

Title: Role Of Gram Panchayats In Ensuring Intersectoral Co-ordination for Improved Stunting Outcomes In West Bengal.

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Exemplars in
Global Health

INTRODUCTION

Stunting is a complex global health issue, especially prevalent in South Asia. India, like other countries, requires a holistic, intersectoral approach to combat this issue. West Bengal, an exemplar state in stunting reduction, provides a compelling case study of effective intersectoral convergence for addressing stunting and improving child health outcomes while aligning with the ‘Localization of Sustainable Development Goals’ initiative.

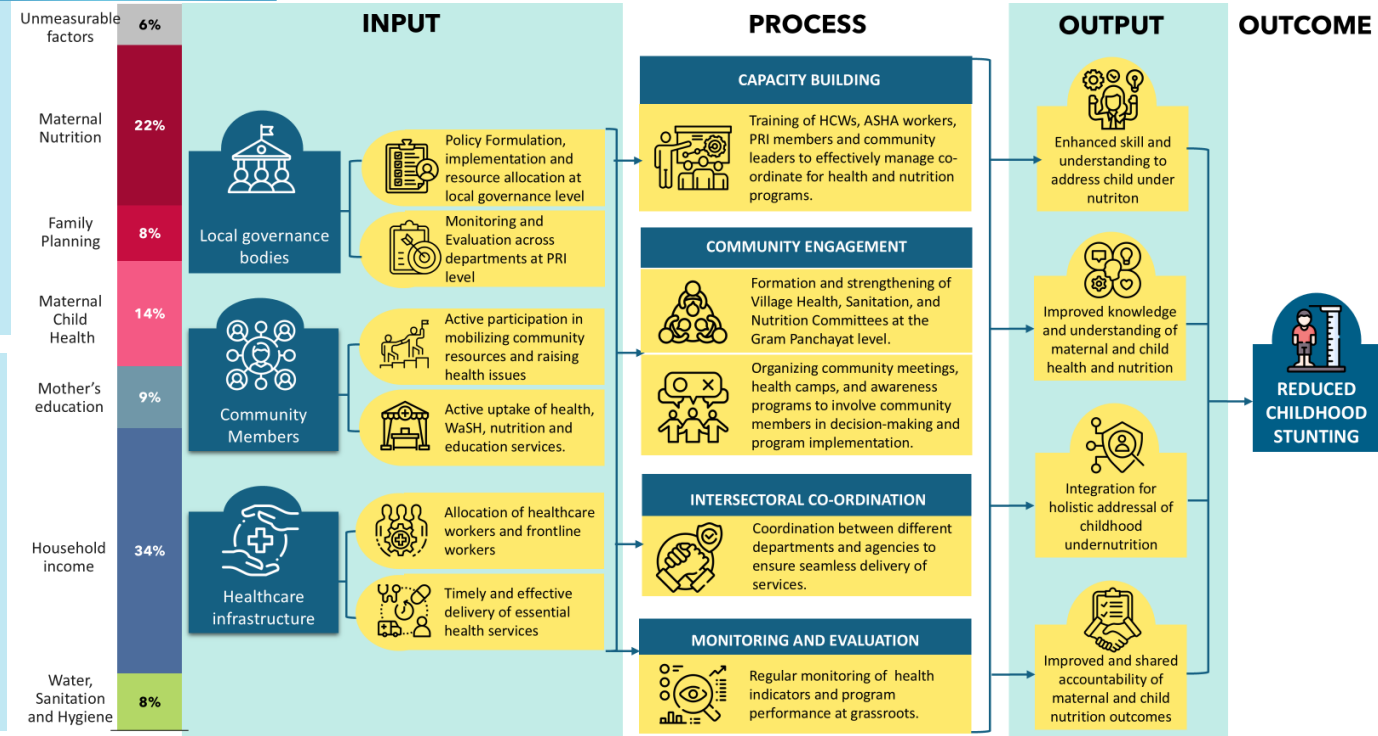
METHODS

Study Design: Mixed-methods case study

Data Collection and Analysis: Used pooled data from NFHS 3 and 4, to study trends in mean child HAZ and its determinants, conducted literature review and policy document analysis and integrated these findings with thematically analyzed key informant interviews (12) with stakeholders at from key ministries, technical experts and developmental partners. Data organization and coding were conducted using NVivo 12.

RESULTS

West Bengal’s stunting decline from 44% to 34% between 2005 and 2020 attributed to improvements in maternal nutrition, reproductive health and WASH indicators. Along with interventions that addressed maternal and child nutrition, health, education, WASH and poverty; West Bengal’s particularly note-worthy CHCMI program played an important role in addressing stunting by connecting the dots across sectors through governance, capacity building, community engagement, and monitoring & evaluation by- 1) Enabling local government bodies for resource allocation and policy implementation 2) Strengthening healthcare systems through investments for seamless service delivery and 3) Empowering communities to foster local ownership and participation.



CONCLUSION

Empowered local governance bodies, active participation and ownership by the community and a continually strengthened healthcare system fostered by processes like capacity building and real-time monitoring are the key ingredients to fostering convergence of services at local level for a holistic and intersectoral addressal of child undernutrition. Other South Asian countries with a context and administrative structure similar to that of India’s could potentially adopt this model to holistically address undernutrition in their region.

REFERENCES:

Department of Panchayats and Rural Development West Bengal. (2018). Community Healthcare Management Initiative (CHCMI)