
Index:

I: Interviewer

P: Participant

Interview duration: 00:46:17

Language in which the interview was conducted: Nepali

Location: At participant's workplace

Date of the interview: 22 April 2021

I: Ma'am, could you tell me about the policies and strategies regarding early childhood development? In recent days? I am focusing on kids below 3 years old only.

P: There is preprimary development guideline for kids under 1 year old up to 4 years old. It is usually for kids up to 8 years old. We have recently published one strategy from the Ministry of Education and the education division ... they have developed guidelines... about the pre-primary child development... there is a guideline letters...but now the National Planning Commission have published the latest strategies regarding ECD, but we are not able to see that. They will send it soon via official letters. It is a national project.

I: What are the facilities for kids in this?

P: It has not arrived yet. It has been published recently.

I: Ma'am are you familiar with term ECD related to stimulation? Parents who have kids under 3 years of age is supposed to interact, play, and talk with their kids. They are supposed to react according to the actions shown by the kids. It will develop various senses in the kids which leads to the development. It activates the sensational neurons in the brain which makes them active and intelligent.

P: Like thousand golden days?

31 I: Yes, it is under nutritional intervention. W.H.O has now recommended that if nutrition
32 and stimulation programmes are launched together, then it will be more beneficial for the
33 mental growth and development for the kids. ECD scientists has also done a lot of
34 research which shows the growth and development of child via these interventions. What
35 are your thoughts regarding this?

36 P: Ministry of Education, through the education and human resource development centre
37 ...has been providing day's lunch (*Diwa Khaja*) for the school children from last year... a
38 big budget is allocated for Diwa khaja programme through the local municipality. They
39 have been providing lunch for kids in pre-primary level to children in class five in
40 schools at the rate of 20 rupees in Himalayan region and in other replaces at the rate of 15
41 rupees... This lunch is prepared by the school with the help of local committee, mother's
42 group, and school itself prepare this fresh lunch... school buys locally produced foods,
43 prepare lunch, feed all the student and then they will teach them. Kids eat breakfast at
44 their homes in the morning. They get hungry at school and their homes are far as well or
45 some households don't have the capacity to feed their kids as some of them are poor.
46 That is why we are providing them lunch at school. We have banned packet food, junk
47 foods, foods from the markets in the school. We thought that unless the kids are hungry,
48 they won't get any knowledge form the school. That is why we have implemented this
49 lunch programme. This has been efficient as well. The main motive of this Day lunch
50 programme is to increase the participation of children in education and improving the
51 teaching level to provide quality education. Our motive is to provide 30% of the total
52 nutrition child requires in a day through from the schools Day lunch programme.
53 Similarly, connecting agriculture with the day lunch programme... Government has a
54 motive that schools could be the market for those local agricultural farmer.... Nepal
55 government is working on that.

56
57 I: In governmental school? (00:05:54)

58 P: Yes, in every governmental schools. Education and human development center allocate
59 the budget at local government ... the local government sends the data on the number of
60 student and based on that local government allocates budget to that school. The budget
61 for the school is allocated for lunch for 180 days per child. We have a system like that.

62

63 I: Kids under 3 years of age don't go to school. Are there any facilities for them in home?

64 P: Children below three have not come to school ... some private schools have opened care

65 center for them. Parents also invest in those ... where the school feed children ... We

66 have seen and heard like that. Our system has not done anything for kids under 3 years of

67 age. It falls under ministry health sector ... and under ministry of women, children, and

68 senior citizen health ...

69

70 I: Is there anything happening for kids under 3 years of age?

71 P: They provide nutritional foods and vitamins ... they provide nutrition food to mothers.

72 They do the survey and assess their health... do all the survey to keep the data of height

73 and weight. I don't know this in detail. These are related to health.

74

75 I: I wanted to know how we could launch this programme in together.

76 P: Maybe it is looked by the health and UNICEF.

77

78 I: You said that they are distributing various nutritional diets, and there are some

79 programmes as well, right? So, kids under 3 years of age should be taught things in a

80 happy environment while playing and all. People need to understand stimulation as well.

81 We need to take this programme in community level. What are your thoughts on it?

82 P: We don't have any plan to take the programme to the household level.... We do have

83 this in early development department. They provide NRS. 500 to the school for a child in

84 one year. They have been giving these expenses for education materials and other

85 logistics. The teachers also get their salaries.

86

87 I: There are no existing programmes, right? But what if in future, we launch one

88 programme like this in this community? The topic which I am going to discuss has not

89 been launched in Nepal yet. W.H.O has recommended this way though. We are planning

90 to add stimulation components too which includes playing, learning, talking and

91 interactions with nutrition programmes.

92 P: We don't have any programmes like this in here. We can run this programme with the
 93 collaboration of local municipality as well. There could be parks build for kids ... and a
 94 playground and put toys and other playing materials for children ... parents can take
 95 children there and bring back home... a care center could also be built especially of both
 96 parents are working like where we could take care of children from young age, feed them
 97 healthy food, play with them, and talk with their parents as well. But we don't have
 98 anything like that. There is one center like this nearby here in Kathmandu where kids are
 99 enrolled below two years and given healthy food and they play all the time. If we could
 100 do something like this then it would have been good, but we do not have this thinking.
 101

102 I: I was trying to know what will happen if programme like this is launched. How can we
 103 run this combined programme of stimulation and nutrition via health workers in the
 104 community level?

105 P: Like I said, at community level we need to open one center for kids from 0 to 4 years of
 106 age. We need to hire a caregiver. We need to provide them, toys, resting areas for sleep
 107 and provide nutritional foods. We need to participate parents and local government there.
 108 We could do something like this ... but there is nothing like this yet...
 109

110 I: Who should initiate this center like you said?

111 P: Local level should mobilise this. They have budget as well. They should do it as per their
 112 need.
 113

114 I: How could they do it?

115 P: If policies are made from the center level, then they can run this via local level as well.
 116 We need policies as well. They might have made it too. Maybe they have made in many
 117 places, and we are not aware of it...
 118

119 I: These things are related to ministry. They have their own authority to make these
 120 policies. The main level is still the ministry, right? What sort of help could we get form
 121 the ministry level?

122 P: At ministry level we could help with the policies ... a sample policy... and later they can
123 step on that and take it forward according to their local context

124

125 I: Who could help that?

126 P: We have Ministry, of education CHRT, provincial government and local government as
127 well. We could go through these mediums... They have social development ministry in
128 local level government as well. Science and education ministry is in top level. They have
129 social development ministry in local and state level. There are small social development
130 committee in local level. They have schools too. They have school level committee,
131 teachers committee in there.

132

133 I: Ma'am, which of the ongoing nutritional programme is more suitable for integration with
134 stimulation programme for kids under 3 years of age? We have nutritional related
135 programmes only running currently, right? Which of the nutritional programme is more
136 suitable to combine with stimulation programme if we must launch this programme in
137 future? Any nutritional programme from the governmental level as well?

138 P: We should go via local government ...

139

140 I: In which nutritional related programme? You said that there were programmes related to
141 vitamins distribution and measurements programmes as well.

142 P: We have nearly 3000 early childhood pre-primary centers ... From health ministry they
143 have regularly conducted health checkup ... regularly have been feeding children
144 deworming tablets and vitamin supplements....

145

146 I: How can we run this programme with this then?

147 P: We need to aware the parents as well ... there should be Parents awareness programme...
148 specially to those who lives in rural areas they need to be made more aware... about the
149 importance of nutrition. At the current state many awareness messages have given to the
150 community level through MOHP through FCHVs ... they have been doing various good
151 work in this field. Besides this Ministry of education and school should also these kinds
152 of work at local level in their catchment area...

153

154 I: What sort of works?

155 P: Awareness raising programmes ... for the parents...

156

157 I: Who can run this programme in community level? You said school could do it. What
158 about health workers?

159 P: Yes, health workers, parents and teachers could do it Female teachers could do it
160 more efficiently.

161

162 I: They can be involved in school, but teachers cannot be involved directly in community
163 level, right?

164 P: Teachers could be. They know the parents and their neighborhood too.

165

166 I: How can they catch those kids who are small?

167 P: Their sisters and brothers will come to the school. They know via them. We conduct
168 admission campaign ... Last year we could not do due to COVID ... We don't know
169 anything about next year. Otherwise, admission campaign would take place now. We
170 could know about the kids and their home, which came to school the reasons they did not
171 get admitted in school. Teachers know everything about their area. Which children came
172 who did not... Teachers bring kids from their home and get them enrolled in schools.

173

174 I: What could be the roles of health volunteers in this?

175 P: They know about the situation of. kids in their area. I don't know in detail about this.
176 They take note of the condition of mother and kids in their respective areas. They see if
177 any kids are suffering from malnutrition or not, weight of the mother... They also see the
178 growth of the child and whether mothers are taking the iron tablets or not. I think this is
179 what they do I don't know about the detail. You need to take these details from the health
180 section as well. We listen in the radio things about iron tablets distribution and checkup
181 programmes, encourage for check and follow up why they have not done health checkup
182 ... conduct home visit and send them to health post I have been listening to these
183 things from radio and TV. I also hear this when I go to the meetings...

184

185 I: Ma'am health volunteers have been taking this nutrition programme in doorstep. What
186 will be the effect when these volunteers take ECD related stimulation programme as
187 well?

188 P: It will be a good thing. Parents will be conscious about education and nutritious food for
189 children. Not just about the education but they will understand the necessity of nutritional
190 food for the kids. It will be beneficial if they study ... there is no use if you don't study...
191 we have also implemented compulsory education campaign... They need to get education
192 must. They cannot sit at home. Teachers visit home to bring children to school ... About
193 health also there should be similar things...what is the child being feed ... NPC has
194 implemented Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan ... according to that Health, education and
195 women and kids' ministry have been working together on this ... It is a multisectoral
196 programme (Background Noise) ...

197

198 I: Ma'am, you talked about inter sector, right? I have been talking to various person about
199 this topic as well. Everyone said that it will be feasible to launch the combined
200 programme of nutrition and stimulation. What are your thoughts on this?

201 P: I have just come here. Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan has been in action from NPC... I have
202 visited few meetings ... We have Day snack programme ... We are also seeking results
203 from this day snacks programme. We are trying to know how it has influenced the kid's
204 education, how many kids joined school after this programme and what is the retention
205 rate? Students used to leave school after lunch break before. We have seen in reduction in
206 that. Now they stay at school for whole day and eat healthy. There is a growth in their
207 knowledge as well. They are happy now as they get healthy snacks, and they learn well.
208 They stay late in school for studies. They also complete their year.

209

210 I: There are more activities in school.

211 P: Yes.

212

213 I: Ma'am, this was school level programme. Kids under one year old stays in their home
 214 only in the community. If we must target that level of children in community level, how
 215 could health volunteers do this?

216 P: We don't have any programmes for kids under 1 year.
 217

218 I: What If there was a programme regarding this?

219 P: We don't have anything from the ministry.
 220

221 I: How can we run this if we are going to launch this for kids under 1 year old? How can we
 222 take this stimulation programme to the parents via health volunteers? How will this effect
 223 on the child?

224 P: If we decide to do then we might need to make some planning and strategies... We have
 225 early child development center. We don't have anything for kids under 3 years old where
 226 nutrition supplement is given. We don't have anything regarding stimulation.
 227

228 I: Ma'am, there is a system made from the local government, right? There are no
 229 programmes for stimulation programme in today's context, right? What if in future, there
 230 launches a programme like this? (00:22:31)

231 P: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health work together in advocacy regarding
 232 child's protection and feeding them nutritious food ... we train the teachers... through
 233 teachers these messages can go to the community... this is there...But there is nothing
 234 formally done regarding this for under three age group.
 235

236 I: What can be done then?

237 P: I cannot say about this. We don't have any planning regarding this.
 238

239 I: I am saying that, if we are about to run this programme in community level where we
 240 could interact with the kids and their parents and share about stimulation, how can we run
 241 this programme then?

242 P: Parents usually don't have time they both go for work. They don't know where else to
 243 leave their child when they at work. So, it is a problem. Government should plan with

244 the help of women and education ministry about developing a daytime preprimary care
245 center for kids from 0 age to support such parents. There should be children's
246 participation in that area. We need to manage that from all aspects... financial,
247 geographical....

248

249 I: Who should do that?

250 P: Everyone should be a part of it. Women ministry, education ministry and even the local
251 government should help in that. We need to collect data of parents at local level who do
252 not have time to take care of their children and we can build a nice care center for the
253 kids.

254

255 I: Who could be the operator in that care center? For instance, a teacher is an operator in
256 school, right? Who do you think should be this operator there?

257 P: We should hire people. Hiring people will not be okay. We need to provide them
258 essential materials. They need to teach the kids. They can teach them to wash their
259 hands, wear clothes by themselves. It will help these kids for their physical development
260 as well. Inserting shirt button is also a big task for kids below 3 years old. They will need
261 to use their brain... so this will help in and mental development... Kids will learn how to
262 behave with their fellow mates which enhances their social development as well. A well-
263 trained child teacher or helper is required for this. We need a caretaker as well who looks
264 after the children and cleansing them as well. They need to do all the toilet training and
265 need to wear those clothes on. We need a trained human resource for this. We cannot
266 just include any one... they need to be trained... they should be female ...We have training
267 packages... we can provide them trainings... we have training center in each province. We
268 can give them the trainings with the help of state level and local government.

269

270 I: Ma'am you talked about the training and this center. Do you think it can participate all
271 children and their parents in this? What will be their participation in this?

272 P: If they are aware then there will be participation... if they are not aware, we need to make
273 them aware as well.

274

275 I: Who do you think we should appoint for this? (00:26:59)

276 P: I think it should be done by the local level. I think school and local level do it.

277

278 I: Ma'am you said that parents don't have time, so that we need care centers like this. What

279 else could we do?

280 P: For kids?

281

282 I: One you said that we need a center for kids where parents could drop off their kids and a

283 trained professional should take care of them.

284 P: Yes.

285

286 I: Are there any other methods?

287 P: Kids under 4 years old should go into his care center and above this will go to school.

288

289 I: Ma'am you said about building center. What types of resources are needed for doing this

290 in future?

291 P: We have resources in local level. If they want, they can do ...Schools have limited

292 resources, but the local level government if they feel the need and if they realize the need

293 of the people in this community ... it they understood that this is important for children

294 development then they can do it.... they have enough resources for everything.

295

296 I: They also seek help from the top level. Let us take an example. Even if we realize from

297 the local level, that we need a programme for kids where they would play and learn. Now

298 they will give us excuses like, there should be something from the top level as well. They

299 need some sort or approval and plan for any programme like this. What do you have to

300 say about this? (00:29:23)

301 P: Central level ministry could facilitate ... Local level say that we have central level

302 mentality ... they don't listen to us... Ministry should ease this process... local level

303 should be made aware ... they should have understood the need of the community

304 ...There are many members of municipalities, committee... they also have ward

305 members... even women council too. If all of these identify the need and collaborate then
306 it is possible ... Just saying through the central level would not be enough...

307

308 I: But ministry does all these guiding, right? If we must launch in health sector too, other
309 than education?

310 P: They look for budget from the central level... And central level does send budget, but
311 they are not adequate... Local resources must be mobilized...

312

313 I: So, they have the necessary resources. You also said about manpower. If we must hire
314 this caretaker like you said, there are various volunteers in community level. There are
315 ANM in health post s as well from governmental level. Don't you think it will affect the
316 existing system when we hire this caretaker?

317 P: What do you mean?

318

319 I: You said about the care center and to provide these facilities to them, we need a trained
320 person for this job as well. How will it affect when we hire a separate category person for
321 this job?

322 P: Care center people?

323

324 I: Yes.

325 P: That person should be local from the community. Local government should hire him.
326 They should know how long they should work, for how long the child should be looked
327 after in the care center... how to bring the kids in the center and how to look after the
328 kids. Should parents come to collect their child, or the caretaker will drop them
329 home... They should make them play and manage all of things. So, resources and
330 equipment available at the local level must be evaluated and the local level should
331 manage these if they feel the need ... from the top level there are no such concepts
332 developed yet....

333

334 I: What if it does not come from the top level?

335 P: If they understand the need, they can do so many work ... They have done in many places
 336 but maybe we don't have it in our record ... If they have adequate staff, then they can
 337 provide such facilities for children...
 338

339 I: So, you mean we can do things in local level without too much concerning about the top
 340 level? (00:32:52)

341 P: Yes. They can do work independently... Now they have health and education sector at
 342 local level. ECE does not come to the central if they need local government give
 343 permission wherever required.
 344

345 I: Ma'am, NGO and INGO also plays an important role in this. They are also required in
 346 this community as well. What could be their roles in any programme?

347 P: They also have been collaborating with us in many programmes and in programmes
 348 related to child development. There is UNICEF, Seto Gurans ... They also have been
 349 providing various trainings and have many roles in this community level as well. They
 350 provide various facilities and materials such as toys, learning materials, books corner for
 351 child development.
 352

353 I: What we have found in the community level is people want NGO/INGO to take part in
 354 the programme. They find it easy to learn with them and they trust them even more as
 355 they know it better. It will be hard for the government to launch any programme in the
 356 community now.

357 P: I don't think like that. We are also doing our best. They have been doing great as well.
 358 We used to get basic trainings from CHRD for 15-16 days. NGO would give refresh
 359 trainings of 6-7 days. We used to give trainings from 10-4 pm. They would complete
 360 their training in 4 days. This training is utilized by everyone. They prepare all the
 361 education material ... and use those materials to teach in the ECE centers ... Both have
 362 equal role ... Their technical aspect benefits everyone.
 363

364 I: While running any programmes in the community level, people expect something for us
 365 to participate in programmes like this.

366 P: Because of NGO?
367

368 I: Anyone either from governmental side or from NGO. Let us take an example of mother's
369 group. To participate in that programme as well, they need something in return from the
370 programme. Do you know anything about this?

371 P: I have not heard anything like that when programme is launched in the community level
372 ...
373

374 I: Some people ask for incentive as well.

375 P: No, I have been working here for long time and I have not heard anything like this here.
376

377 I: Ma'am what are the things that makes it easy to run this programme in the community
378 level? For example, participation of people in the community will make the programme
379 easy, right? (00:37:56)

380 P: If we are about to launch any programme, then we will be consulting our own department
381 for this at the district level. There is a separate office for education development and
382 coordination unit in district. We will go them and coordinate with them. We would seek
383 help from them to make people participation and resources too. Then we decide about the
384 target group as well. They would inform those people and make necessary arrangements.
385 They will also fix the place for the programme and run the programme ... We will do like
386 this. Our programme is helped by everyone around like school, community, our
387 department in the district and local government as well. We need help from this group.
388 They provide us full support ...
389

390 I: Are there any challenges you have faced?

391 P: No, not at all. This COVID is only the challenge we have been facing right now.
392

393 I: Ma'am, what should be done to make this programme sustainable in the community?
394 From health center?

395 P: You can ask me from education point of view. Don't ask me from health point of view.
396

397 I: How can this programme be sustainable in this community? How can this programme be
 398 run for long term?

399 P: About?

400

401 I: Ma'am about this health system, those things that are to be taught to the kids below 3
 402 years of age.

403 P: This health aspects are attached in our curriculum too. We have added health-related
 404 topics in the curriculum from class 1 to up to class 11. There are health teachers in school
 405 as well. They know what to eat, what types of food to avoid, how many times we should
 406 eat, what types of balanced food we need and all that could contribute to better health and
 407 free from disease ... kids understand these from the curriculum as well. We have been
 408 providing free sanitary pads to the girls as well in this school. This is also related to
 409 health sector.

410

411 I: Ma'am how can we run this combined programme of health and education in this
 412 community? Right now, you have been taking this programme via school, right? How
 413 can we take this programme for kids under 3 years of age in combination of health in
 414 school?

415 P: Programme related to health?

416

417 I: No, I meant your education-related programme in collaboration with health.

418 P: We need to add this to school level curriculum. We need to add in school level
 419 curriculum about how to take care of kids below 3 years old. It is nice if siblings learn
 420 these things ... parents obey what their children tells them ... they accept easily ... they
 421 can say, "brother should be fed this, brother should be cared like this ... You should not
 422 feed this Mummy... this is what written in our book...Miss has said this too" ... Older
 423 siblings would educate their parents about this. Parents and guardians will learn more
 424 after that.

425

426 I: This is one way too. How can we target parents for involvement?

427 P: We have parents' awareness programme where we can make them aware. We can teach
 428 them in parent's education programme as well. We can add these messages to this
 429 education programme for effectiveness...
 430

431 I: Ma'am, will there be any obstacles for this curriculum activities and this awareness
 432 raising programmes? Maybe be participation, social norms, and trends? (00:43:04)

433 P: Yes, these things might be the problem. If the issue occurs, then we also change the
 434 curriculum... For this in every 5 years, we update the curriculum too. In every 5 years,
 435 there is small changes and in every 10 years whole thing is changed. We see the
 436 implementation in the community and what impacts it has done in the community as
 437 well. Even one word can make a difference ... It could be local languages or ethnicity as
 438 well ... so if we find any issue, we correct them...
 439

440 I: Ma'am, you gave a lot of information.

441 P: I don't know about health though. We don't have any programme to point out for kids
 442 under 3 years of age. Local government could help if they want because the holistic
 443 development of children is important ... If this programme is implemented, it will be
 444 benefited. Their learning will be better ... Kids should be involved in every activity
 445 rather than just studies only. Teach them behaviors and prepare them for Grade 1 ... They
 446 will learn more. They will teach more from the base level. If local government develop
 447 this concept, they can do it...
 448

449 I: Ma'am these things have been written in policies but has not been implemented yet. Why
 450 do you think is the reason behind it?

451 P: Yes.
 452

453 I: Please continue.

454 P: We needs to continue their health and education aspects. We need to take care for them
 455 from 0 level to 8 years old. This all lies in preprimary care.
 456

457 I: It has been seen in report that, these policies, and strategies for home visits for kids under
458 3 years of age has not been implemented yet. Why do you think this is?

459 P: Pardon?

460

461 I: What might be the hindering factors?

462 P: Maybe the parents don't know it very well. Schools also may have no made parents
463 aware adequately or Local government have not been active to this situation ...

464

465 I: Okay ma'am, I am now ending this. Thank you for your time.

466

467 **End of the Interview**

468

469

470