

Background

- There is limited evidence on effective nutrition governance at either national or sub-national levels in low income countries. This is a key knowledge gap for policymakers seeking to coordinate multi-sector nutrition planning.
- As Nepal implements a second phase of its Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP), finding ways measure individuals and institutions' capacity, commitment and collaboration is critical for success.

Objectives and Methods

- The study applies a panel design to a nationally representative survey of policymakers and implementers (under the PoSHAN policy research activity).
- A total of 1,043 policymakers and implementers were interviewed in 2014 and 2016, at multiple levels of governance at national and sub-national level. Unit of observation is the 'officeholder'.
- From those that were interviewed, 304 of those interviewed were the exact same individuals over two years.
- The research objective is to test ways to measure change over time in selected facets of nutrition governance; namely, commitment, capability and collaboration and evolution of strengths and weaknesses and areas of improvement across years. The analysis captures the dynamics of office/institutional capabilities and knowledge over time, since individuals rotate among locations and tasks on a regular basis.
- The results are preliminary descriptive statistics generated using SAS 9.4. McNemar's test was used as a statistical test for matched pairs of subjects.

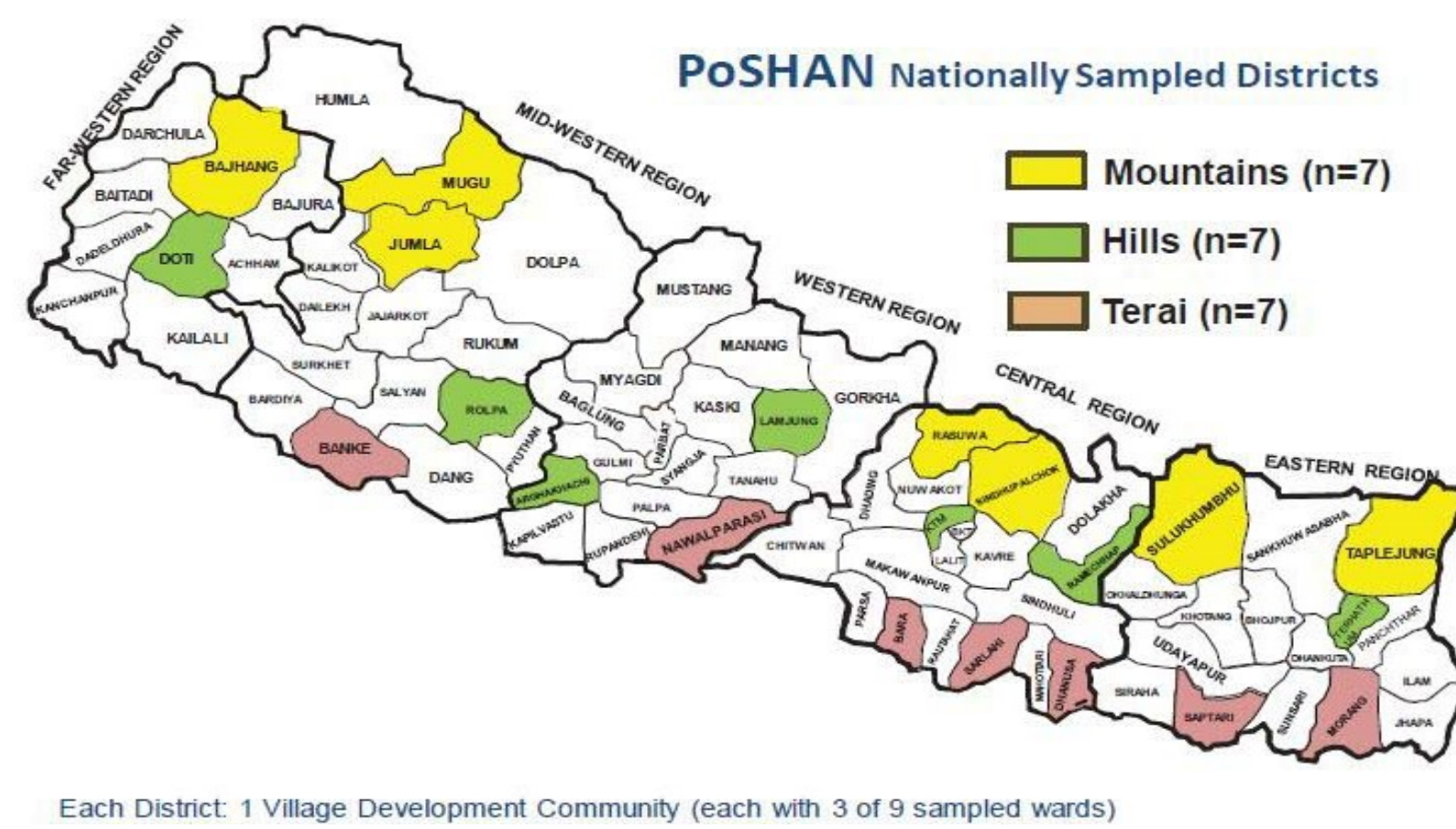


Figure 1. Study sites and design

Level	Institution/Individual
District	Departments of Health, Agriculture, Livestock, Education, Local Development, Social Development, implementing NGOs
Ilaka	Offices of Health, Agriculture, Livestock, Education, Local Development
Village Development Committee	VDC Secretaries of Health, Agriculture, Livestock, Education, implementing NGOs
Ward	FCHV, Representatives of Ward Citizen Forum, Mothers Groups, Cooperatives, Ag extension, Social Mobilizers

Figure 2. Study participants

Results

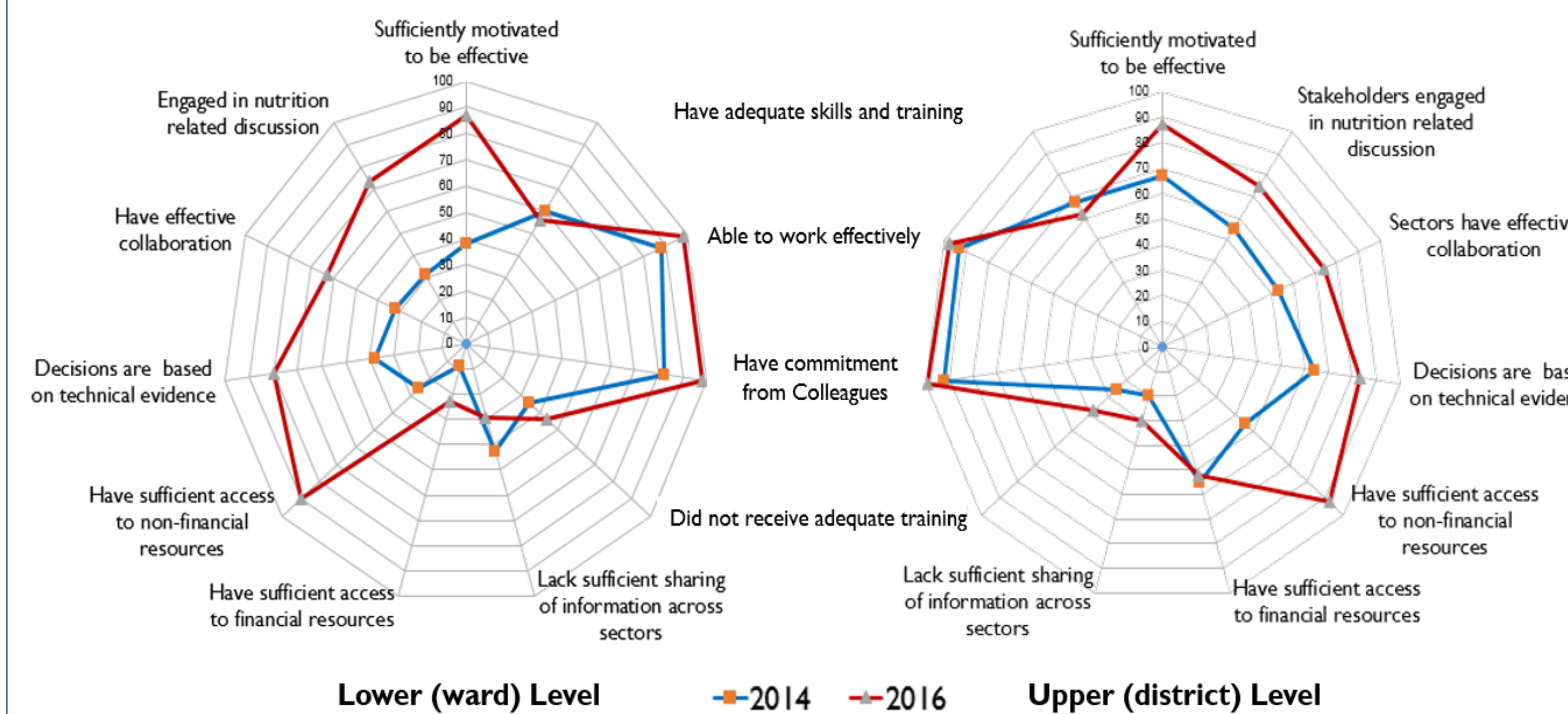


Figure 3. Spider Diagram showing descriptive statistics of elements of Nutrition Governance for 2014 and 2016, by sub-national administrative levels (upper and lower).

Administrative level	Lower Level (Ward)			Upper Level (District, Ilaka, VDC)		
	2014	2016	McNemar's test	2014	2016	McNemar's test
Shift in metrics of Capability-Skills/Trainings	% (N = 164)	% (N = 179)	P-value	% (N = 359)	% (N = 341)	P-value
Agree to have been adequately trained to carry out responsibilities	60	56	0.0004	67	62	<0.0001
Disagree to have received adequate training	34	44		25	38	
Shift in metrics of Capability-Resources						
Disagree that offices/department have sufficient financial resources	38	69	0.031	35	48	0.0033
Shift in metrics of Collaboration						
Disagree that there is sufficient sharing of information across sectors	43	29	0.0030	20	30	<0.0001

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics showing shift in elements of Nutrition Governance in 2014 and 2016, by sub-national administrative levels

Results (Contd.)

- Among perceived constraints to collaboration and effective work for nutrition, insufficient sharing of information was widely reported in 2014, but this decreased by 14% ($p < 0.003$) in 2016 at lower levels of governance (wards), suggesting greater cross-sector engagement around nutrition. That said, complaints about a lack of information sharing among ministries increased by 10% ($p < 0.001$) at upper levels of governance. (Districts/VDC).
- The same is true of the demand for more training in nutrition, but on increased knowledge and better defined responsibilities in the government's national strategy for nutrition. The demand for more training to implement nutrition actions increased by 10% ($p < 0.004$) at lower levels and 13% ($p < 0.001$) at upper levels between the survey rounds. Overall, positive shift in the metrics of 'capability' was seen more at lower levels than at upper levels over time.
- In terms of 'capability' to act on nutrition problems, the reported lack of sufficient financial resources increased by 31% ($p < 0.0310$) at lower levels and 13% ($p < 0.0033$) at upper levels. This suggests both more awareness of the complexity of nutrition actions and their cost in relation to fixed budgets. That said, a significant positive shift in availability of non-financial resources was noticed at all administrative levels.

Conclusions

- With a large enough sample and careful questions, it appears to be possible to measure effective nutrition governance in policy-relevant ways.
- Significant positive shifts were noted in metrics of 'commitment' and 'collaboration', indicating multisector programming in nutrition in Nepal is working. However, inadequate or lack of training was reported, reflecting growing demand among stakeholders who are taking their responsibilities increasingly seriously.
- Persistent hurdles in lack of financial resources, lack of information sharing and multisector discussions among stakeholders to solve nutrition problems remains.
- Evidence of success and areas for improvement in multi-sector actions at sub-national level critical for successful implementation of Phase II Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP).



Figure 4. Evolution of nutrition policies and plans in Nepal

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