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BACKGROUND

- Bangladesh's National Nutrition Policy emphasizes reducing child malnutrition
- Despite progress, over 22% of children under five are underweight, and 24% suffer from stunting
- There is a growing push for budget allocations for child nutrition and WASH services through the Local Government Institutions
- Engaging local governments, Civil Society Organizations, and communities in nutrition planning and budgeting can be a potential key step/strategy to reducing child malnutrition and improving health outcomes at the grassroots level

METHODS

- Study Area: 24 unions across Khulna, Satkhira, and Patuakhali districts.
- Data Source: Quantitative data from 8,700+ children (2022-2023) and qualitative insights from FGDs and KIIs.
- Community Engagement: Involved Union Parishads & CSOs in budgeting and monitoring interventions.
- Budget Analysis: Extracted & Analyzed Union-level budgets for nutrition and WASH and performed quantitative comparative & correlation analysis

RESULTS

- Severe U5 Stunting decreased 16.4% → 6.7%, significant improvement in linear growth.
- Severe U5 Underweight dropped 5.1% → 3.1%, reflecting improvements.
- Severe U5 Wasting slightly declined 3.3% → 3.1%
- Increased Union-level budget allocations for nutrition and WASH were positively associated with reductions in stunting and underweight
- Economically disadvantaged households benefited most from targeted interventions
- Areas (Unions) with the largest budget increases showed the greatest improvements in nutrition outcomes.
- Integrating WASH interventions alongside nutrition programs was essential in improving nutrition outcomes, suggesting that multi-sectoral approaches yield greater impact.
- The community actively participated in monitoring, planning, designing, and implementing nutrition and WASH activities at the local level.



CONCLUSION

- **Dedicated nutrition and WASH budgets** at the local government level are essential for effective, targeted interventions to address child malnutrition.
- **Involving Union Parishads in budget planning and implementation** ensures resources are allocated based on local needs, fostering community ownership.
- **CSOs are crucial** for advocating budgets, raising awareness, and monitoring interventions, ensuring accountability and sustainability.
- **Engaging local governments and CSOs can contribute to suitability and scalability** across regions.
- **Institutionalizing nutrition budgets** and forming Union Nutrition Coordination Committees (**UPNCCs**) may contribute to long-term success in improving child nutrition.

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