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 - #ANH2021

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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

FINDINGS

1. Interventions were implemented as planned, but reached only around half of mothers of children under two years through Self-Help Groups.

2. 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.

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.

Watch the intervention film: www.youtube.com/6Xo1raZMN
Read the trial results: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(21)00001-2

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.