

# Nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions with participatory videos and women's group meetings for maternal and child nutrition in rural Odisha, India: a process evaluation - [www.ANH-Academy.org/ANH2021](http://www.ANH-Academy.org/ANH2021) - #ANH2021

Audrey Prost<sup>\*1</sup>, Satyanarayan Mohanty<sup>\*2</sup>, Manoj Parida<sup>\*2</sup>, Sneha Krishnan<sup>3</sup>, Helen Harris-Fry<sup>3</sup>, Ronali Pradhan<sup>4</sup>, Shibnath Pradhan<sup>5</sup>, Suchitra Rath<sup>6</sup>, Philip Jame<sup>3</sup>, Emily Fivian<sup>3</sup>, Peggy Koniz-Booher<sup>7</sup>, Nirmala Nair<sup>6</sup>, Hassan Haghparast-Bidgoli<sup>1</sup>, Naba Kishore Mishra<sup>5</sup>, Shibanand Rath<sup>6</sup>, Emma Beaumont<sup>3</sup>, Heather Danton<sup>7</sup>, Abhinav Kumar<sup>5</sup>, Jolene Skordis<sup>1</sup>, Diana Elbourne<sup>3</sup>, Elizabeth Allen<sup>3</sup>, Suneetha Kadiyala<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University College London, Institute for Global Health, UK; <sup>2</sup> DCOR Consulting Pvt. Ltd. Bhubaneswar, India; <sup>3</sup> London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, UK; <sup>4</sup> Digital Green, New Delhi, India; <sup>5</sup> Voluntary Association for Rural Reconstruction and Appropriate Technology (VARRAT), Kendrapara, India; <sup>6</sup> Ekjut, Chakradharpur, Jharkhand, India; <sup>7</sup> JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. Arlington, VA, USA. \* Equal contributions



## INTRODUCTION

- Upscaling Participatory Action and Videos for Agriculture and Nutrition (UPAVAN) was a cluster randomised controlled trial that tested three nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions with participatory videos and women's group meetings to improve maternal and child nutrition in rural villages in Odisha, India:



**AGRI** - fortnightly women's groups viewing and discussing videos to promote nutrition-sensitive agricultural practices



**AGRI-NUT** - as in AGRI, but with additional nutrition-specific videos about maternal diets and rest age-appropriate, child feeding practices, and care during child illness.



**AGRI-NUT-PLA**: fortnightly women's groups viewing and discussing nutrition-sensitive agriculture and nutrition-specific videos combined with a cycle of Participatory Learning and Action meetings



Watch the intervention film: [www.youtu.be/j6Xo1raZMNA](http://www.youtu.be/j6Xo1raZMNA)  
Read the trial results: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(21\)00001-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(21)00001-2)

- The trial found an increase in children's dietary diversity in the AGRI-NUT and AGRI-NUT-PLA arms and significant or borderline effects on maternal minimum dietary diversity in all intervention arms, but no effects on maternal BMI or child wasting in any arm.
- We did a process evaluation to understand the fidelity of the interventions' implementation, mechanisms behind their effects, and contextual factors affecting these.

## METHODS

In addition to monitoring and survey data, we analysed:



- 17 group discussions with 181 women's Self-Help Group members
- 32 family case studies from across all arms
- 3 group discussions with 32 intervention staff

- We used a thematic approach to capture elements related to the theory of change and emergent themes.



## FINDINGS

- Interventions were implemented as planned, but reached only around half of mothers of children under two years through Self-Help Groups.
- Videos and meetings increased women's knowledge and motivation to improve their and their children's diets.

They also increased women's confidence to 'speak up' about diets, workload and agriculture in the family, and in the PLA arm, to problem-solve and take collective action.

*"Interviewer [I]: Did you see the video about how to give boiled vegetables to [a child to] eat? Participant [P] I: Yes, I have done this. [...] I boiled papaya and added carrots too. I boiled everything and mashed them and mixed them. [...] My daughter eats well...so she plays happily and does everything." (Case study 21, AGRI-NUT-PLA)*

*"I: Who do you discuss the videos with? P: My husband [...], my father-in-law. [...] With him [father-in-law], I also discuss which crop we will cultivate ... then if he replies 'yes, cultivate that crop', we cultivate it [...]. I: Could you tell him all these things earlier? P: No, we were not telling him. After seeing the video, we learnt many things." (Case Study 3, AGRI arm)*

### 3. Families adopted nutrition-sensitive agriculture practices that suited their circumstances:

- Among the 32 families interviewed for case studies, seven families began cultivating crops for sale, 16 cultivated vegetables in small kitchen gardens to eat them, and nine made no changes to agricultural practices.
- Small landholdings, poor access to irrigation, and decision-making processes dominated by men remained key barriers to changing cultivation practices.

## CONCLUSION

- In the UPAVAN trial, women's and children's diets are likely to have improved because of discussions about nutrition and an increase in kitchen garden cultivation. This remained insufficient to change nutritional status, which requires investment in wider, multisectoral approaches.

