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Improving Maternal Nutrition Knowledge and Practices through Co-Designed Community Engagement in Delhi's Underserved Communities



Presented by: Dr Jitender Nagpal

The Genesis Why and Who?

- Background

- Micronutrient def continue to be widely prevalent despite efforts for decades
- Reasons cited-Home and Food environments, Dietary practices and awareness, compliance

- Objectives

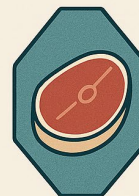
- To evaluate if community engagement was a feasible and effective in improving the knowledge and awareness of mothers from underserved communities
- To evaluate the role CEI learning's could play in improving the intervention plan as we developed the larger effort to improve maternal micronutrient deficiencies in pregnancy (SACMIND Project)

- Population

- WRA- preferably pregnant and lactating
- Residing in Urban slums



MICRONUTRIENTS FOR PREGNANCY



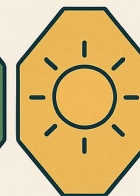
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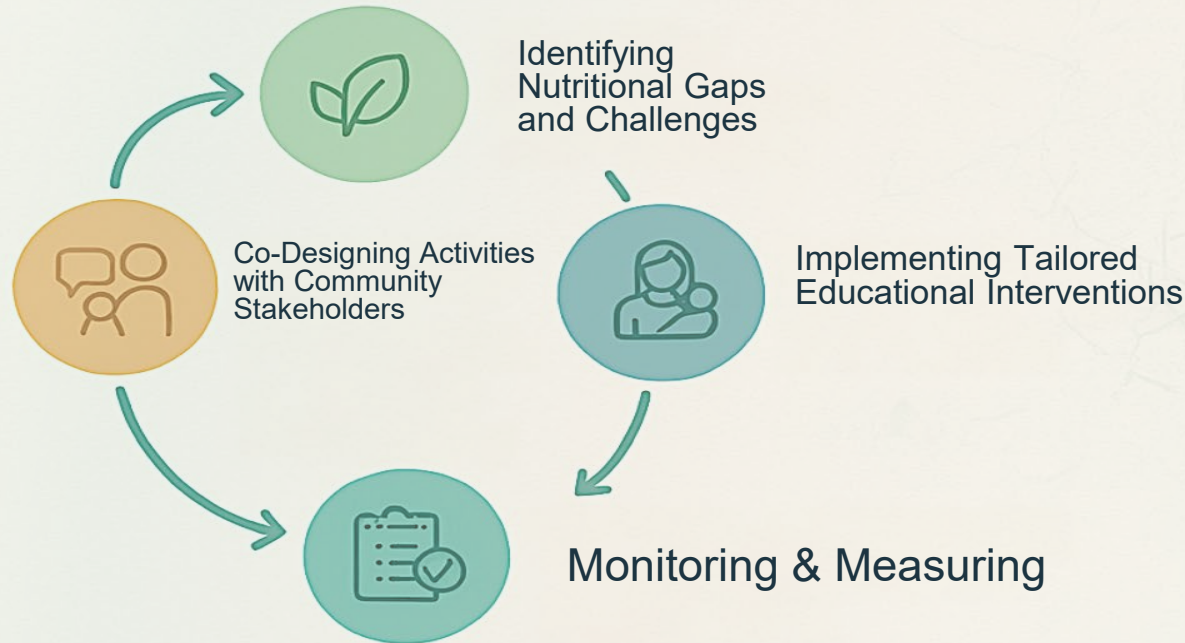


CALCIUM

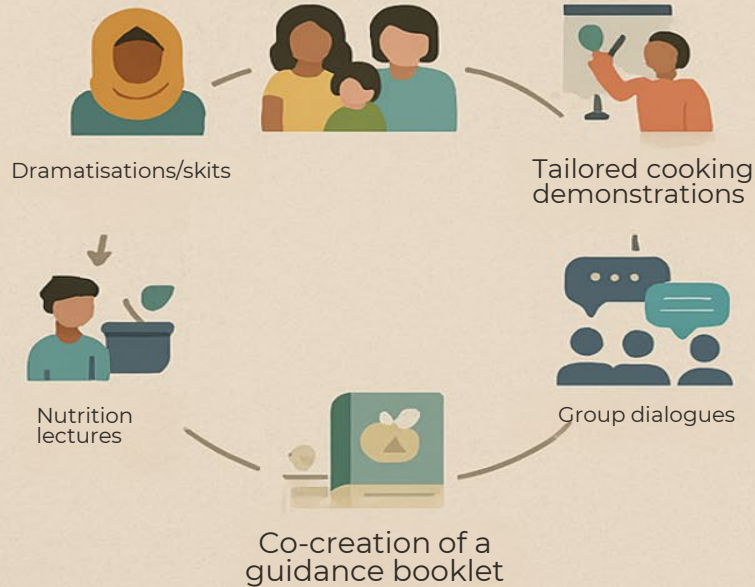


VITAMIN D

Addressing Maternal Nutrition in Underserved Communities.....How?



Co-Design with Community Stakeholders and Participatory Methods



The Community Co-design

Formation of a Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) panel

Women, families, community leaders, frontline HWs

Design culturally sensitive, contextually relevant nutrition interventions

Use of participatory methods to engage diverse literacy levels

Dramatizations/skits
Tailored cooking demonstrations
Nutrition lectures

Event timeline and valuation:

June 2025

First event with broad community reach

August 2025

Follow-up event incorporate



Tailored Activities for Diverse Literacy and Cultural Contexts



Formation of a PPI panel

- Ensured intervention was contextually relevant and culturally sensitive

Use of participatory methods to engage diverse literacy levels:



Tailored cooking demonstrations



Nutrition lectures



Broad reach

Enhanced impact assessment via focus groups- Pre-post Quest FGD



Group dialogues

Co-creation of a guidance booklet



The Events

Reach and Demographics



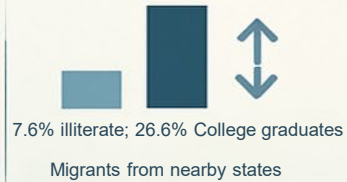
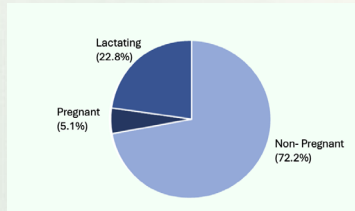
Kishangarh

139 women



Madangir

79 women



Family also attended

Key Interventions

- Distribution of 150 nutritional booklets- well received
- Educational Skit
- Expert Session
- Recipe Demonstration



Themes



Micronutrients

Supplements/Fortified foods

Dietary diversity



Educational Skit

“Sahi Poshan, Desh Roshan” (Right Nutrition for a Brighter Nation)

Key messages:

- The critical **role of micronutrients** in promoting healthy pregnancy outcomes and optimal infant neurodevelopment.
- The necessity of **attending regular antenatal checkups**
- The importance of diversified dietary intake
- Role prescribed supplementation (IFA, calcium)



Nutritional Expert Session

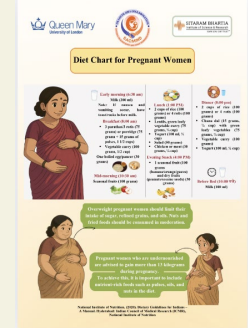
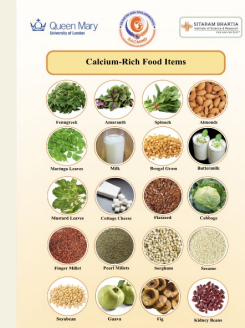
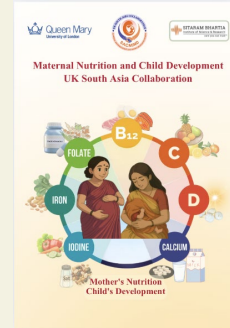
- General Dietary Guidelines
- Changes during Pregnancy
- Key Micronutrients in Pregnancy –iron, folic acid, calcium, vitamin D, iodine, and vitamin B12
- Dietary Sources of Micronutrients
- Micronutrient Supplementation
- Fortified Food Products
- General Health and Lifestyle Recommendations
- Overview of Government Schemes



Low-Cost Nutritious Snacks

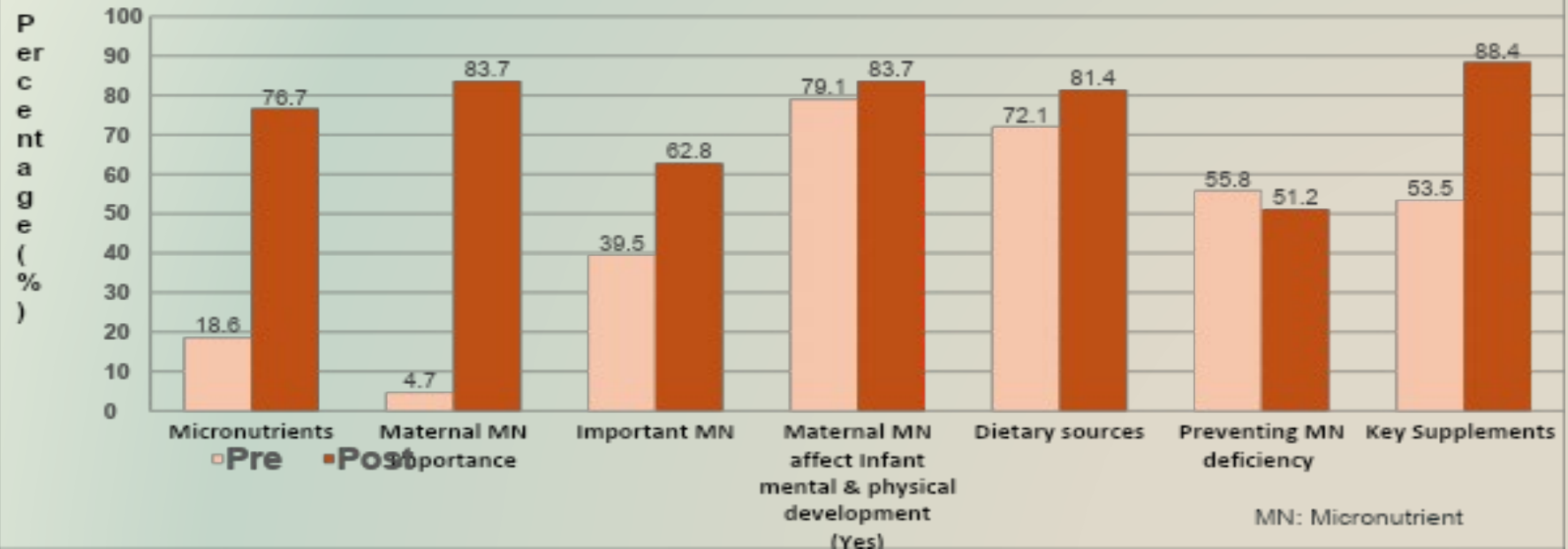
- Low-Cost Nutritious Recipe Demonstration
- Distributed nutrient dense healthy snacks

Educational Book



Pre-post assessment forms

Pre-post Impact



Recording and Evaluating CEI Impact

Focus Group Discussion

Participants

- PPI Panel
- Pregnant and lactating mother with their husband
- Mother-in-law

Impact

- Built community trust and encouraged active participation.
- Empowered mothers through shared learning and dialogue.
- Strengthened knowledge of frontline workers
 - ability to identify fortified foods
 - design affordable diets
 - utilize government nutrition programs after participating



Key Learnings specific to the SACMIND Project



Community participation has a constructive role in intervention refinement



CEI highlighted the need for low-literacy, co-developed tools for effective communication.



Integrating community engagement strengthens intervention relevance and boosts overall impact.



CEI coupled with counselling by FHW, enhances uptake and behaviour change.



A key barrier is that public health functionaries operate within a complex, system-driven structure.

Wider Learnings



Co-design early for cultural fit and acceptability.



Simple, visual, multi-format tools better in low literacy.



Work through trusted community spaces and leaders to enhance reach.



Profile participants well and plan built-in impact checks from the start.



Integrate frontline worker capacity development for consistent delivery and sustainability.

