

3. Rural Nutrition Project in Lalitpur

Starting date: October 2000

Implemented by: Rural Institution for Rural Development RICOD

The local NGO RICOD (Rural Institution for Community Development) has been developed by some ex-staff of the rural 'community health development project' of 'United Mission to Nepal' UMN in south Lalitpur, a rural area of Lalitpur district. RICOD wanted to maintain a higher level of community health in the area after the departure of UMN. NGO members discussed among themselves how to go about, and sought advice from senior UMN staff that recommended developing a nutrition project with *Terre des hommes*.



Preparation for the rural nutrition project began in late 2000 and the project eventually kicked off early 2001 with a baseline survey. Results came up in September 2001 and have been shared with different stakeholders. During the first nine months of 2001 the team of RICOD nutrition staff have been trained in various aspects of nutrition, community development and awareness. Of course, a major focus was on team building. Eventually the rural nutrition project began in October 2001.

RICOD very closely works with the area health post and sub-health posts of four target 'village development committees' VDCs: Bhattedada, Ikudol, Malta and Sankhu. The area health posts are under close supervision of the district health office DHO, which are part of the health system of the Ministry of Public Health in Nepal. Therefore RICOD, as an implementing partner of *Terre des hommes*, works closely with the governmental health structure.

The main approach is to work with pregnant women and mothers of young children directly through training by project staff - with the intension of reaching more women in the community and enabling them to have direct access to knowledge in nutrition & MCH. This approach has proven to be highly successful: the word about practices favourable for improved health status is now spread by many more people than originally planned without having to build a system of continuously monitoring and motivating volunteers.

The rural nutrition project works with locally recruited young women who are part of the community and living there. The RICOD team develops a close and trustful relationship with the families. They also provide the link between the health facilities and the mothers/children in order to implement the nutrition protocols. The project also creates links between the mothers and ward authorities, especially Ward Implementation Committees (WICs), which are nowadays demanding more outreach clinics in distant and remote areas.

RICOD is strictly applying the government protocols for every element of the program (Iron and Vitamin A Supplementation, Growth Monitoring, ANC/PNC).

Map: Project location

