

KALPANA'S JOURNEY

TOWARD BETTER HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Like Kalpana, many mothers in Nepal do not have access to information on the right actions to ensure proper nutrition needed to raise healthy children.



1 “I delivered my first child at home. I did not exclusively breastfeed him, as I used to think milk alone was insufficient for my baby,” said Kalpana Khadka, 22, holding her newborn second child.

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2 USAID-funded Suaahara is an integrated nutritional program that is reaching out to 1,000 days (period between a woman’s pregnancy and her child’s second birthday) mothers in 41 districts of Nepal through frontline workers such as Female Community Health Volunteers to promote good nutrition practices. This will lay the foundation for the child’s ability to grow, learn and emerge out of poverty – yielding dividends for a lifetime.



3 In the nutrition interaction meeting conducted in villages by Suaahara, mothers and their families learn about healthy caring and nutrition behaviors. This is where Kalpana learned about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, ante-natal checkups, hygiene and sanitation as well as complementary feeding of children, incorporating animal source foods and nutritious vegetables.

4 “Unlike my first one, I delivered my daughter in a health facility. I breastfed her exclusively for six months and then fed her nutritious homemade porridge that I had learned to make in the nutrition interaction meeting. I am also extra careful about washing my hands with soap before feeding her and we drink boiled water at home,” said Kalpana.



5 Suaahara also trained Kalpana and her family on vegetable cultivation and poultry farming, providing her with five chickens and nutritious vegetable seeds for three seasons. This is to encourage proper and correct complementary feeding practices, making sure that diverse nutritious food—rich in iron, Vitamin A and protein—can be easily produced and prepared at home.

PHOTOS:
DINESH BASNET,
RAMCHANDRA GIRI AND
PALLAVI DHAKAL,
USAID SUAAHARA PROGRAM



6 Suaahara encourages women to adopt small actions like these that will make a difference in their lives and the lives of their children. Like Kalpana, the USAID-funded Suaahara program is planning to reach more than 620,000 Nepali mothers and household decision makers, equipping them with knowledge to ensure the healthiest possible start in life for the next generation of Nepal.

