

Ethical Community Engagement (ECE) to improve agriculture-nutrition links in resource poor communities – Lessons from the field

Seeds of Change, 2nd to 4th April 2019, Canberra

Michaela Cosijn and Lucy Carter
Land and Water
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
Brisbane, Australia

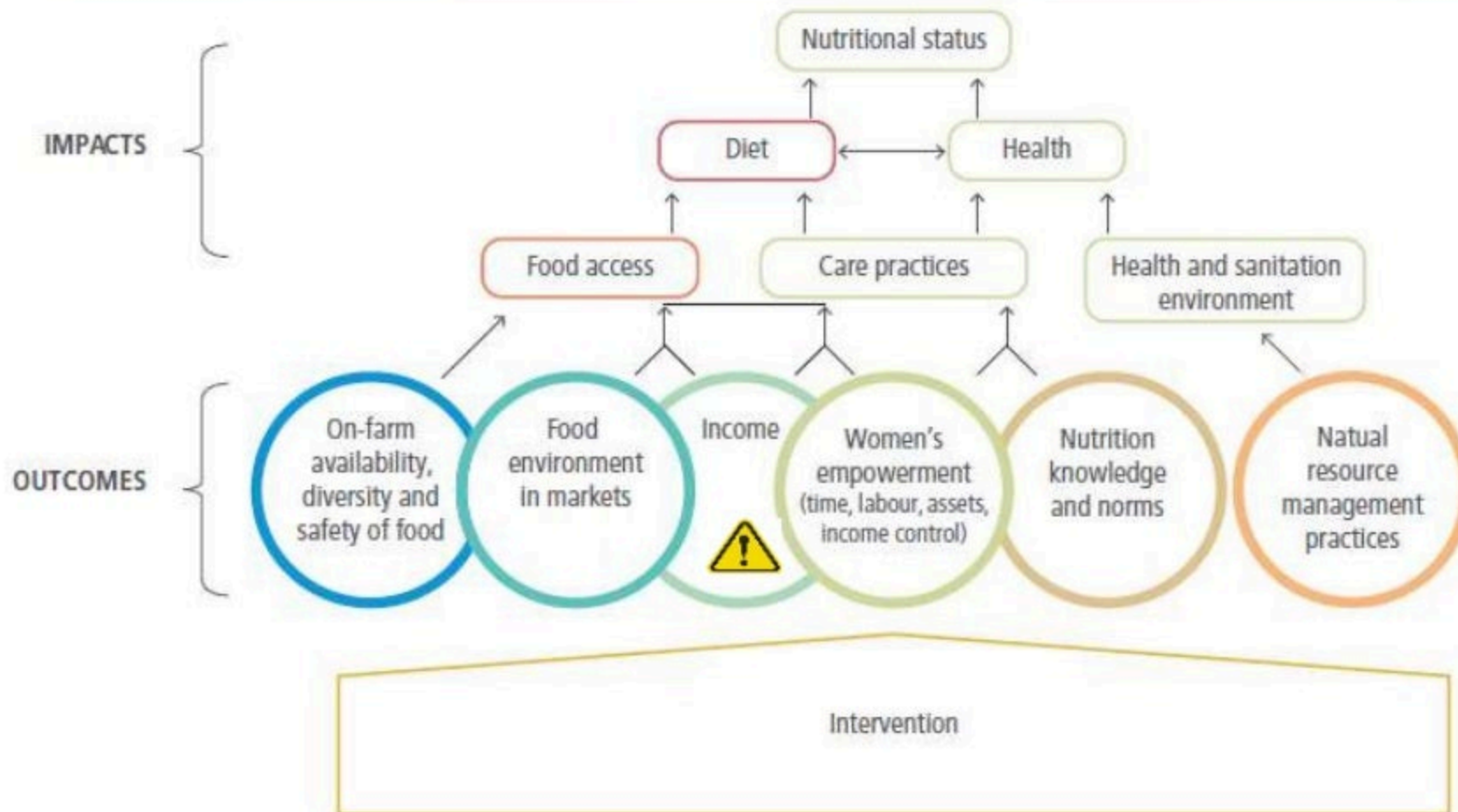
Arnab Chakraborty, Alak Jana, Subhankar Chakraborty, Rajsekhar Bandopadhyay
Professional Assistance for Development Action - PRADAN
Kolkata, India

SIAGI Socially Inclusive Agricultural Intensification

Outline

- Applying currently available international guidance on NSA has not been a straightforward exercise in our research context.
- Our experience in Bankura revealed that for very resource poor communities, income generation from sale of increased agricultural production might not be the immediate pathway to improved nutrition. Women often spent money on children's education and immediate health needs first.
- Until households are able to reach a base level of income, it was unrealistic to expect that money be spent on nutritious and diverse food.
- In addition, without special attention to WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) – a key mediating factor for good nutrition outcomes, any NSA intervention in these settings would be less successful.
- Using an Ethical community engagement (ECE) approach allowed us to uncover these mediating factors and co-design interventions

Nutrition-sensitive indicators



Source: FAO Compendium of Nutrition-Sensitive Indicators, 2016, originally appeared Herforth and Ballard (2015)

Assumed pathway: Increased income leads to improved nutrition

Constraints and assumptions:

- ❖ Women have control of income (and decision-making power)
- ❖ Women spend income on nutrition or health-related products and services
- ❖ Sufficient demand exists for agricultural products
- ❖ Production does not increase women's time and labour
- ❖ Increased incomes can lead to purchase of less nutritious food or items that do not promote health

Linking water to NSA in Bankura

Water quality, water access and water management practices directly affects food production, women's empowerment, care practices, and the health and sanitation environment.

These links have impacts on diet and health and therefore nutrition outcomes.

Iterative process of co-designing an acceptable plan for NSA action which improves the food and nutrition environment of two sites: Chaka Doba (Hirbandh block) and Hakim Sinan (Ranibandh block).

SIAGI experience of ethical community engagement (ECE)

ECE is about empowering community organisations (especially women) to take control of their futures to achieve enduring outcomes.

- ECE is an empathetic process which instils a greater sense of confidence and self-esteem in marginalised communities. (Process)
- ECE facilitates a rediscovery of hope in a community's ability to change their condition and influence their future. (Outcome)

Principles of Ethical Community Engagement

➤ Principle 1

- Individual and organisational **values and cultures** play a key role in inclusive practice.

➤ Principle 2

- Inclusive engagement demands **specific skills and attitudes** integral to the engagement process.

➤ Principle 3

- **Employing qualitative methods** is a useful technique in inclusive engagement.

Principles of Ethical Community Engagement

➤ Principle 4

- **Situational awareness** is paramount to building trust and achieving inclusion.

➤ Principle 5

- **Follow-up, monitoring, learning and evaluation with the community** enhances facilitator's and the community's ability to adapt as new situations arise.

➤ Principle 6

- Scaling initiatives without **communities driving** the desired change is unsustainable.

NSA and water: a community engagement template

Water supply

Describe the water infrastructure available at the household level (eg tap or community pump/well?). What condition of this infrastructure (eg functional?)

Water quality and quantity

For how many months of the year does the household have adequate water for all family needs? Is the water treated at all? Are you satisfied with the quality of water?

Water access (household level)

Who collects water, how often and how much water is collected? What are the physical constraints to collecting water (eg distance from source to?) What are the social or cultural constraints of collecting? How is water allocated within the household? How many households have secure access to water?

ON-GOING.

Reflections

What are your thoughts about the information you are getting? What is your instinct saying about this? What assumptions have you made about the data you are given, and are recording?

Water use (household level)

What proportion of water collected is used for domestic use, consumption, irrigation, etc. How is water allocated? Does the household use soap and water for hand washing?

Water management practices (environmental)

Are animals kept near water sources? Is the water contaminated from agricultural or industry practices?

Women's health and children's health

For women: what are your ongoing health concerns? What about your children's health? Your family's health? Is there an understanding of the link between water, nutrition and health?

Water governance (village level)

How is water managed? What are the governance structures? Who are the leaders? Are there equity and justice issues? How is water allocated across the village, for various activities?

Women's daily activities

What are the main daily activities for women? How much time is spent on each of these? (eg grazing animals, housework, food preparation, collecting forest foods, fetching water, etc).

Notes:

Maintaining and improving the natural resource base and women's workloads are the key impact pathways under study. It's important to capture both men's and women's perspective where possible.

Village: _____ Date: _____

Completed by: _____

Water access

- ❖ In total, water collection consumes ~3 hours of a woman's day.
- ❖ Over 90% of households are spending up to half an hour on carrying water for livestock drinking alone, + same time for sanitation purposes.
- ❖ From 365 days, men carry water 10-12 times, only when women are absent or in ill-health.
- ❖ Women indicated a desire for access to water to grow and eat more vegetables for their families



NSA in Bankura



Access to irrigation

Increased irrigation investment

Increased agricultural production

Improved fish production

Grow vegetables

Grow non-rainfed staple crops

Household consumption

Generate income

Purchase agricultural machinery/irrigation equipment

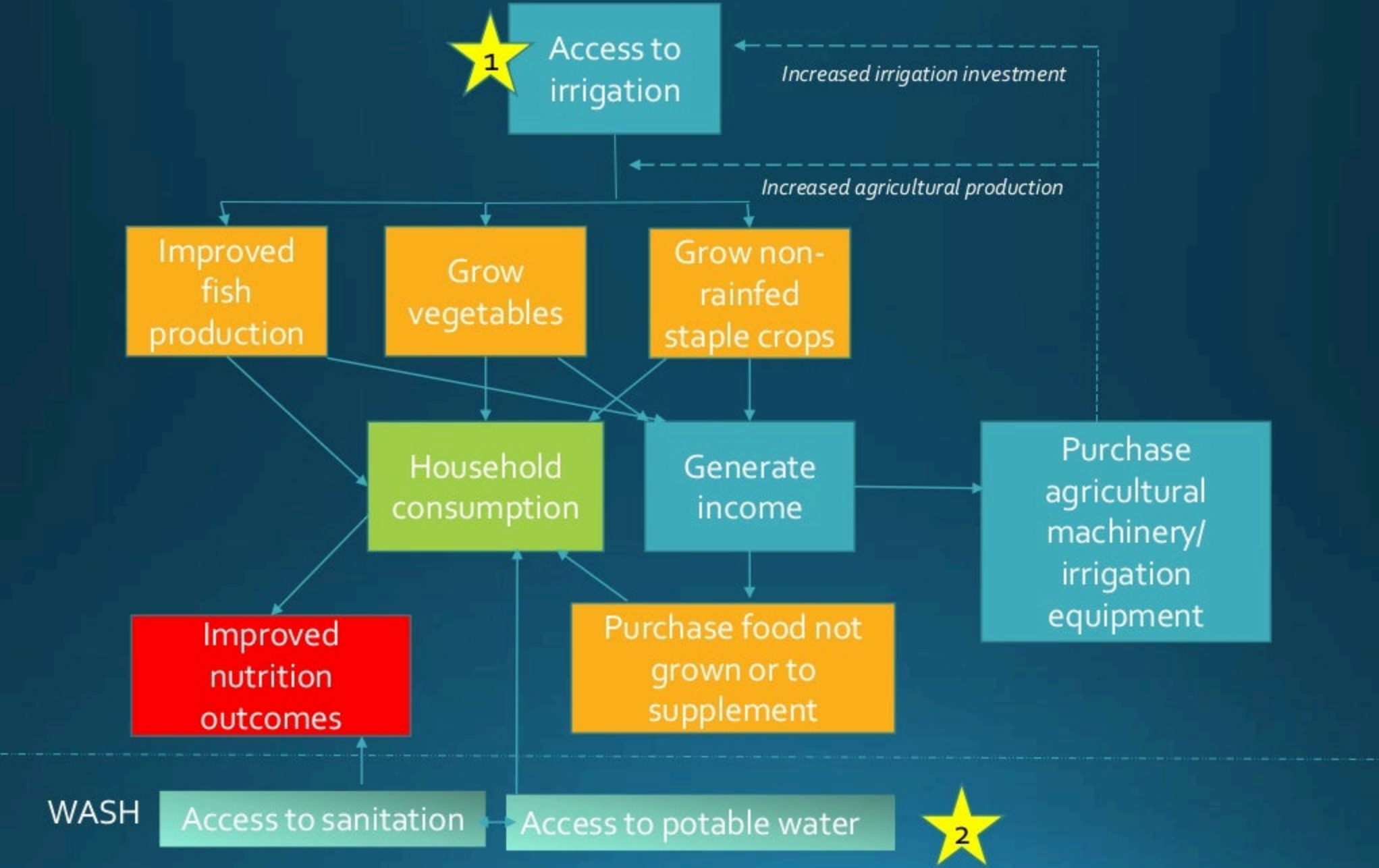
Improved nutrition outcomes

Purchase food not grown or to supplement

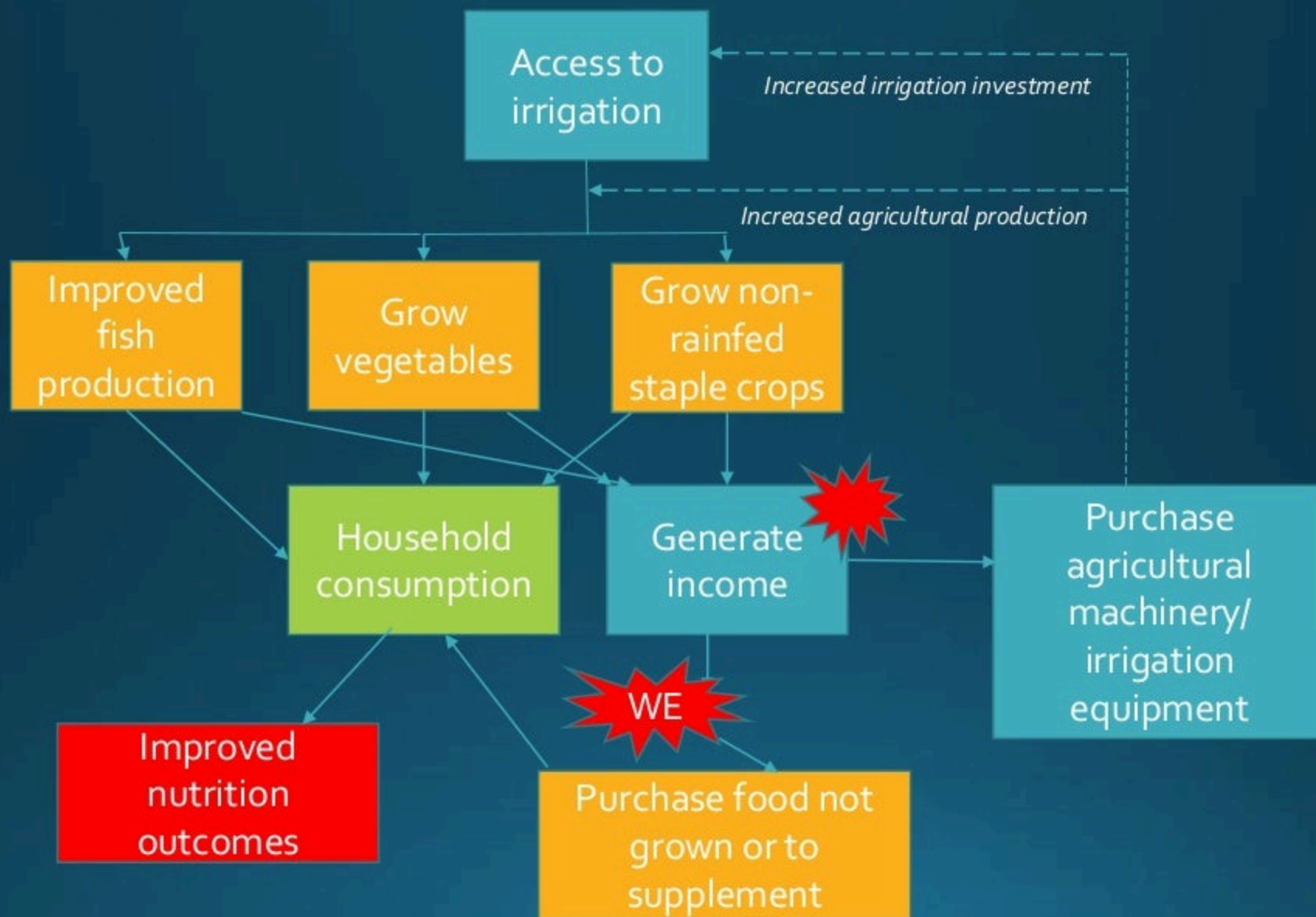
WASH

Access to sanitation

Access to potable water



NSA in Bankura



Outcomes to date

- Vision created for each village by villagers
- Empowerment of self help groups
 - Awareness raising on nutrition & women's health
 - Crop selection & prioritisation with men and women - 1,131 families; 53 Ha of pulses; + additional for chick pea
 - Orchards development
 - Growing crops & seed preservation
- Partnering with WBADMIP
 - Irrigation & water infrastructure (micro-irrigation with solar for horticulture, dug wells, water harvesting structures)
 - Integrated natural resource management (rivers & water bodies)
 - Water user groups (women) for water management
- Partnering with Child in Need Institute (CINI)
 - health, water and sanitation (needs assessment + training)
- Change Vectors
- Collaboration with the MGNREGS department in rejuvenation of dying rivers (employment guarantee scheme)
- Looking for WASH partners

TREATING A VILLAGE AS A
WHOLE & NUTRITION AS PART OF
A SYSTEM

Insights

- Take a systems view to nutrition and understanding the context
 - BUT *Resist the urge to know and do everything*
No one size fits all and veggies are not solution to everything
- Keeping true to internationally recognised NSA methods and tools has been challenging in an economically, culturally and environmentally constrained context
- Build capacity of community to envisage a future and empowering them to take action
 - BUT *be aware this takes more time*
- Focus on empowering women and building their understanding of nutritional needs of a household
 - BUT *also find male champions*
- Partnering across sectors is critical
- Take opportunities as they emerge to reach scale
 - BUT *be proactive in taking a "do no harm" approach*

Thank you



Women from Hakim Sinan village

SIAGI Socially Inclusive Agricultural Intensification

THANK YOU

Please visit our website: www.siagi.org



SIAGI PARTNERS

- Australia
 - CSIRO
 - Australian National University
 - Edith Cowan University
- Bangladesh
 - Bangladesh Agriculture University
 - Shushilan
- India
 - Livelihoods and Natural Resource Management Institute
 - PRADAN
 - Centre for Development of Human Initiatives
 - IIT Kharagpur
 - WBADMIP
- The Netherlands
 - Wageningen University