

# Building

## Food and Nutrition Behaviors through Participatory Learning and Action (N-PLA)



# What need does the playbook address?

Malnutrition rates amidst vulnerable communities are concerning high due to a lack of information and awareness, prevalence of misinformation, and high degree of migration. The loss of traditional knowledge coupled with low intake of certain essential food groups has severe consequences on development of children in these areas.

## What are the benefits to Participatory Learning Approaches in Nutrition (N-PLA)?



01

This is a Social Behavior change centric campaign to help community food healthy Food habits



02

Increases knowledge & awareness about diet diversity, maternal & childcare & Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) in both personal & community levels



03

There is an increase in the availability of nutritious food for women and their families. It addresses issues of gender inequality when it comes to nutrition and child care



04

Community institutions for nutrition governance are strengthened



05

Social and Cultural context of restoring practices of Local and traditional food /uncultivated food consumption.



06

Awareness on Food and Nutrition focused Govt schemes and entitlements



07

Building community level resilience to Food and Nutrition security.



08

Supports and encourages community action- Nutrition Garden

## Awareness on the Role of Food in our Body is focused on three broad food groups under N-PLA approach:

- "Go Food-" food Provide energy(carbohydrate )
- "Grow Food" for Body building (Protein)
- "Protective Food " growth and vitality(Vitamins and Minerals ) which will lead to improvement in daily food habits and Dietary Diversity

*This playbook is designed using the expertise of **Development Support Centre (DSC)** and **Welthungerhilfe (WHH) India**. DSC works on issues of malnutrition among tribal communities in the Satpura and Aravalli ranges. DSC has have tested this model successfully in only Nandurbar and other partners under the Securing Nutrition, Enhancing Resilience (SENU) initiatives. This model has been implemented in multiple geographies of MP, Rajasthan, MP and MH with more than 6000 anganwadi workers*

# Participatory Learning & Action for Nutrition (N-PLA)

The PLA focuses on a model of sustained communication across three pillars of community development



## 01

## Baseline Survey

## Understanding the deficiencies in the region

A baseline survey of families is to be conducted in the area to understand the nutritional intake, dietary needs, and availability of local food resources.



- ☐ Collecting information on the Food availability in the village in Summer/winter and Rainy season this can be through FGD with community mix group. A suggestive format for this is here:

Season	Vegetables	Fruits	Crops
Rainy season			
Winter season			
Summer season			

- ☐ Primarily targets for the survey: Anganwadi beneficiaries
- ☐ If covering a large area, need around **5 people per village**, with around **200 interviews** forming the basis of the survey
- ☐ This can be a mixture of individual interviews at their home and group discussions
- ☐ All interviews are conducted after obtaining their consent on a form through a signature or thumbprint.
- ☐ Information sought includes:
- **Demographic information:** Age, number of children and members in the household, work details.
  - **Dietary intake:** A list of all food consumed in the past 24 hours, commonly available food resources
- ☐ Survey is blended with government data on malnutrition, health indicators and stunting rates in the region.

# 02 Workshop to develop IEC material

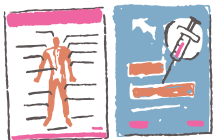
A workshop is conducted between all stakeholders: programme coordinators, nutrition experts, government officials, local NGOs and anganwadi workers.

Text on IEC materials.

*"The inputs of anganwadi workers is critical at this stage. All effort should be made to include local forms of story-telling. The characters' names should reflect commonly used children's names within the community."*

IEC material is prepared using local knowledge. These include:

Posters



Games & interactive material



Banners



Handbooks



Picture Cards



Things to consider:



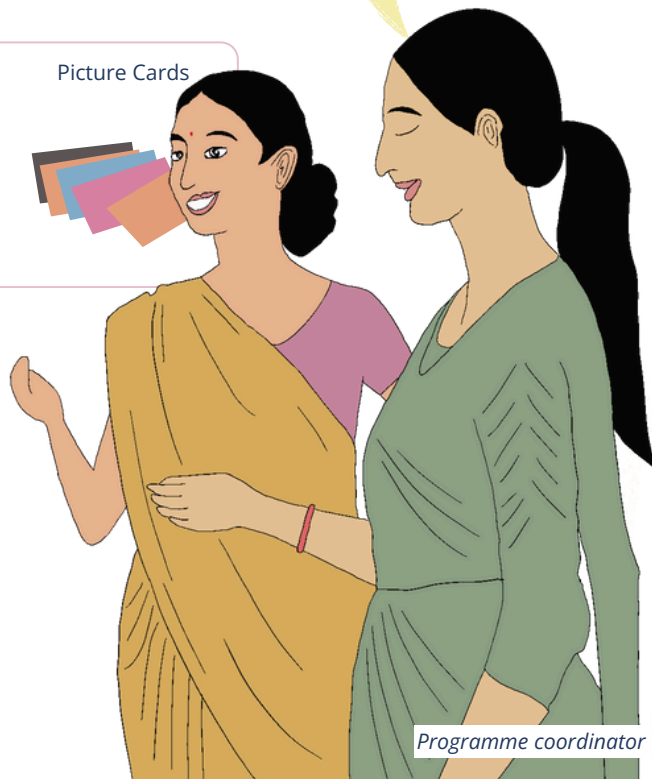
**01** Emphasis on **story-telling** as means to raise awareness



**02** **Principles of Adult Learning** (that is, learning by doing) are to be followed



**03** Apart from topics on nutrition, topics on **gender equality in nutrition and child care**, the role of men in nutrition is also included



# 03 Governance structure: Role of Anganwadi Workers

01

Community Level Facilitation of monthly meetings in the village



02

Facilitate the discussions & make the village-level meetings as interactive as possible.



03

Brief those who have missed subsequent meetings on discussions that have taken place so far.



04

Responsible for selecting women members for the **Nutrition Group**.

*Empowered young women (aged 15-20) are chosen from within the village who take collective action for nutrition security.*



05

**Summarise** discussions in the meeting



## 03

## Governance structure: Poshan Mitra

01

Locals, who are educated and motivated, are chosen to become '**Poshan Mitras**', who become "champions" of health and nutrition in the area.

02

They are onboarded on a voluntary basis, with an honorarium of around **Rs. 5,000 per month** given for around **15-20 days of work per month**. The honorarium can be fixed based on the project specifications.

03

On average, each Poshan Mitra is in **charge of 10-12 villages**

04

They support and **train the Anganwadi workers**

05

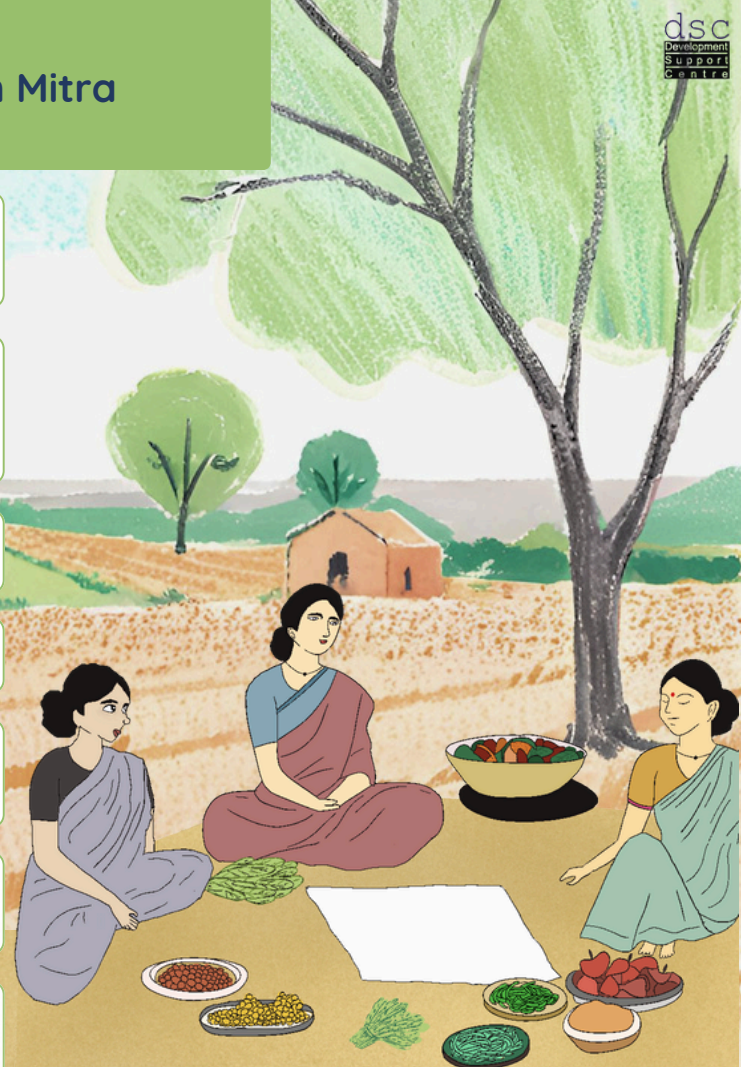
They monitor **village-level meetings and reports on progress** made in each meeting

06

They are responsible for keeping up the **morale and interest of anganwadi workers and villagers**

07

Can take on additional steps to **ensure high attendance in meetings and a positive morale** amongst the villagers.



Poshan Mitra in a village-level meeting

# 03 Governance structure: Field Officer & Block Level Leader

## Field Officer:

01

Usually, the program is implemented by a non-profit organisation with whom the Field Officer is associated.

02

They are in charge of around 250 Anganwadi workers or 25 poshan mitras

250

Anganwadi workers



25

Poshan Mitras

03

On an average, each Field Officer is in charge of 10-12 villages

10-12

Villages



## Block Level Team Leader:

01

Supervises field officers & overall implementation of the programme in the area

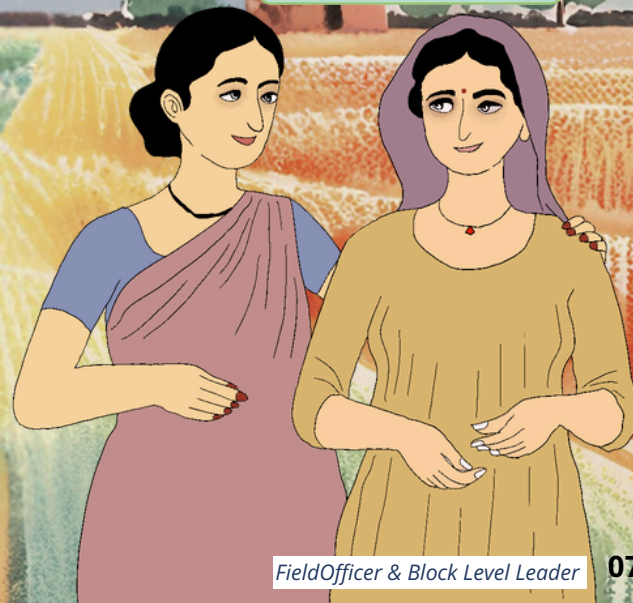
02

Whatsapp groups are created on all levels to ensure better coordination, faster responses, and clearing of any doubts and issues.



03

Facilitate monthly meeting between Poshan Mitra and Field Officers.



# 04 Training

3-day training can be organised to supervisors, Poshan Mitras and Anganwadi workers on the Participatory Learning and Action for Nutrition.

## Training covers



01

Community-level activities about diet diversity, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and nutrition-sensitive micro planning by the community groups.



03

Elements of story-telling



02

How to conduct meetings and make it more engaging



04

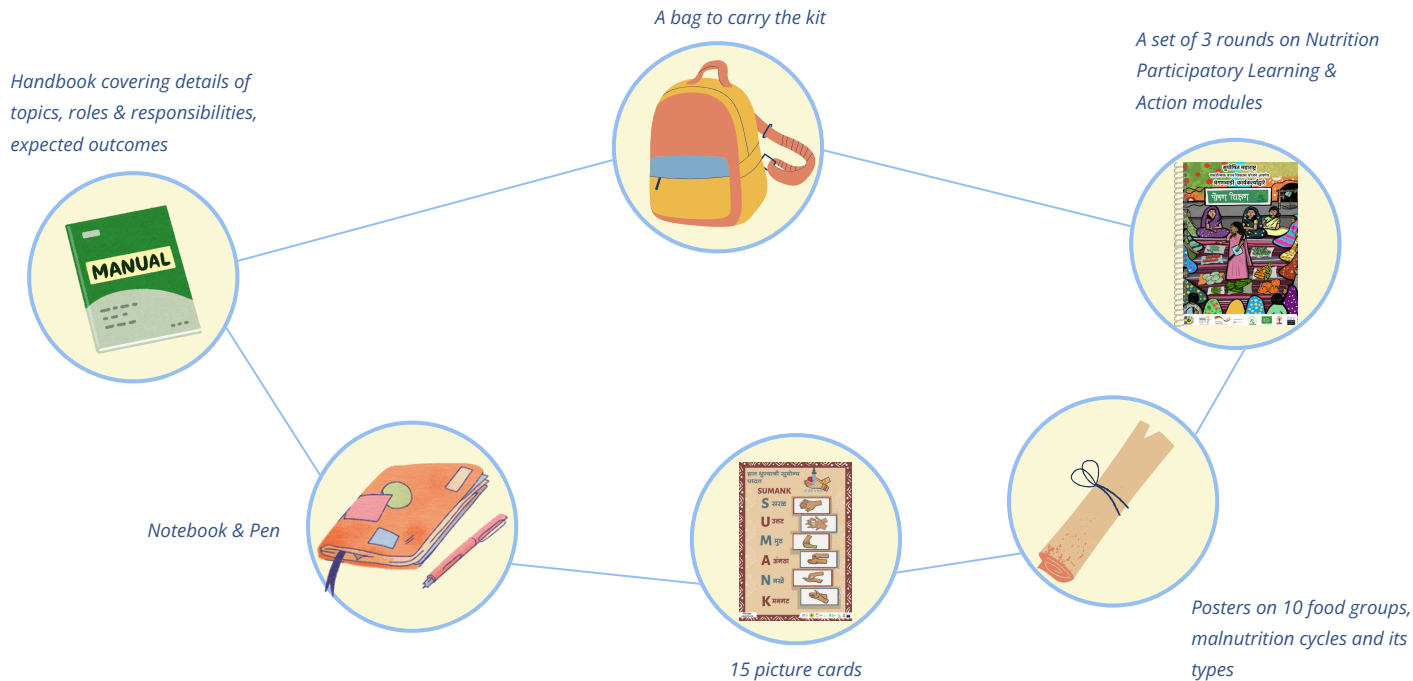
Administering Pre and Post meeting questionnaires to track progress

# 04 Training

3-day training can be organised to supervisors, Poshan Mitras and Anganwadi workers on the Participatory Learning and Action for Nutrition.

## Distribution of IEC Kits

IEC kits are distributed to each of the Anganwadi workers. This includes:



# 05

## Structuring of meetings

Each anganwadi centre is to have a total of 20 classes spread over the year. The number of classes and duration is spread out to ensure anganwadi workers are not burdened by this additional responsibility.

**1st phase:**

**07 meetings**

with **two** meetings held every month



Approximate number of people expected in each meeting:

**40**

**2nd phase:**

**07 meetings**

with **one** meeting held every month



Ideal duration for each meeting:

**1.5-2 hr**

**3rd phase:**

**06 meetings**

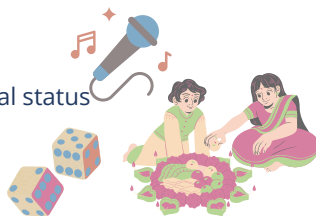
with **two** meetings held every month



**Date and time** of the meeting is decided in consultation with villagers

### Cultural Tools

1. Rangolis to visualise nutritional status
2. Songs on Nutrition
3. Games and Quiz cards



5-6 cultural teams are formed to tour villages to create awareness and excitement for the meetings. These teams also perform street plays, skits and concerts on important themes of nutrition.



**Training for anganwadi workers & poshan mitras are held after every phase** 10








# 05 Structuring of meetings: Phase 1

These meetings are intended to highlight consequences of malnutrition, the source of the issues, create an environment for nutrition education

	<i>Meeting No.</i>	<i>Focus Area</i>	<i>Major objective and Activity</i>
	<b>Meeting 1</b>	Introductory meeting	Creation of a social map in the village.
	<b>Meeting 2</b>	Social Inequity and gender discrimination	Steps to identify vulnerable population; introduction to nutrition education.
	<b>Meeting 3</b>	Mother and Baby nutrition	Understanding generational cycle of malnutrition; identifying underlying causes of malnutrition.
	<b>Meeting 4</b>	Well-nourished mother and diet for the child	Finding feasible solutions to malnutrition through local solutions.
	<b>Meeting 5</b>	Food security and diversity	Making a plan for community action to address malnutrition.
	<b>Meeting 6</b>	Good nutrition elements	Allocating responsibility based on the plan made; inculcating a sense of collective action.
	<b>Meeting 7</b>	Collective meeting	A meeting with the village elders, local government officials, and other leaders to discuss the nutrition plan and a way to its implementation.

# 05 Structuring of meetings: Phase 2

These meetings are intended to find solutions to malnutrition among children and mothers.

	<b>Meeting 8</b>	Growth, development and supervision of children (0-5 years)	Learning how to track the growth of the children (weight and height). Hygiene and dietary practices adopted by well-nourished families.
	<b>Meeting 9</b>	Importance of mother's milk for children below the age of 6 months	Discuss local customs on breast-feeding. Importance of first milk for babies.
	<b>Meeting 10</b>	Nutritious food for babies older than 6 months	Role of parents in baby's diet; amount of food required for their age; to learn about nutritional value of children's food
	<b>Meeting 11</b>	Nutritious diet for women and children of reproductive age	Special dietary needs women of reproductive age and importance of diversity in nutrition
	<b>Meeting 12</b>	Nutrition of Adolescent Girls, Pregnant and Lactating Mothers	Increasing dietary diversity and addressing misconceptions within the village
	<b>Meeting 13</b>	Kitchen garden as means to supplement nutrition	Planning of vegetables and other nutrients
	<b>Meeting 14</b>	Village public meeting	Discussion with village at large on backyard farming, use of organic inputs, and introduction of nutritional plan for women and children.

# 05 Structuring of meetings: Phase 3

In the final phase, behavioural change and collective action is marked through a series of resolutions and commitments.

	<b>Meeting 15</b>	Hygiene in the kitchen	Hygiene practices to be followed in the kitchen when handling food, ways to ensure drinking water is uncontaminated and safe to consume
	<b>Meeting 16</b>	Sanitation	Its of open defecation, proper ways to wash hands using soap
	<b>Meeting 17</b>	Healthy Dietary Habits of Women in Our Village	Resolution to tackle anemia among women and maintain nutritional diversity
	<b>Meeting 18</b>	Well-nourished children in our village with nutrition-rich baby food and healthy habits	Ensuring that babies and children will have access to food from all 10 essential food types
	<b>Meeting 19</b>	Nourished, healthy women, children and families are our villages	Setting up a group to formulate maternal community and child nutrition strategy
	<b>Meeting 20</b>	Our village on the road to nutrition	A collective evaluation and celebration of progress made. Local food items made from healthy ingredients to be made and distributed

# 06 Tools for Learning

The village community learn and act in participatory manner through participatory tools such as:



## 01 Storytelling for Sensitisation on Nutrition

This initiative focused on social and behavioral issues with a focus on disseminating key messages around nutrition subjects. It uses **street theatre, folk songs in local languages, and local instruments** to engage the audience. The cultural context of the community is taken into account to enhance its relevance and interest for the audience.



## 02 Cooking Demonstration with Locally Available Food

Anganwadi Workers plan these sessions and **incorporate local ingredients and traditional recipes** to educate PLA participants about home-made, child friendly, locally relevant foods.



## 03 Community based Nutrition education through convergence with schemes and nutrition gardens

The PLA meetings empower the community to demand and access food and nutrition entitlements under the **Integrated Child Development Services schemes** and the **Targeted Public Distribution System**, and to establish **homestead nutrition gardens** through seed distribution.



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