

The National Composite Index for Family Planning (NCIFP) Nepal 2014 Results

What is the NCIFP?

The NCIFP is a new tool developed to support FP2020's efforts to improve the enabling and policy environment for family planning. The NCIFP measures both the existence of policies and program implementation, using 35 individual scores organized under five dimensions: **strategy**, **data**, **quality**, **equity**, and **accountability**.

Strategy – whether the 1) national FP strategy/plan includes objectives that are quantified and 2) targets to reach the poorest and most vulnerable; 3) resource requirements are projected; 4) means to broaden participation among diverse stakeholders are supported; 5) seniority of FP program director; and 6) policies that facilitate contraceptive importation or local manufacturing.

Data - whether the government 7) collects data to monitor special sub-groups (e.g. the poor) and 8) availability data on private sector commodities; 9) quality control of service statistic in place; and 10) data used to ensure access by vulnerable groups; 11) adequate client record keeping in place; and 12-13) uses various data sources for program operations, monitoring and evaluation.

Quality – whether the 14) government uses WHO-based FP procedures; 15) has FP task-sharing guidelines; 16-17) has and uses quality of care indicators in public and private facilities, 18) has adequate structures in place to address quality, 19) collects information on informed choice and provider bias, 20) has adequate training programs in place, 21) logistics and transport systems insure sufficient stock, 22) adequate supervision system in place, 23) informed choice on sterilization, 24-25) access to IUD and implant removal.

Equity - whether 26) policies are in place to prevent discrimination; 27) extent to which service providers discriminate against special groups; 28) underserved areas are served by CBDs; and 29-30) the entire population has access to modern methods.

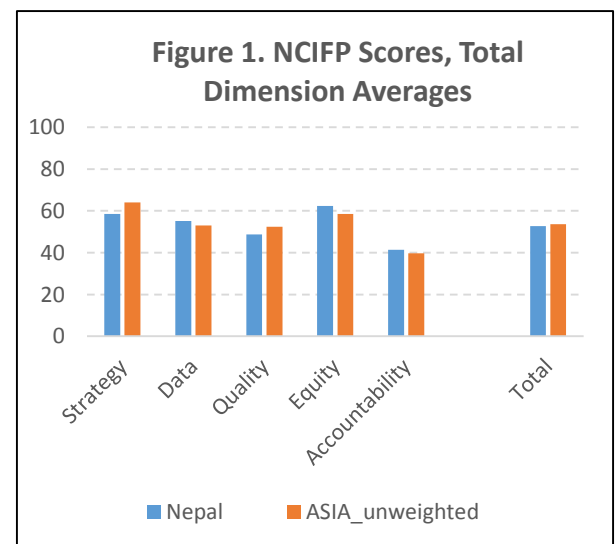
Accountability – whether there are 31) national, sub-national and facility-level mechanisms in place to monitor voluntary, non-discriminatory FP provision; 32-33) mechanisms to report denial of services in place and reviewed; 34) client feedback solicited, and 35) system in place to encourage dialogue between clients and providers.

The NCIFP builds on the long-standing *National Family Planning Effort Index* (FPE). In 2014, questionnaires of the two indices were fielded jointly in 90 countries by the Health Policy Project (implemented by Palladium with USAID funding) and Avenir Health's Track20 project (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). NCIFP data allow assessments of FP programs and can help stimulate discussions among stakeholders about factors that help make FP programs effective, widely supported and sustainable.

What do the Nepal results look like?

Nepal's total score as only a point lower than the regional average for Asia (53 vs 54, as shown in Figure 1). Compared to the region, Nepal also rated lower on two NCIFP dimensions (Strategy and Quality) but averaged higher for Data, Equity and Accountability.

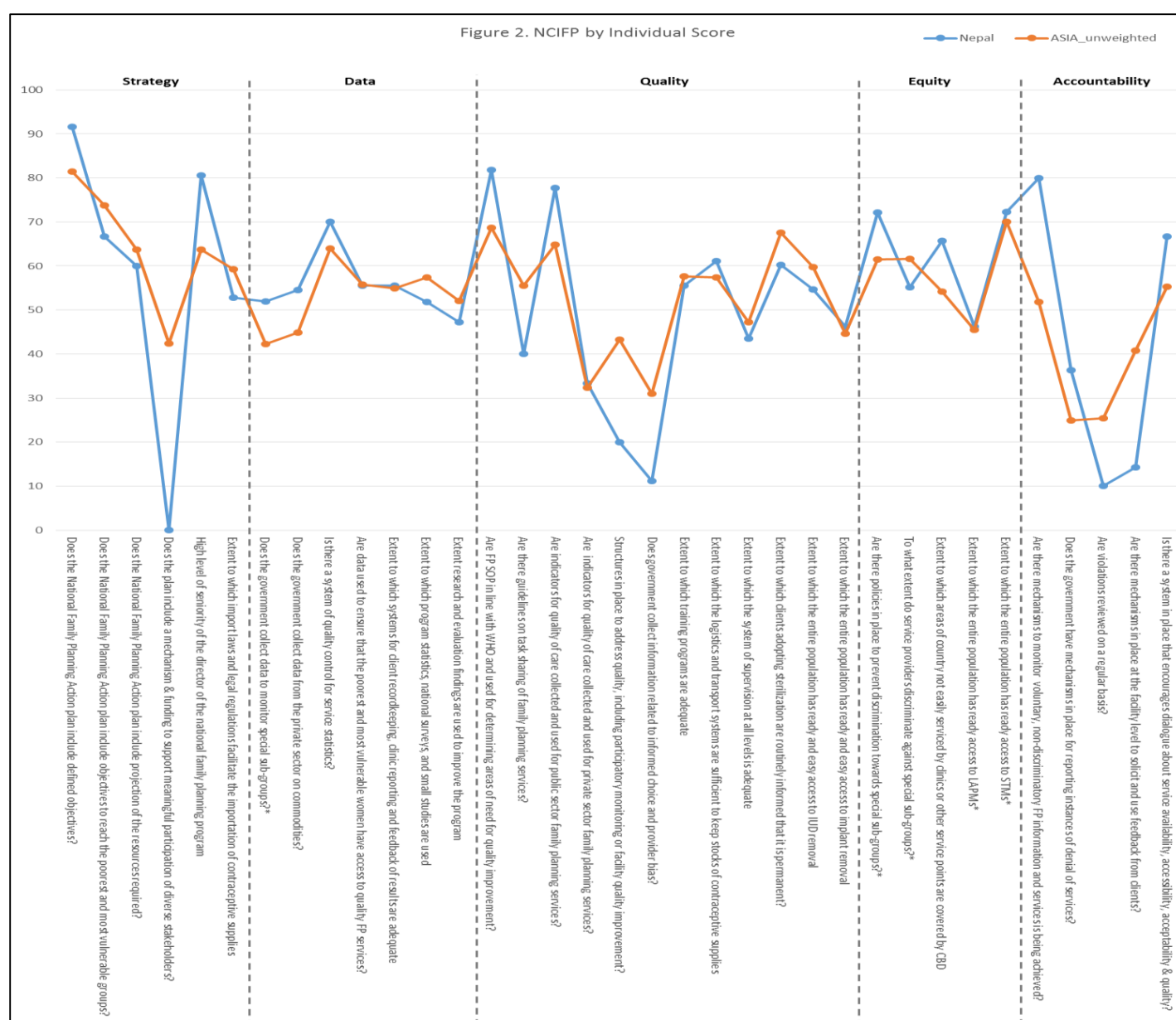
The individual item scores for Nepal and the region follow similar patterns, tending to move together along the same direction, agreeing largely in which items rank higher or lower (Figure 2). Nepal's highest ratings (between high 70s to low 90s) include: its FP Strategy having defined objectives over a 5 to 10 year period and the high-level seniority of the national FP program director; use of WHO-based quality standards as well as collection of quality indicators of public sector services; and on the Accountability item involving anti-discrimination mechanisms. On other hand, Nepal scored 0 on whether its Strategy supports mechanisms for diverse stakeholder participation. Nepal received ratings of 40 or lower for the following: four Quality items – whether the government has task-sharing guidelines and structures in place to address quality, as well as government collection of quality indicators of private sector services and information on informed choice and provider bias; and three Accountability items- whether the government has mechanisms for reporting instances of denial of services, regular review of violations, and mechanisms at the facility level to solicit/use client feedback.



Implications

In 2015, Nepal fully articulated its commitment to FP2020 by pledging to reposition FP to foster sustainable socioeconomic development and execute the Costed Implementation Plan on FP, 2015-2020 within the Nepal Health Sector Program III, 2015-2020. Interventions include identifying and addressing barriers to FP services faced by individuals and couples, including adolescents, rural residents, migrants and other vulnerable groups; improving public-private partnerships; increasing funding for FP by at least 7% annually from 2015 to 2020; raising additional resources by engaging external development partners and non-health sectors; broadening contraceptive choice at different health care levels; undertaking various communication activities to raise awareness of FP among populations with high unmet need; expanding and strengthening service delivery points to increase access to high quality FP services; strengthening the evidence base for effective program implementation through research and innovation.

The 2014 NCIFP study is very timely for Nepal, as the NCIFP data refer to various elements of FP policies and programs, including those cited in Nepal's FP2020 commitments as well as the country's 2015-2020 plans. The NCIFP results, for example, point to the importance of having mechanisms in place for stakeholder participation, collecting information on service quality and equity, as well as for ensuring accountability. The results of the 2014 study are important points for discussion by Nepal's key stakeholders as the country implements its FP policies and programs to achieve national objectives and international commitments.



Want to know more: Read the full NCIFP report and use the interactive data tool available at track20.org

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