

**Title : K.E.Y-Knowing and Engaging for Young child food and feeding: Demystification by involving ordinary people in assessment**

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**Introduction:**

Undernutrition continues to be a problem facing our country. Nearly one third of the childhood deaths are attributed to undernutrition<sup>1</sup>. India has one of the highest proportion of undernourished children in the world. Sound Infant and young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices have been emphasized to combat undernutrition that sets early on. There is a policy push in India to unpack age appropriate complementary feeding so that the same can be better understood and adopted at community level. An innovation was hatched extrapolating ASER/Pratham approach for large scale assessment and community participation approach in education for assessing IYCF and other domains involving National Service Scheme (NSS) students.

**Methodology:**

In the first stage, 40 villages were randomly sampled of Hoshiarpur II block using probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling technique. Villages selected were as per the Census 2011 village list. The second stage units were households. In this stage, households with children aged 2 years or below in the village were identified. 16 households were sampled from each village in order to give us a total targeted sample of 640 households to create a block report card of Hoshiarpur district.

**Results:**

78% children below 6 months were given only mother's milk. Majority (75%) of the surveyed children were continued to be breast fed. Consumption of protective foods (62.5%) was low across all the age groups in comparison to body building and energy giving foods. Few households (35.3%) took measures to improve energy density of the meals given to children. Only 44% parents took their child for weighing in the month of survey. Only 30% of the households reported to be giving purified water to children. Only six percent of the children were reported to be given foods in thick consistency.

**Conclusion:**

Majority of the households have access to facilities but they have very little knowledge about right practices that need to be followed for development of a child. It seems to be not so much of a problem of access but a problem of awareness. Easy assessments instruments like the one used here might have a potential to demystify young child food and feeding by involving ordinary people in assessments and understanding the gaps to propel action.

**References:**

- WHO (2013). Essential Nutrition Actions: improving maternal, newborn, infant and young child health and nutrition.