Operationalization of Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre
Community Health Centre, Karra Block, Khunti, Jharkhand

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BACKGROUND

Despite India’s remarkable economic growth over the last decade, many children still struggle to meet their most basic needs, including access to sufficient food and health care. According to the 2005-06 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), 20 per cent of Indian children under five years old were wasted (acutely malnourished) and 48 percent were stunted (chronically malnourished). Importantly, with 43 per cent of children underweight (with a weight deficit for their age) rates of child underweight in India are twice higher than the average figure in sub-Saharan Africa (22 per cent). The consequences of this nutrition crisis are enormous; in addition to being the attributable cause of one third to one half of child deaths, malnutrition causes stunted physical growth and cognitive development that last a lifetime; the economic losses associated with malnutrition are estimated at 3 per cent of India’s GDP annually. Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) have nine times higher risk of dying than well-nourished children. With appropriate nutritional and clinical management, many of the deaths due to severe wasting can be prevented.

FACILITY BASED MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE ACUTE MALNUTRITION (SAM): NUTRITION REHABILITATION CENTRE

Nutrition Rehabilitation Center (NRC) is a unit in a health facility where children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) are admitted and managed. Children are admitted as per the defined admission Criteria and provided with medical and nutritional therapeutic care. Once discharged from the NRC, the child continues to be in the Nutrition Rehabilitation program till she/he attains the defined discharge criteria from the program. In addition to curative care, special focus is given on timely, adequate and appropriate feeding for children; and on improving the skills of mothers and caregivers on complete age appropriate caring and feeding practices. In addition, efforts are made to build the capacity of mothers/caregivers through counseling and support to identify the nutrition and health problems in their child. Objectives for operationalizing NRC at Karra are;

- To facilitate clinical management of SAM children particularly with medical complications
- To promote physical & psychosocial growth of SAM children
- To build the capacity of mothers in appropriate feeding practices
- To lower the malnutrition rates prevalent in Karra block by identifying the factors responsible for condition & facilitating behavior change

STATUS OF MALNUTRITION & NUTRITION REHABILITATION CENTRES IN KHUNTI

District Level Health Survey-2 conducted in 2002-04 (DLHS-2) for Jharkhand on the nutrition status (weight-for-age) of children says that 53.5 percent of children aged 48-71 months are underweight. 56.6 percent children in rural areas were underweight as per DLHS-2. This survey used the NCHS Child Growth Standards (1970), which were later replaced by the WHO Growth Standards (2006). As per third round of National Family Health Survey 2005-06 (NFHS-3), 54.6 percent children under 3 years of age were underweight in Jharkhand and percentage of underweight for same age group in rural areas was as high as 58 percent. In lieu of any recent nutrition survey, current data about nutritional status is not available. Nutrition rehabilitation center at District hospital Khunti & First referral unit Torpa are functional & are providing services to SAM children.

CGC|SA SUPPORT FOR OPERATIONALIZING NUTRITION REHABILITATION CENTRE KARRA
During a joint mapping exercise with the District Programme Management Unit (DPMU), it was noted that district doesn’t have adequate facility based management units for providing services to Children with severe acute malnutrition. It was also identified with the review of Record of Proceedings (RoP) 2013-14 of NRHM that district has got approval for setting up of an NRC at Karra community health centre. Having recognized this gap, CGC|SA advocated to district administration for setting up of Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre (NRC) at the Karra Community health centre. Based on discussions, CGC|SA agreed to assist the district to operationalize a ten bedded NRC at newly constructed Community health centre at Karra block. In June 2014, a detailed work-plan with timelines was submitted to the District Health Team for approval and inputs.

CGC|SA’s scope of work was broadly defined

A. Project Management Support to operationalize the NRC
B. Technical guidance on Infrastructure, training and procurement
C. On-going monitoring and operational support till the Unit functions to its optimum capacity

**TASKS UNDERTAKEN TILL DATE:**

1. Identification of budgetary allocation for NRC Karra from RoP 2013-14
2. Pushed up for setting up of NRC by ensuring it as an agenda of discussion in monthly review meetings
3. Designed (customized) the NRC space as per national guidelines
4. Customized technical specifications (infrastructure) for the NRC
5. Orientation of Hospital staff on the critical need of the specialized facility based management of SAM children in the block
6. Supervised & facilitated the procurement and purchase of equipment & instruments
7. Liaised with lead Technical Partner –UNICEF for protocols to be displayed, registers, discharge slip, SAM management chart etc. at the NRC
8. Monitored the progress of setting up of NRC
9. Facilitated the training of nurses and support staff dedicated for the Unit on SAM management, formats, maintenance of records, universal precautions, referral mechanism
10. Monitoring Support on an on-going basis

**TIMELINE**

July 2014 – March 2015

**STATUS AS ON MARCH 2015**

The Nutrition rehabilitation centre at the Karra –Community Health Centre got operational on 26 February 2015. As on March 31, 2015; 7 children have been admitted & treated.