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Assessment of nutritional status of children under-five year of age, pregnant and lactating women of Dolakha district after earthquake in Nepal

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A strong earthquake of 7.8 magnitude hit Nepal on 25 April 2015, causing death, injuries and devastation among the affected population. Before the earthquake, Nepal had made great strides in reducing undernutrition. National rates of child stunting decreased from 57% in 2001 to 41% in 2011. Due to the earthquake on April 2015, all these efforts are now compromised. The disaster was marked by limited access to nutritious food, safe drinking water and poor sanitation condition, increasing the risk of under nutrition among children below five years age, pregnant and lactating women in Dolakha district of Nepal. A cross-sectional, 30-cluster study was performed. 14 children under five from each cluster and all pregnant and lactating women in selected cluster were studied. Data were from mothers and caregivers. Weight, height or length and mid upper arm circumference were measured on children while the mid-upper-arm circumference of pregnant and lactating women was measured. A total of 425 children were assessed, of whom 4.2%, 23.3% and 36% were wasted, underweight and stunted respectively. The prevalence of each indicator was higher in boys than in girls. The prevalence of under nutrition among pregnant women (n=191) was 18%. Among them, prevalence was higher in lactating women (18.3%) than pregnant women (11.7%). The survey showed that the stunting and underweight in this district were seriously based on WHO classification. Wasting, underweight and stunting were higher among boys. The prevalence of acute malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women was high. Programs like the integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) need to be continued and expanded. Provision of nutritious food for children should be focused. IYCF practices should be promoted in the district. Similarly, there is a need to establish nutritional surveillance systems to monitor the nutritional status of children, pregnant and lactating women.

Biography

Bindu Panthi has completed her MPH from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. She has 5 years of working experience in nutrition field in different NGO's including Save The Children. She was Health and Nutrition Coordinator in Save the Children, Nepal.

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