

Government Engagement

KHPT conducts multisectoral public engagement programs on preconception nutrition



(From left): Dr B Usha, Joint Director (ICDS); Dr M T Reju, IAS, Secretary to the Government; and Ms Priyanka Mary Francis, IAS, Director, from the Women and Child Development Department in discussion with the KHPT team and Department representatives; Participants, including frontline workers, at the Tumakuru program engaged in discussion

KHPT conducted a series of public engagement programs culminating in a consultative workshop under its initiative titled 'Early preparation to a safe and healthy motherhood: Understanding delays and opportunities in delivery and access to preconception care', supported by the HCL Foundation. The programs followed an intensive scoping review and qualitative research study on preconception nutrition, and were intended to elicit responses and ideas from representatives of the Departments of Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW) and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) of the Government of Karnataka.

These engagement programs will help KHPT formulate its strategy for preconception nutrition interventions going forward, and

encourage buy-in from state representatives, having taken into account the challenges and opportunities of integrating preconception nutrition into existing health programs.

The first public engagement program was held at Kunigal taluk, **Tumakuru** district, on June 15. The event was attended by Mr Shridhar, Deputy Director, WCD, Tumakuru; Dr Nagendrappa, District Health Officer (DHO); and Dr Vidya Kumari K, IAS, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Zilla Panchayat (ZP), Tumakuru, who addressed the audience, and encouraged them to support the initiative for the future of the children in their communities.

The KHPT team led participants, including ASHAs, Angandwadi workers, health facility staff and Child Development Project Officers through a series of participatory sessions to gauge the status of various programs available

for women's health, and the opportunities available to integrate preconception nutrition into these programs.

The second event at **Gulbarga** district on June 24, was attended by Dr Girish D Badole, ZP CEO, Gulbarga and Dr Rajashekhar Mali, DHO. Representatives of the three departments had an intensive discussion and presented their ideas for behaviour change among stakeholders, emphasizing the need for counselling for families and couples, as well as awareness for adolescent girls and boys about the importance of women's health, among other interventions.

After the two events, the KHPT team held a consultative workshop in **Bengaluru** on June 29 with representatives from different levels of the WCD. Mr Mohan H L, CEO, KHPT, set the context for the need for integrating preconception nutrition into women's health schemes, and added that convergence between Departments, especially at the level of frontline workers, would reduce their work burden and enable them to more efficiently serve the community. The KHPT team presented the results of the scoping review and qualitative study, and requested inputs from the gathered participants.

Dr MT Reju, IAS, Secretary to the Government; Ms Priyanka Mary Francis, IAS, Director, and Dr B Usha, Joint Director (ICDS), discussed with gathered representatives the need for a convergent model which utilizes the existing system and will be well-received by the people. At the close of the event, Dr Reju said he was grateful that KHPT was doing action research, more of which is required in many other states.

KHPT launches early childhood development intervention supported by Healthium Medtech in Tumakuru



Dignitaries from the Government, Healthium Medtech and KHPT launch the project by lighting the lamp

KHPT launched its early childhood development and care interventions titled 'Improving early childhood development through a life cycle approach: Preconception to early childhood' at Tumakuru on June 15. The launch was attended by representatives of the Departments of Women and Child Development, and Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka, including frontline workers, as well as representatives of Healthium Medtech.

Mr Mohan HL, CEO, KHPT, set the context for the gathering, emphasizing the importance of convergence between the different departments to help children achieve the desired development outcomes. Mr Shridhar, Deputy

Director, Women and Child Development, Tumakuru; Dr Nagendrappa, District Health Officer, Tumakuru; and Dr Vidya Kumari, K, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Panchayat, Tumakuru addressed the audience.

The three-year program, which will be implemented in Kunigal taluka, aims to design and develop innovative strategies and intervention packages aimed at improving Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and to develop an intersectoral convergence model at the village level and build sustainable solutions. KHPT will be implementing this initiative in Kunigal taluka, a rural block of Tumakuru district.

KHPT attends virtual inter-departmental meeting to support food fortification in J&K

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) organized a virtual inter-departmental meeting for Jammu and Kashmir on June 20. It was attended by officials from the Integrated Child Development Scheme

(ICDS) program and PM Poshan program (Department of Social Welfare), as well as the Public Distribution System (Department of Food and Civil Supplies), and the Food and Drug Administration. KHPT-GAIN was part of the meeting and representatives discussed the possibilities of supporting the

Union Territory in scaling up fortification in safety net programs with a focus on wheat flour fortification. A round table meeting will be planned in the coming months to develop a detailed road map and KHPT will be supporting in the scale-up of fortification initiatives, focused mainly on wheat flour fortification.

Community Engagement

Wipro CEO and global management team visit KHPT's urban health intervention site at Singasandra, Bengaluru



■ Wipro CEO, Mr Thierry Delaporte, interacts with children during a session

Wipro CEO Mr Thierry Delaporte, and members of the global senior management team at Wipro, visited the Kudlu Gate slum on May 8, a site at which KHPT is developing an Urban Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) model. The Wipro Cares-funded intervention at Singasandra Urban Primary Health Centre aims to create a comprehensive service package for pregnant, lactating mothers and children (below 5 years) among identified vulnerable groups, including the urban poor, migrants, and persons with pre-existing health conditions.

The KHPT team spoke about the organization's history, vision, principles and initiatives to ensure communities, especially

the most vulnerable, are empowered to lead a life of quality health and well-being. The team facilitated interactions with frontline health workers of the area to understand their motivations and daily challenges. The Wipro team also had conversations with mothers about their experiences with accessing healthcare during their pregnancies. Three groups of children from the slum shared with the visitors, through art, what they loved and did not like about their community, and their ambitions of improving their surroundings. The Wipro team concluded their visit with a walk through the Kudlu Gate slum blocks to understand the daily challenges of life in the slum.

KHPT team conducts awareness on food fortification at five state Eat Right Melas

KHPT participated in Eat Right Melas organized by the FSSAI in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The team set up stalls in the May-June period to create awareness on the importance of consuming edible oil, milk and wheat flour fortified with micronutrients such as Vitamins A, D, B12, iron and folic acid.

At the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, on May 7, the team also set up a live tasting and experience counter at which aloo parathas and chapatis prepared from fortified wheat flour and fortified oil were made available for the participants to show that there is no change in taste, colour and odour, as compared to unfortified wheat and oil. They also held a technical session and quiz on staple food fortification for the students of the National Institute of Nutrition,



■ The KHPT team interacts with Shri S M Nasar, Honourable Minister for Dairy, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Tamil Nadu at the Eat Right Mela

Hyderabad, along with other participants, to spread awareness on the benefits of consuming fortified foods and to clarify any misconceptions on the same. Ms B V Siva Naga Kumari, IRS, Chief Commissioner of Hyderabad, GST and Customs Zone, visited the stall, where she was briefed on the purpose of staple food fortification and its importance in combatting micronutrient malnutrition in the population.



■ A team member explains fortification to Gen V K Singh at the Eat Right Mela in UP

On May 21, the project team participated in the Eat Right Mela at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, which was inaugurated by Gen V K Singh, Ex Army Chief, Member of Parliament and Minister of State in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and Ministry of Civil Aviation, as well as Shri Atul Garg, MLA, Ghaziabad. Shri S M Nasar, Honourable Minister for Dairy, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Tamil Nadu, inaugurated the Eat Right Mela in Thiruvalluvar, Tamil Nadu, from June 10-12.

KHPT identifies Child Health Ambassadors in Singasandra

Children have the potential to bring a change in the family and at the community level, as they can easily connect and influence their peers, parents and the community as a whole. KHPT identified a group of children in Singasandra, Bengaluru, under its Wipro Cares-funded program, to be a good resource for school health programs, and influence the other school children/ families/ community to learn and adopt healthy lifestyles. This initiative aligns with the Government of India's Health and Wellness Ambassador program, in which two teachers in every school will be designated as Health and Wellness Ambassadors and trained to spread health promotion and disease prevention information through interesting activities for one hour every week.



■ Painting fest for the children at Kudlu slum quarters

KHPT in April selected 30 school-going children aged 10 - 15 from Kudlu Slum quarters who are proactive and vocal, to be Child Health Ambassadors. A series of interactive activities such as drama and painting were conducted for the children to build a rapport with them

and understand their perspective of their roles. They expressed that their dream is to have healthy surroundings free from open drainage, alcohol and tobacco, and domestic violence, and to have clean drinking water. They want to bring these issues to the concerned authorities, and bring behaviour change among their peers and community

KHPT staff facilitated a mapping exercise with the Child Health Ambassadors on May 6 to understand their aspirations. The children drew the map, plotting their quarters, open-pit drainage, and features such as temples, churches, community halls, petty shops, trees, etc. The facilitator also provided guiding questions to assess the situation, gaps and challenges that exist in their quarters, and the probable solutions to resolve those issues.

Capacity Building

ANMs and Village Health nurses sensitized on food fortification

The Government of India has directed the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and the Ministry of Women and Child Development to provide information and generate awareness about importance of food fortification among communities. As ANMs and Village Health Nurses are the core team on ground, sensitizing them on food fortification is essential in order to get the information about benefits of consuming fortified foods disseminated among communities.

KHPT conducted an online sensitisation workshop for 574 ANMs and Village Health Nurses in Tamil Nadu in two batches on 18 and 24 June. The participants were briefed on fortification, its need and importance, identification of fortified products available in market and other relevant information.

KHPT sensitizes industry representatives on fortification

KHPT was invited by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Pune, to address a gathering of oil and milk industry representatives on fortification on June 23. The event was jointly organized by the FDA, Pune, and the Maratha Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA). The team addressed over 100 representatives

on fortification, recent developments in the Indian scenario, the importance of staple food fortification to address micronutrient malnutrition, and the technical processes of oil and milk fortification. The industry participants showed interest in initiating fortification of their respective staples and will be given individual onsite support by KHPT.



Oil and milk industry representatives at the Pune sensitization event

A division - level sensitization workshop of roller flour millers was organized for 10 roller flour mills from Basti, Sant Kabir Naga and Siddhartha Nagar districts of Uttar Pradesh on June 14. They were sensitized on importance and benefits of wheat flour fortification, technical and legal requirements, and the industrial process of wheat flour fortification. Dr Shashi Pandey, Assistant Commissioner, Food Safety, requested all the millers to get the equipment installed and other requirements completed within six months to be able to start fortifying wheat flour.

Community Health Workers in Singasandra trained on Non-Communicable Diseases and TB

KHPT staff conducted a two-day training for project's Community Health Workers on April 5 and April 13 on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), including diabetes and hypertension, Tuberculosis, and Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC). The training covered causes, symptoms and management of diabetes hypertension and TB, and converting the information into key messages using Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) techniques.

The team was oriented on who is eligible for KMC, when and how to do it, who can provide KMC, benefits of KMC for mother and newborn, and converting information into key messages using BCC techniques. A refresher training was organized in May.



A demonstration on providing effective KMC

Case Story

CHW encourages family to practice KMC at home for low birth weight baby

Thilagamu is 27 years old, living in Kudlu Slum quarter in Singasandra, Bengaluru. She delivered a low birth weight baby, weighing just 1660 grams in a private hospital. The baby was initiated on Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in the hospital, which is a technique involving skin-to-skin contact between the mother and baby, that has been proven to reduce the risk of hypothermia, hospital-born infections and mortality risks to underweight babies. However, after Thilagamu came home, she discontinued giving KMC to the baby. The



Thilagamu provides KMC to her baby at home

ASHAs at Singasandra have not been trained on KMC, and would have not known to encourage Thilagamu to provide it to her baby. However, our CHW, Durgamba, had been recently trained on KMC under the Wipro Cares initiative in Singasandra. She had been trained to identify babies who need KMC, how to initiate KMC, and how to counsel mothers and families to provide prolonged KMC at home. She spoke to Thilagamu and her family extensively on continuing KMC at home for at least 10 hours to ensure her baby gained weight. Thilagamu now provides six hours of KMC per day, and her husband takes over when he comes home from work!



Voices

We need more of such action research to be able to scale up on an ongoing basis. I keenly look forward to understanding more from this (KHPT) study, and other future studies.

Dr M T Reju, IAS, Secretary to the Government, Dept of Women and Child Development at KHPT's consultation workshop

In most interventions, the lifecycle approach is missing. If this pilot is a success, it will be a powerful and cost-effective intervention to improve childhood development.

Dr Deepak, Medical Advisor, Healthium Medtech



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