

Strengthening the Economic Evaluation of Multisectoral Strategies for Nutrition (SEEMS-Nutrition)

The costs of complex multisectoral interventions for improved nutrition outcomes: findings from the SEEMS-Nutrition common approach

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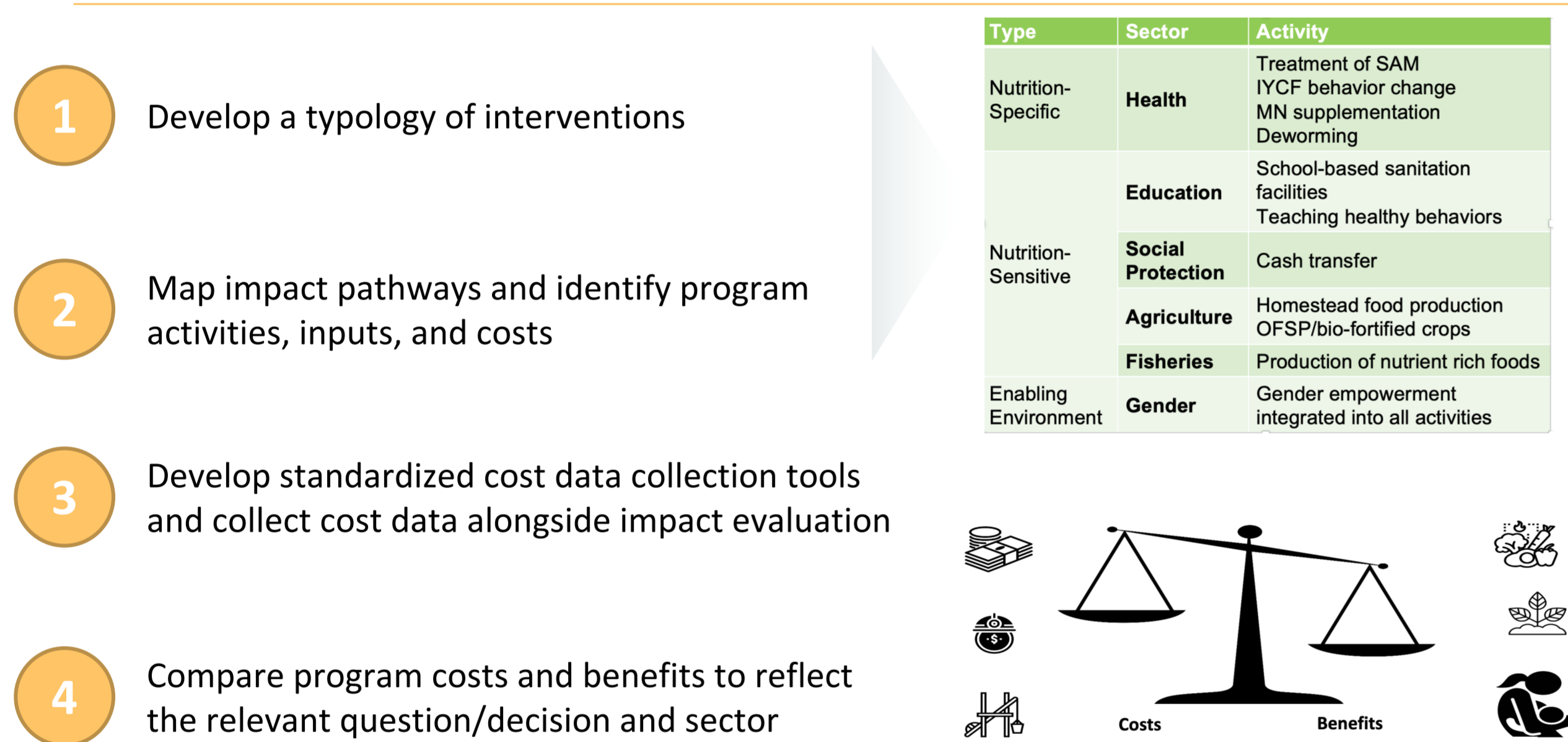
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Background

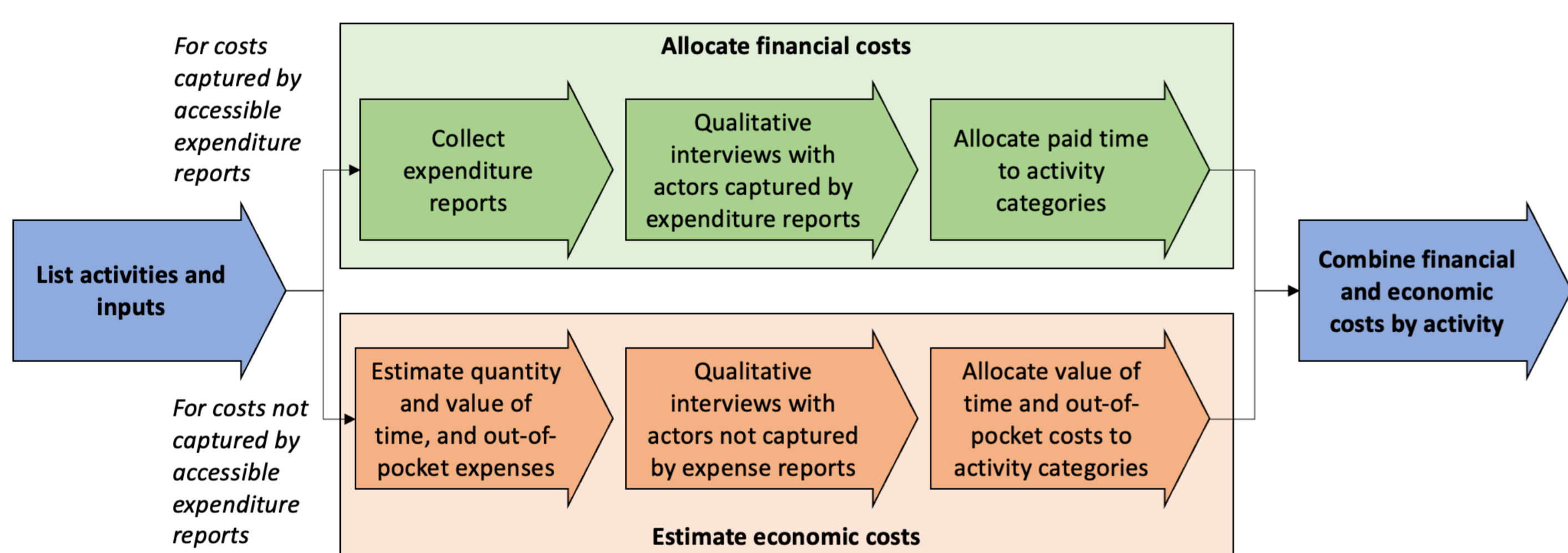
- Multisectoral nutrition programs promise to comprehensively address malnutrition through coordinated interventions across diverse sectors like agriculture, livestock, health, and social protection, implemented by and coordinated across the national and local-level governments.
- Robust understanding of the costs will be critical for priority setting and motivating ongoing government investment and donor support.
- The SEEMS-Nutrition common approach generates comparable results on costs and benefits from multisectoral nutrition interventions in Malawi (NEEP-IE), Bangladesh (TRAIN), Burkina Faso (SELEVER) and Nepal (Suahara II).

Methods

SEEMS-Nutrition is developing a common approach to guide how economic evaluations for nutrition are conducted



- Use a mixed methods approach to estimate financial and economic costs.
- Use financial expenditure data and micro-costing methods.



- Application of methods to four multisectoral nutrition programs with strong Nutrition Behavior Change (BCC) components.

Nutrition-sensitive value chain (NSV) Activity Coding

NSV Type	Entry Points	NEEPIE	TRAIN	SELEVER	SUAHARA II
Supply	Diversification & promotion	Materials development Home visits Input provision Training	Materials development Home visits Input provision Training Community events	Materials development Home visits Input provision Training Community events	Materials development Home visits Input provision Training Community events
Demand	BCC	Materials development School meals Training	Materials development Home visits Input provision Training	Materials development Training	Materials development Community events Home visits Training
Enabling Environment	Childcare	Community events Caregiving Preschool meetings Training	Community events Home visits Materials Development Training	Community events Training	Materials dev. Community events Home visits Training
	Gender				
Shared costs	Poultry value chain/Market Multiple				
	Coordination	Integration & coordination M&E Awareness raising	Integration & coordination M&E Awareness raising	Integration & coordination M&E Awareness raising	Integration & coordination M&E Awareness raising

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

- NEEP-IE:** A community-based pre-school meals and household food production intervention to improve children's diets, currently planning for nationwide.
- TRAIN:** A maternal and child health and nutrition behavior change communication strategy integrated within an agricultural credit program aiming to improve production diversity and income generation.
- SELEVER:** An integrated poultry value chain and nutrition intervention to improve nutrition status and diets.
- SUAHARA:** A scaled up multisectoral nutrition strategy aiming to improve nutrition outcomes in women and children in 42 of Nepal's 77 districts.

Results

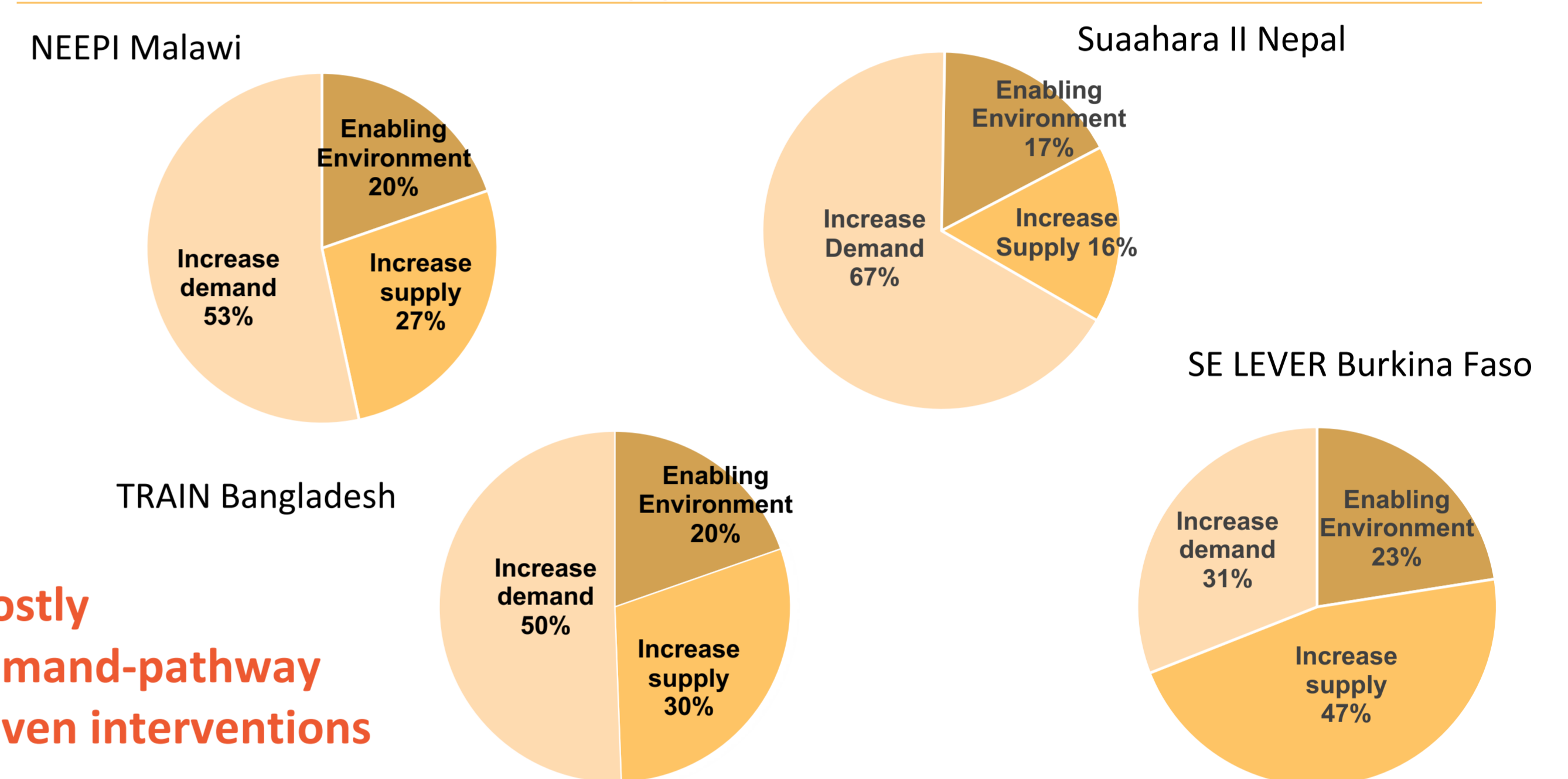
- Average unit costs range from \$65 to \$200 per participant.

Total and unit costs across four programs (project period)

Cost Metric	NEEP-IE Malawi		TRAIN Bangladesh		SELEVER Burkina Faso		Suahara II Nepal (average district)*		
Total incremental costs	\$197,377		\$795,040		\$18,084,728		\$3,332,808		
Cost per direct participant	No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost	No.	Unit cost	
	1,017	\$194	7,090	\$112	86,150	\$209	24,024	\$132	
(No. & cost for all direct & indirect participant)		(4,806)	(\$41)	(17,653)	(\$71)	(197,594)	(\$91)	(350,946) ^Ω	(\$10)

*Suahara II was a national program with financial costs of US\$ 60 million over 5 years and reaching over 878,000 annually; costs based on a sample of districts, including national and district costs.
^Ω Direct and indirect participants includes family members from all households reached directly or through mass media campaigns sponsored by SII, approximately 80-90% of the district population.

Cost drivers mapped to the NSV chain



Mostly Demand-pathway driven interventions

Discussion

- We've been underestimating costs.
- We have narrowed the range from previous studies.
- Critical to include opportunity costs of frontline volunteer workers and participants economic costs/
- Opportunity costs of these programs is high.
- Repeated exposure is necessary, but costly.
- Household visits are costly; without frequent engagement and reinforcing messages, without refresher trainings, don't see sustained behavior change.

- Generate estimates of unit costs that are comparable across diverse, complex agriculture, health and nutrition programs.
- Disaggregation of costs by activity or nutrition sensitive pathways allows for assessment of cost drivers.
- Generic tools lower the bar to integrating cost analysis into multisector nutrition program evaluations.

References

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