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STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS, RESULTS, AND INNOVATIONS IN NUTRITION GLOBALLY (SPRING)

The goal of the SPRING project in the Kyrgyz Republic is to improve the nutritional status of children under the age of two and women of reproductive age. SPRING collaborates with the government and other partners to increase the uptake of 11 evidence-based nutrition practices and services aimed at reducing rates of undernutrition and anemia.

MAJOR FOCUS AREAS

According to the 2012 Kyrgyz Demographic and Health Survey, 18 percent of children under five are stunted. In addition, 43 percent of children under five and 35 percent of women (aged 15-49) have some degree of anemia. SPRING works at both the community and national levels to contribute to reductions in stunting and anemia in the Kyrgyz Republic through the uptake of 11 evidence-based practices.

These practices, tailored to the Kyrgyz context, relate to optimal breastfeeding, appropriate complementary feeding of children, dietary diversity throughout the year, reduced consumption of junk food, handwashing, and other household-level behaviors targeting women and children in the first 1,000 days.

SPRING also works with USAID's Agro Horizon Project to increase access to a diverse diet, integrate nutrition messaging into ongoing project activities, and develop training materials. SPRING also promotes technologies and practices to increase safe preservation and storage of diverse foods to enhance dietary diversity over the winter season.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

At the national level, SPRING supported the finalization and roll out of the national anemia technical guidelines and protocol, which includes proper nutrition practices for pregnant women.

The project strengthened nutrition-related components of the pre-service clinical training for doctors and nurses, which is being rolled out in 17 medical colleges and universities.

A special working group, established with USAID's support, developed a new clinical protocol around prevention and treatment of helminth infections, and developed strategies and materials to accompany future deworming campaigns.

As part of its efforts to train health care providers to deliver high-quality nutrition services and counseling, SPRING trained over 5,069 health workers since January 2015.

27 health facilities receive training and guidance to help them achieve Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative certification. Thus far, four hospitals and four family medicine centers have been designated as mother-baby friendly.

SPRING mobilized nearly 2,600 community volunteers who deliver key nutrition and hygiene messages to households, particularly those with pregnant and lactating women and/or children younger than two years. Each month, they reach over 114,460 caregivers and over 21,800 children under two from about 26,800 households through household visits and community meetings in areas covered by the program. The program also engages local and national level media to reach urban audiences.

The program published a cook book and food storage reference guide in Kyrgyz and Russian languages to help families keep and eat diverse and nutritious foods throughout the year. SPRING also provides targeted technical assistance and capacity building to various agriculture projects and organizations to strengthen nutrition program elements or to make the agriculture programming more nutrition-sensitive.

Duration: August 2014 – June 2017

Implementing Partner: The SPRING Project

Key Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, UNICEF, USAID Agro Horizon Project, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)

Activity Locations: Jalalab Oblast - 11 rayons and towns (including Jalalab City); Naryn Oblast - 5 rayons and the town of Naryn

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