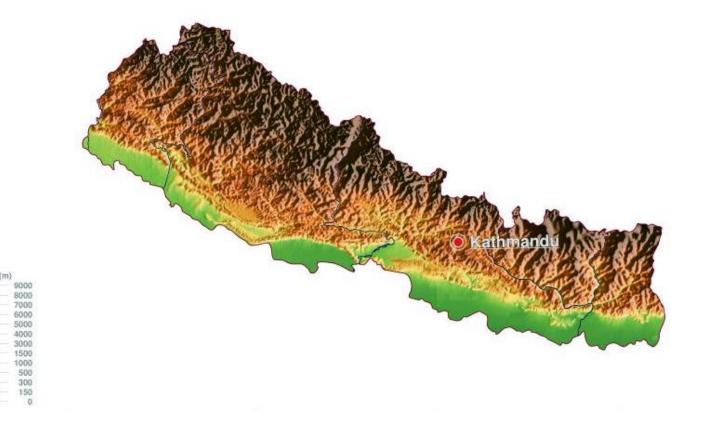
 Geographic/agro-ecological, economic, socio-cultural

Fragmented

 Food system actors (private sector, regulators, policymakers) operate in silos

Dynamic

 Trends toward unhealthy foods, changing trade policies



Evidence-based Policy

 Multisectoral nutrition and agriculture policies and plans, with high-level commitment and coordination mechanisms.

Data on Needs

28%

Minimum Acceptable Diet

% of children 6-23 months with minimum acceptable diet (NDHS 2022)

Rely on markets for food

% of households that rely on markets for food

48%

Minimum Dietary Diversity

% children 6-23 months fed a minimally diverse diet in the past 24 hrs (NDHS 2022)

Cannot afford a healthy diet

% of households that cannot afford a healthy diet (Cost of a Nutritious Diet 2021)

69%

Unhealthy foods

% of children 6-23 months fed unhealthy foods in the past 24hrs (NDHS 2022)

50%

57%

80%

Unreached by healthy diet promotion

% of households not reached by promotion and marketing efforts

Nepal: Program challenge

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3 Asks to Connect Research to Action

Food systems frameworks that are practical.

Implementation science research to guide on the 'how' to address gaps.

3

Nuanced tools and approaches to facilitate prioritization and sequencing of actions by context.



Practical, simplified food systems frameworks

Complex food system frameworks are overwhelming!

- Current frameworks are macro-level and difficult to apply by policymakers and practitioners, and difficult to influence by implementers.
- Can we model the classic nutrition framework? A good example of less is more.



Action-oriented local implementation science on 'how'.

Evidence for policy and program action is needed soon.

- All income groups rely on food markets, but the private sector avoids low-profit areas.
- Evidence is needed soon on *how to* incentivize the public and private sectors for poor and vulnerable populations to align market dynamics with nutrition outcomes
- Can we define a set of non-negotiable priority actions to drive systemic change (based on learnings from the nutrition sector SUN movement, etc.)?

3

Tools and approaches to prioritize and sequence actions by context.

Implementers cannot do everything at once.

- Nuanced, practical tools, are needed to help policymakers and program implementers decide where to start based on specific contexts for targeted, maximum impact.
- Community-oriented tools for local level policy makers and implementers are also important.



Together we can connect the dots between research and action for food systems and nutrition

