

COVID-19 Creating Space for Adaptive Operations in the Field



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Disclosures

AFFILIATION/FINANCIAL INTERESTS (prior 12 months)	ENTITIES
Grants/Research Support	N/A
Scientific Advisory Board/Consultant/Board of Directors	N/A
Speakers Bureau	N/A
Stock Shareholder	N/A
Employee	N/A
Other	N/A



Background

- *The Sustainable Agriculture and Production Linked to Improved Nutrition Status, Resilience and Gender Equity (**SAPLING**) project is a multisectoral Food for Peace project located in 5 Upazilas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region of Bangladesh, working with over 100,000 participants from 12 different ethnic groups to improve their nutrition, food security and resilience by growing their own food, engaging in income generating and increasing savings and internal lending, improving knowledge and skills about maternal and child health and nutrition, and preparing and mitigating the impact of shocks and stressors.*
- *The project has over 800 field facilitators and community health service workers who live in the community and conduct small group sessions, mobilize communities, and work to strengthen community groups and government structures. All of these staff and participants have been under a village lockdown plan since March.*
- *COVID-19 has presented the opportunity, albeit for horrible reasons, to engage in new approaches, some which create a nexus from relief to development, and some which advance a technological approach*

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1. How is the pandemic altering program implementation?

SAPLING pivot to address COVID-19 involves utilizing existing FFP program funding coupled with additional USAID Bangladesh FTF funding to address prevention and impact of lockdown. Efforts include:

- Coordination and support for key stakeholders involved in response including dissemination of information/materials to support awareness raising for COVID-19
- Extending satellite ANC services in 21 remote locations to enable and encourage the GOB to continue to “piggyback” additional health services
- Repair or installation of highly trafficked water points such as community clinics, markets, religious centers, and multipurpose cyclone shelters need water
- Repair or installation of handwashing stations with soap to reduce the chance of spreading illness.
- Awareness raising on the importance of proper handwashing through multi-lingual SBCC messaging and materials including folk songs and dramas.

1. How is the pandemic altering program implementation?

- Movement to virtual outreach-
 - “how to” (DIY-style) videos
 - Training materials, including technical content and coaching tools for frontline staff
 - On-line training for participants through tablets used by frontline staff
- Phone counselling
- Smaller group discussions for marketing support, further niche IGA training
- Increased training for Family Nutrition Leaders for enhanced homestead food production (EHFP)
- Telenovela style SBCC for family viewing of MCHN issues, followed by facilitated discussions with group

2. What questions about implementation arise from this scenario?

- **Supply side issues**

- Ensuring safety of staff doing outreach
- Ensuring events happen as planned
- Ensuring events happen with quality

- **Demand side**

- Reaching all those who need it
- Providing the information needed, or clarifying what is not understood or heard through other venues
- Ensuring understanding of SAPLING messaging



3. How can information be obtained to address these questions?

- **Supply side**

- Tablet based GPS and time stamped session collection
- Recorded sessions
- Discussion of using community stakeholders to verify (i.e. village heads)

- **Demand side**

- Survey data collection (weekly currently)
- In-Person monitoring (once movement allowed)



Resources

- Protecting Maternal Diets and Nutrition Services and Practices in the Context of COVID-19 https://mcusercontent.com/fb1d9aabd6c823bef179830e9/files/3a4ad3cd-6c37-4afb-9149-2fdff80d2c7f/HQ_Guidance_English_Brief_on_Maternal_Nutrition_in_the_Context_of_COVID19_v1_28APR2020.pdf
- Key messages on breastfeeding and COVID-19 <http://www.e-lactancia.org/media/papers/CoVid19BF-UNICEF-WHO2020-04-17.pdf>
- SAPLING Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/saplingbd/>
 - SAPLING handwashing video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sjv52rqEvRM&feature=youtu.be>
 - SAPLING SILC video <https://www.facebook.com/saplingbd/videos/256542015457938/?t=7>

Acknowledgements

- Government of Bangladesh
- Partners iDE, CRS, Caritas
- Implementing Partners Toymu, Graus and Tahzingdong
- USAID Food for Peace
- USAID Bangladesh Feed the Future
- Photographs by Meraz Rahman
- Participants in Bandarban



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