

BACKGROUND

- Commercial snack foods may be detrimental to young child feeding by potentially increasing consumption of foods high in salt or sugar and displacing consumption of other more nutritious options.
- According to NDHS 2006, 21% infants 6-8 months of age, 35% infants 5-11 months of age and 55% infants 12-23 months age ate sugary snack foods in a day preceding the survey (1).
- This study under ARCH was conducted among the mothers of children under 24 months of age in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, to assess exposure to promotions for and children's consumption of commercially produced breast-milk substitutes, complementary foods and other commercial food products including snacks commonly consumed by young children.

OBJECTIVES

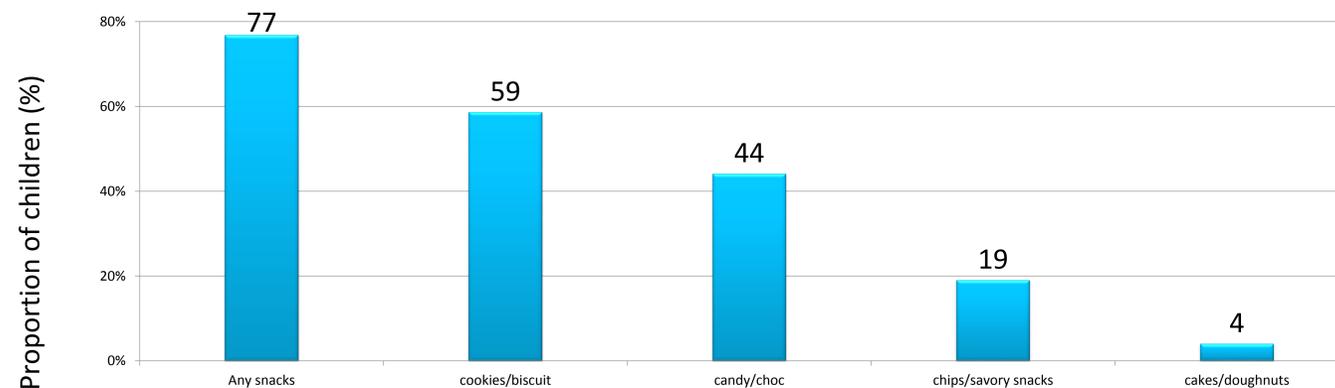
- Document infant and young child feeding practices regarding commercially available snack foods,
- Explore mother's exposure to promotion of snack foods in urban Nepal to inform policies and programs targeting child nutrition

METHODS

- A cross-sectional, facility-based survey, conducted from Dec 2013 - Feb 2014
- Fifteen public and private health facilities randomly sampled
- Sampling based on probability proportional to size, with utilization rates serving as 'populations'
- Mothers with children under 24 months were purposively sampled at each facility.
- Questions regarding consumption of commercial snack foods by the youngest child was asked with mothers (n=309) seeking child health care services
- Mobile technology used for data collection

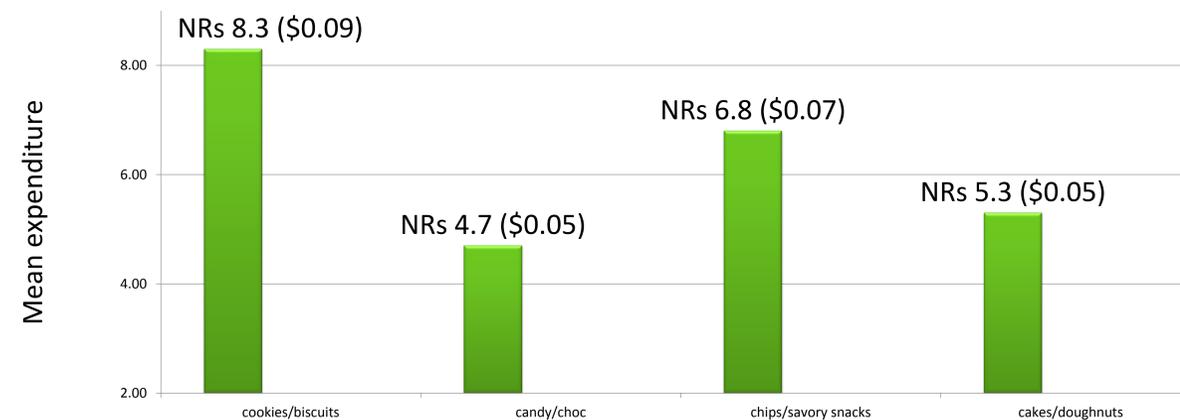
RESULTS

Graph 1: Percentage of children 6-23 months of age who consumed commercially produced snack foods for general consumption (including cookies/biscuits, chips/crisps, candy/chocolate, cakes/doughnuts, or soft drinks) on 24 hours preceding the survey



- The most common reasons mothers reported feeding commercial snack foods to their child were because "the child likes it" and "convenience".

Graph 2: Mean expenditure (per day) on commercial snack products among the mothers of children 6-23 months of age who purchased commercial snack products in a week preceding the survey



- Reported promotions for commercial snack foods by mothers of children less than 24 months of age was high at 87.1%.
- Reported promotion was high across all types of snack food types, but was highest for instant noodles at 86.1%.

CONCLUSIONS

- Commercial snack foods for general consumption, typically high in saturated fats, sugar, and salt, are often included in the diets of children under two years of age in Kathmandu Valley.
- Perceptions of children's taste preferences and convenience influence mothers' decisions to feed these products to their children.
- Promoting consumption of convenient, more nutritious snack foods, which are liked by children, has the potential to improve the nutritional intake of young children in Kathmandu Valley and in other urban areas in Nepal.



REFERENCE

- Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) Nepal, New ERA & ICF International Inc. *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011*. Kathmandu (NP): Ministry of Health and Population, New ERA & ICF International, 2012.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OR CONTACT

We would like to thank the ARCH Project Nepal Advisory Committee, the ARCH Project Nepal Research Team and the ARCH Project Global Research Team. Contact: iadhikary@hki.org