OVERVIEW

Adolescents (10 – 19 years old) are at high risk of iron deficiency and anemia due to poor dietary intake of iron, high rates of infection from parasites, and adolescent pregnancy. Long-term problems associated with anemia include maternal mortality and complications while giving birth.

The objective of this program was to improve the iron count of adolescent girls by providing weekly supplements and biannual treatment of parasites. Evidence suggests that a weekly iron and folic acid tablet supplement for adolescent girls is as effective as daily supplements, but with a much lower rate of side effects. The program also raised awareness of the importance of preventing adolescent anemia and documented and publicized best practices for the management and prevention of anemia.
**ACTIVITIES**

**FOR GIRLS IN SCHOOL**

- Increased teachers’ knowledge about nutrition, the importance of micronutrients, and hygiene and sanitation
- Developed a system for weekly supplementation within urban and rural schools for adolescent girls
- Ensured continuous supply of iron and folic acid supplements and deworming tablets to schools
- Advocate for the integration of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation messages into school education programs

**FOR GIRLS NOT IN SCHOOL**

- Reached girls attending the non-formal education centers (Accelerated Learning Centers) at the community level for delivery of weekly supplements
- Sensitized communities to the importance of nutrition for adolescents, particularly for adolescent girls
- Trained non-governmental organizations and community health workers to provide supplements and parasite treatment for adolescent girls at the community level

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Developed protocols, guidelines, a handbook, and communication materials for weekly iron and folic acid supplementation for teachers, students, parents, and religious leaders
- Developed a comprehensive training plan for facilitators and provided two full days of Training of Trainers to core Master Trainers in facilitation techniques; completed Training of Trainers in 14 provinces
- In December 2016, began supplementing iron and folic acid for adolescent girls in school in Parwan Province then expanded activity to 14 provinces
- Approximately 1 million adolescent girls received supplements, and USAID conducted training in 10 provinces on importance of supplements
- Conducted training in four additional provinces in March 2017; focused on reaching out-of-school girls
- Developed and distributed all communication materials for March 2017 media campaign.

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