GROWTH & HEALTH OF RURAL CHILDREN IN 3 DISTRICTS OF NEPAL: EFFECT OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION OVER 48 MONTHS

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BACKGROUND

Economic growth and poverty reduction are not always sufficient to improve child health and nutritional status. Heifer International, a global NGO, focuses on the introduction of livestock and related training as tools for poverty alleviation, community empowerment, and child health improvement. Although these activities do not directly address child health or nutrition, Heifer recognizes that these are vital cornerstones of community development. Therefore, Heifer International Nepal conducted a 4-year longitudinal randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effects of its programs on these important outcomes.

AIMS

(1) systematically assess longitudinal effects of Heifer activities on child health/nutritional status
(2) delineate characteristics of families and children affecting these (and other) outcomes.

METHODS

- Longitudinal randomized controlled trial
- Questionnaire & anthropometry

Land
Animals (FAO)
SE (DHS)
Income
Food variety (WHO)

CONCLUSIONS

- A livestock-based community development intervention was associated with improved child anthropometry
- Improved HAZ related to the duration of exposure to the Heifer intervention
- INT-1 children showed earlier and larger improvements in both height and weight
- Improvements in weight appeared in the latter phase of the intervention
- Many factors interact to influence child growth
- Family clustering and other household characteristics (such as women’s educational level) likely affect these and other outcomes of community development activities

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