

Community Outreach

Fortification team conducts brief exercise to understand the acceptability and costs related to wheat flour fortification

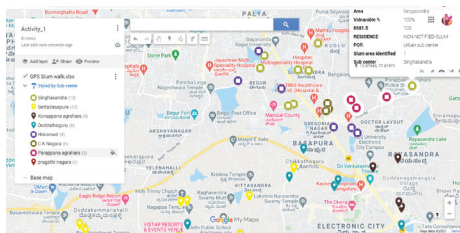


A KHPT team member interviews a local chakki owner

The Principal Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection, Madhya Pradesh, is keen to take wheat flour fortification forward in the state. In the first week of October, he suggested that KHPT carry out three activities

CHWs map vulnerable populations in Singasandra to support outreach activities

The project team initiated an exercise in October to map pockets and households with vulnerable populations in the Singasandra Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) area. The team identified 62 areas with vulnerable populations, and further classified them into pockets with less than 100 households and more than 100 households. The Community Health Workers (CHWs) found that the majority of the vulnerable populations lived in slum areas. They also mapped the predominant languages spoken, the major occupations of residents and the nature of their houses. Of the 1,85,378 people mapped, the team identified a vulnerable population of 31034 in 64 areas.



Sub-centre wise GP coordinates of vulnerable households

before the Department submits a cabinet note on wheat flour fortification initiative to the Honourable Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

A sensory acceptability study was conducted by the KHPT team at four Anganwadi centres, with the support of the Department of Women and Child Development, where one kilogram each of fortified wheat flour was given to 20 pregnant and 20 lactating mothers. The next day, Anganwadi workers conducted interviews of these mothers who had used the fortified wheat flour and collected the data in a questionnaire developed by the project team. It was found that fortified wheat flour and products made with it, such as chapatis and parathas, were acceptable to the beneficiaries.

The KHPT team conducted a mini survey on the community's acceptance towards receiving fortified wheat flour in place of wheat grains.

They also found 3060 (10%) vulnerable people living in the non-slum areas of Singasandra.

The exercise involved using a software to get the geographical coordinates of vulnerable households, which helped the team understand that many of the vulnerable populations were located 5-10 kilometres away from the Singasandra Urban Primary Health Centre. This process helped the CHWs demarcate vulnerable pockets to further strengthen outreach activities of ASHAs and Junior Health Assistants (JHAs).

Fortification team creates awareness at FSSAI's Eat Right Melas in four states

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), along with state Food and Drug Administrations (FDAs), organized 'Eat Right Mela' events in all states to mark the platinum jubilee of India's independence. The Melas served as infotainment events to help better educate Food Business Operators, hawkers, vendors and the general public about food safety and hygiene, fortified foods, organic farming, and the importance a healthy diet and lifestyle. The KHPT fortification team was involved in events in Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to promote

The team conducted a rapid assessment of beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System (PDS) at selected Fair Price Shops in the urban and rural areas of Bhopal and Vidisha districts to understand their perspectives on the provision of fortified wheat flour in the state. About 85% of PDS beneficiaries agreed to procure fortified wheat flour instead of wheat grains from PDS shops by paying the additional cost of grinding.

KHPT also conducted a cost comparison survey of local chakkis in rural and urban areas of Madhya Pradesh. The team found that the cost of grinding grains to flour ranged from Rs 1-3 per kilogram in rural areas and Rs. 2-4 in urban areas. Based on these costs, the Madhya Pradesh State Civil Supplies Corporation (MPSCSC) will decide the cost implications of converting grains into fortified wheat flour for distribution through safety net programs.



A KHPT team member presents at the Eat Right Mela in Karnal, Haryana

food fortification and create awareness about health benefits of fortified foods. At the Eat Right Mela in Bhopal on November 25, Dr Prabhuram Choudhary, Public Health and Family Welfare Minister, MP, and Mr. Akash Tripathi, IAS, Commissioner and Controller of the FDA, MP, visited the stall set up by KHPT. At Karnal, Haryana, Mr Rajiv Rattan, IAS, Commissioner – FDA, Haryana and Mr Nishant Yadav, IAS, District Magistrate, Karnal were the chief guests at the Eat Right Mela on December 3. Mr Kaushal Kishore, IAS, Additional Secretary and CEO, Bihar Swasthya Suraksha Samiti, Department of Health, attended the Mela on December 23. Ms Aryka Akhori, District Magistrate, Bhadohi was the chief guest of the Mela in Bhadohi, Uttar Pradesh, on December 25.

Capacity Building

KHPT team capacitates CHWs to conduct BCC sessions among vulnerable communities

The KHPT team conducted five days of training in October-December for CHWs with the Wipro Cares-supported primary health care model initiative in Singasandra. The training covered topics including understanding the community, the basics of Behaviour Change Communication (BCC), the importance of working with a vulnerable population, and applying observation techniques during field visits.

The CHWs initiated BCC sessions at the community level for the MNCH target groups i.e. pregnant, lactating mothers, and children below the age of five years. The program team focused on strengthening the BCC skills of CHWs through the demonstration of materials in the field by the BCC Specialist. As of December 2021, 785 BCC sessions have been carried out by the CHWs, of which 144 were done with pregnant women, 214 were with lactating mothers and 427 were with mothers of children below the age of five years.



A BCC session conducted by the CHW in the community

KHPT brings ASHAs and CHWs together for needs assessment meeting



■ A group activity with ASHAs and CHWs

One of the key strategies of the Singasandra UPHC strengthening project is to build the capacity of ASHAs to do effective outreach and enable the MNCH continuum of care among vulnerable communities. The project recruited CHWs to mentor the ASHAs, and to perform the role of ASHAs in areas with vacancies and in vulnerable pockets which are currently not covered by ASHAs. To bring both the ASHAs and CHWs on the same platform, a half-day needs assessment meeting was held on December 24. The purpose of this meeting was to improve the trust, coordination

and cooperation between ASHAs and CHWs, understand the challenges of the ASHAs, assess their knowledge and skills, and introduce the project implemented through KHPT in Singasandra.

The team found that many ASHAs don't have an identity at the community level, have low self-esteem and confidence, a lack of clarity regarding the boundaries of their areas, and a lack of understanding of planning outreach. These findings will inform the project's approach.

Government Engagement

KHPT team supports government plans for wheat flour and edible oil fortification in Madhya Pradesh

The Principal Secretary of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection, Madhya Pradesh, invited the KHPT team to a meeting on October 5 for officials from the MPSCSC and representatives from oil industries producing fortified soybean oil across the state. The main objective of the meeting was to consult with the edible oil industry on provisions of a tender on the centralized procurement of fortified edible to be utilized in the state's safety net programs. The KHPT team presented technical solutions to the queries raised by oil industries and supported MPSCSC with the revision of the tender document. Inputs and comments provided by edible oil industry representatives were discussed and appropriate modifications

were incorporated in the tender document. The revised tender on the centralized procurement of fortified edible oil to be utilized under the safety net program in the entire state was released by MPSCSC in the public domain in November.

A state-level meeting on wheat flour fortification in Madhya Pradesh was held on October 21, chaired by the Principal Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection, Government of Madhya Pradesh, and attended by the Managing Director-MPSCSC, General Manager-MPSCSC, and representatives from roller flour millers to discuss the potential action plan and implementation model with roller flour millers, as well as the costing of wheat grain conversion to wheat flour. KHPT presented the findings from its assessment of sensory acceptability and cost conducted earlier



■ The KHPT team at the meeting on October 21

in October. Subsequently, in December, the Department issued an Expression of Interest letter for flour millers to supply fortified whole wheat grain.

Research Initiatives

FGD with ASHAs conducted as part of preconception nutrition study

KHPT is conducting a qualitative study to understand facilitators and barriers to preconception nutrition in Surpur and Devadurga taluks of Yadgir and Raichur districts, respectively. As part of the study, ASHA workers were involved in a focus group discussion (FGD) in Kodaikal village, Yadgir, on November 13, to understand their perspectives towards the need for preconception care. Their views and attitudes towards the importance of good nutrition and care before pregnancy can determine the quality of service delivery.



■ The FGDs with ASHAs in Kodaikal village

Voices from the field

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Initially, I felt annoyed with the CHW for increasing my work by referring to many cases to me. I was surprised when I received more incentives last month than in the earlier months! All that happened because CHW has referred the cases to me!

- Manjula, an ASHA from the Konappana Agrahara Sub-centre area

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