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IDEAL

ASOTRY DFSA Final Performance Evaluation Presentation

TANGO International



Meet our Presenters

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ASOTRY Context - 2014

National estimates



83% of households are food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity



>90% of the population lives on <\$2/day



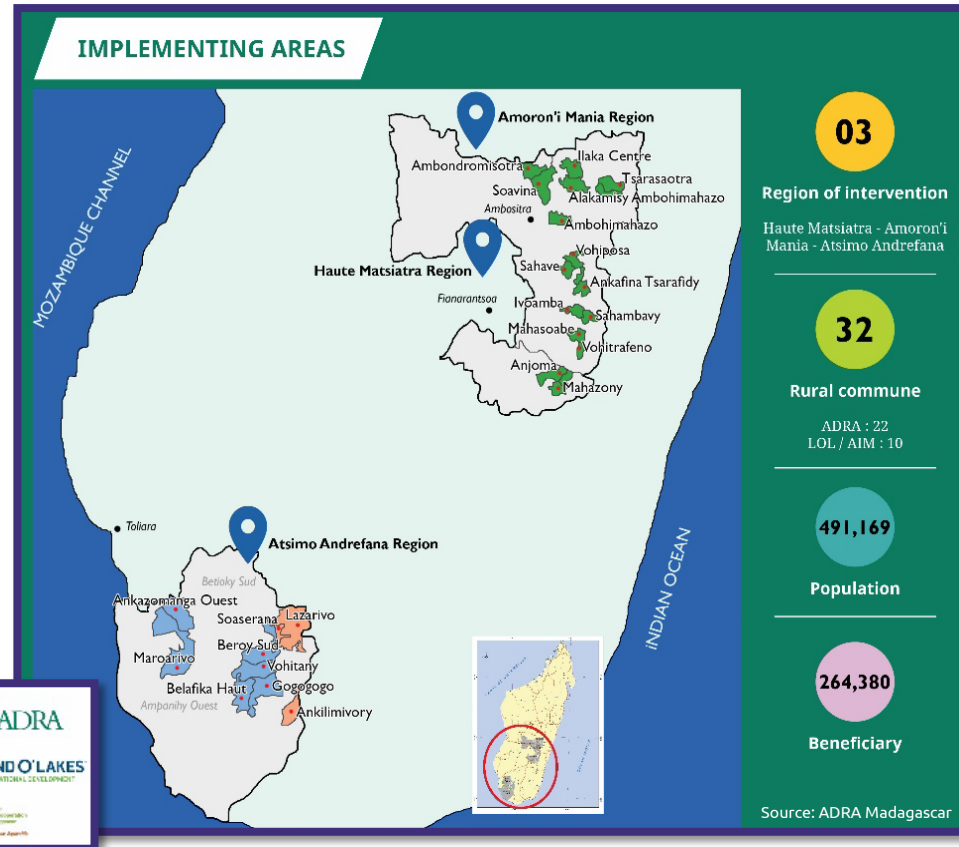
50% of children are stunted

Vulnerability is exacerbated by

- 2009 political crisis → degraded infrastructure, public services
- Natural disasters: cyclones, droughts, and locusts

Approach

- 2 geographic areas in southern Madagascar
- Layered intervention approach to produce a higher, more sustainable impact
- Aimed for:
 - All communities to receive interventions related to resilience (C3)
 - ~75% overlap between HHs receiving interventions for C1 (nutrition and health) and C2 (agriculture)



Main Findings

Improvements in

- Nutrition indicators
 - Reductions in malnutrition (underweight, stunted and wasted) in CU5 in all intervention areas and all target populations, both direct and indirect project participants
 - Reduction in % of underweight women, particularly in Central Highlands
- Some WASH indicators
- Agricultural practices learned by farmers (per FGDs) and use of improved seeds
- Use of financial services through VSLA participation
- Community disaster mitigation assets supported by FFA
- Immediate preparedness and response through the fokontany Disaster Risk Management Committees
 - cyclone, fire

Main Findings

Targeting

- 1/3 of respondents participated in 1 or more project activities
- 2/3 of direct participants in 2 or more activities
- Overlap of 80% among participants in agriculture and nutrition activities

Unachieved objectives

- Dietary diversity
- Source of drinking water
- Use of sanitation facilities
- No increase in ag sales
- Decrease in the percentage % of respondents earning cash in the previous 12 months

Challenges

- high illiteracy, poor infrastructure, geographical distance



Photo Credit: D. Brown

Methods

Quantitative Survey (June 2019)

- 980 households in 3 regions where ASOTRY was active
- Multi-stage clustered sampling approach

Qualitative Study (Sept/Oct 2019)

- 489 FGD participants (316 F, 173 M) in 28 fokontany
- 54 formal KIIs (16 F, 38 M)
- Asset observations of 27 infrastructure investments (water, sanitation, irrigation, feeder roads)
- Desk review of program documents

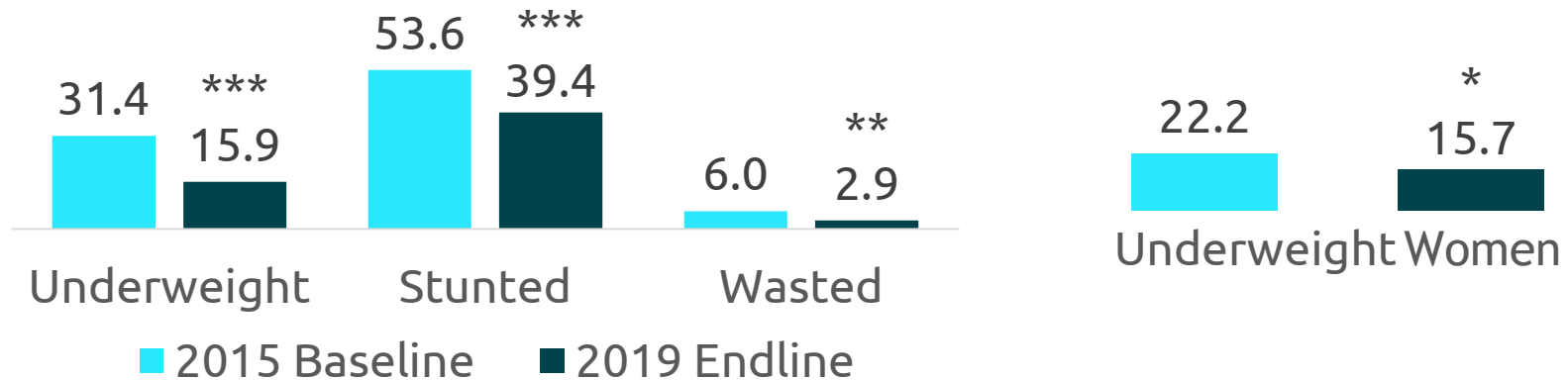


Purpose 1:
Improved health
and nutrition status
of women of
reproductive age
and children under
five (CU5)

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

Improvements

- Decrease in underweight, stunted, wasted CU5
- Decrease in prevalence of underweight women

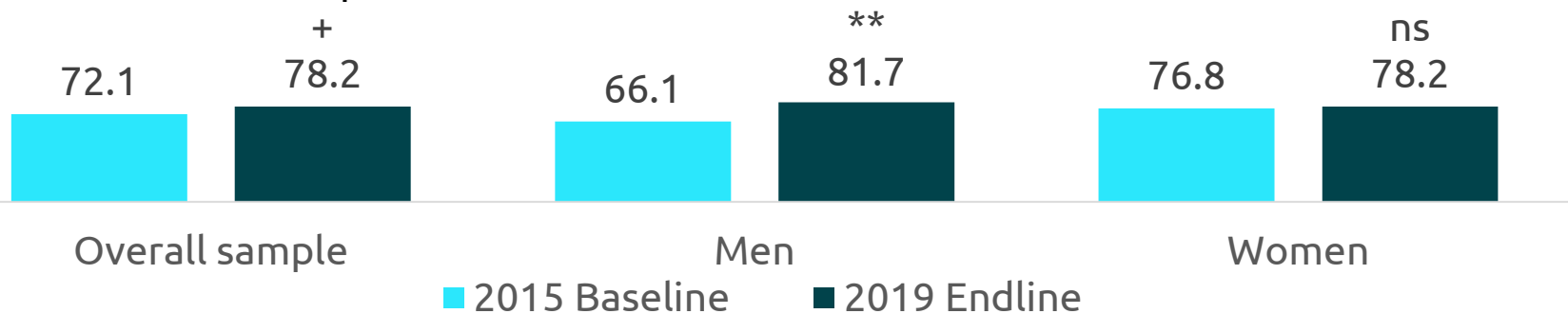


ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

Approach

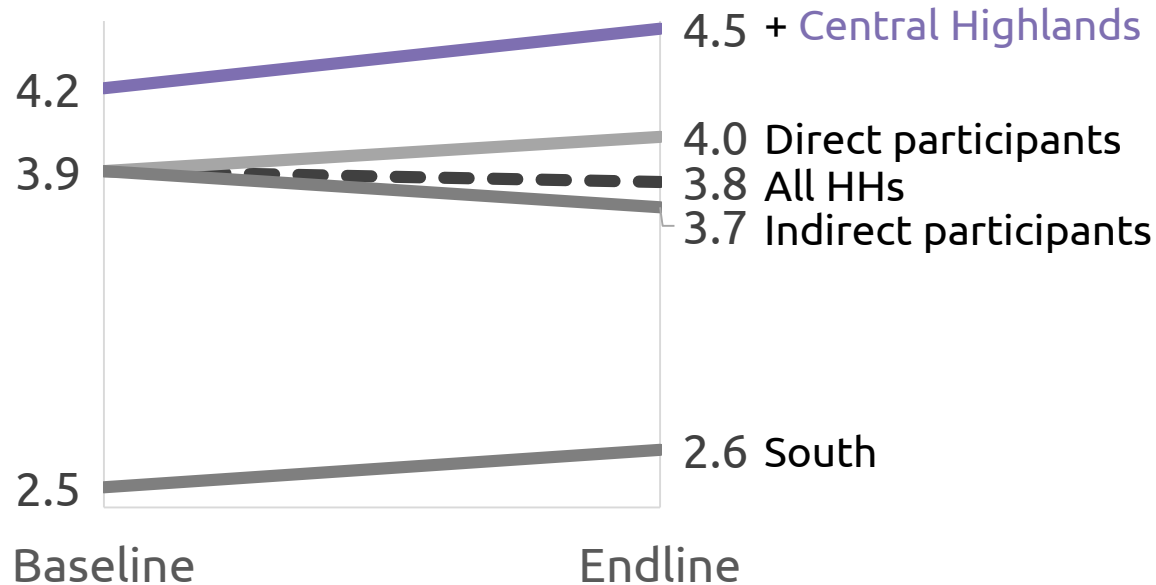
- Care Group model in conjunction with
 - Community Health Volunteers
 - Lead mothers modelled and taught about good health and nutrition practices
 - Lead fathers worked independently in support of the same goals
- Survey results suggest Care Group model is effective
 - Improvement in % of men with CU2 and knowledge of project-promoted child health and nutrition practices



ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) **improved** in the **Central Highlands** from baseline to endline and remained stable elsewhere



FGD participants say:

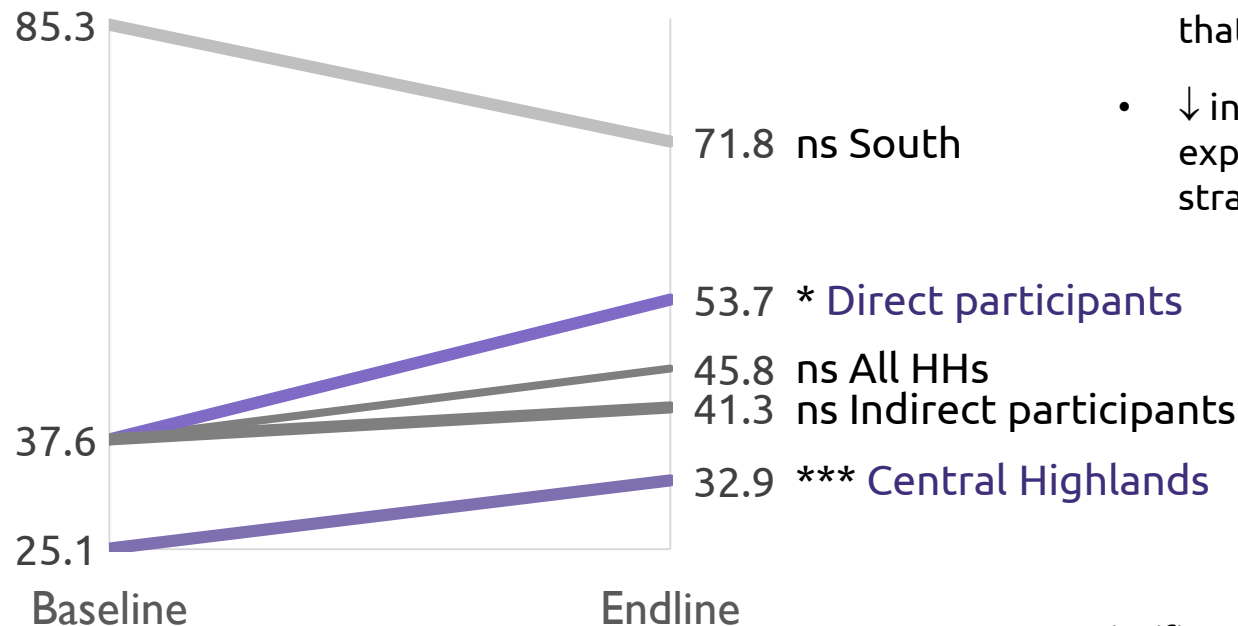
- They are more aware of dietary diversity. Especially in the Central Highlands
- The *Tsikonina* approach helped them understand and take steps to adopt new, more diverse recipes

ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

CSI increased from baseline to endline in **Central Highlands** and among **direct participants**

- No significant change for others



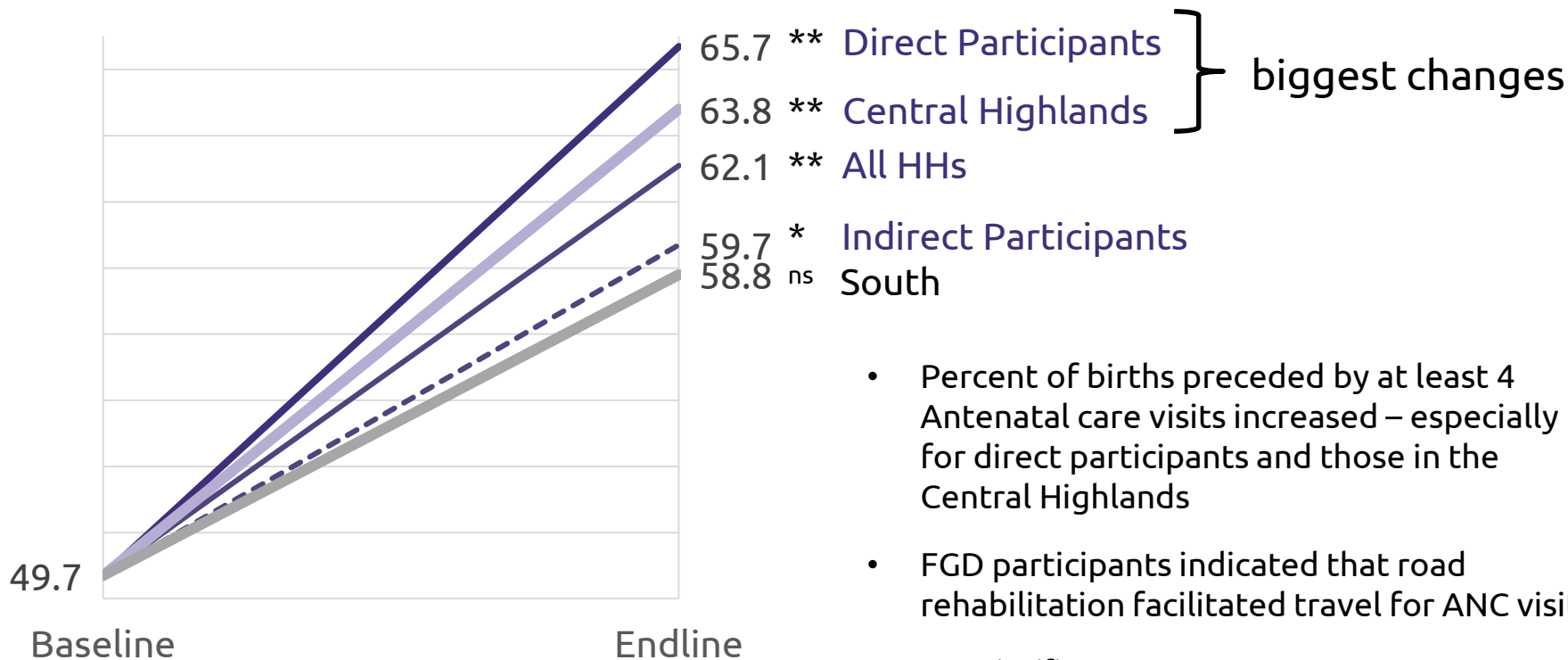
- Shock data indicate that many households had experienced shocks that would negatively impact the CSI
- ↓ in WDDS aligns with shock exposure and use of -ve coping strategies

← CSI higher among **direct** participants than indirect participants

← CSI increased in **Central Highlands**

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

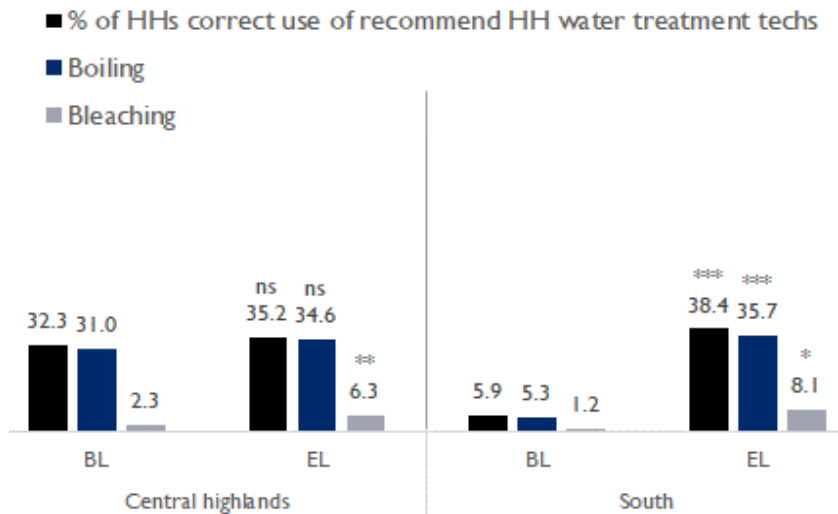
Improvements in % of births receiving at least 4 ANC visits



ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of women of reproductive age and CU5

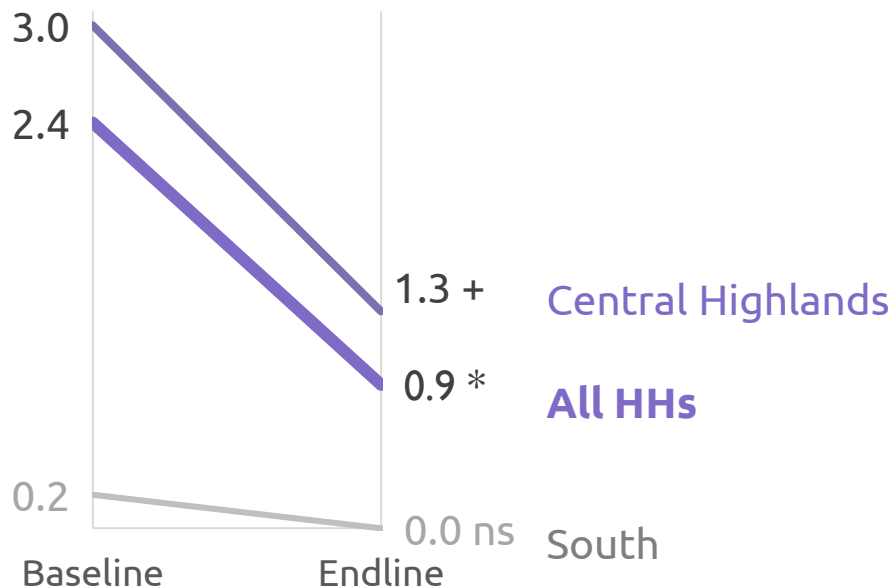
- ASOTRY trainings and awareness-raising on water treatment
 - Carried out by field agents, Community Health Volunteers and Care Groups
 - Some events included free distribution of water chlorination products
 - Contributed to an increase in the % of HHs practicing correct use of the recommended household water treatment technologies



ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of WRA and CU5 - WASH

The percent of HHs using improved sanitation was low at baseline and declined at endline especially in the Central Highlands; may partly explain little change in incidence of diarrhea



- Positive changes in some types of latrines

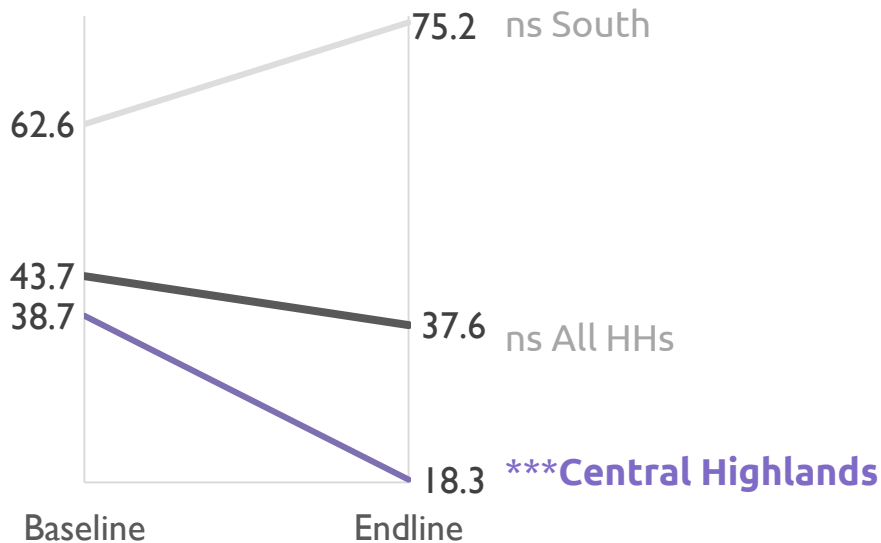
	Baseline	Endline
Latrine without slab/open pit	50.0 %	59.3 %
No facility/bush/field	44.0 %	37.5 %

- However, “latrine without slab/open pit” is not counted as an “improved” sanitation facility though it is an improvement over “no facility/bush/field”

ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of WRA and CU5 - WASH

Improvement in % of HHs practicing open defecation in **Central Highlands**

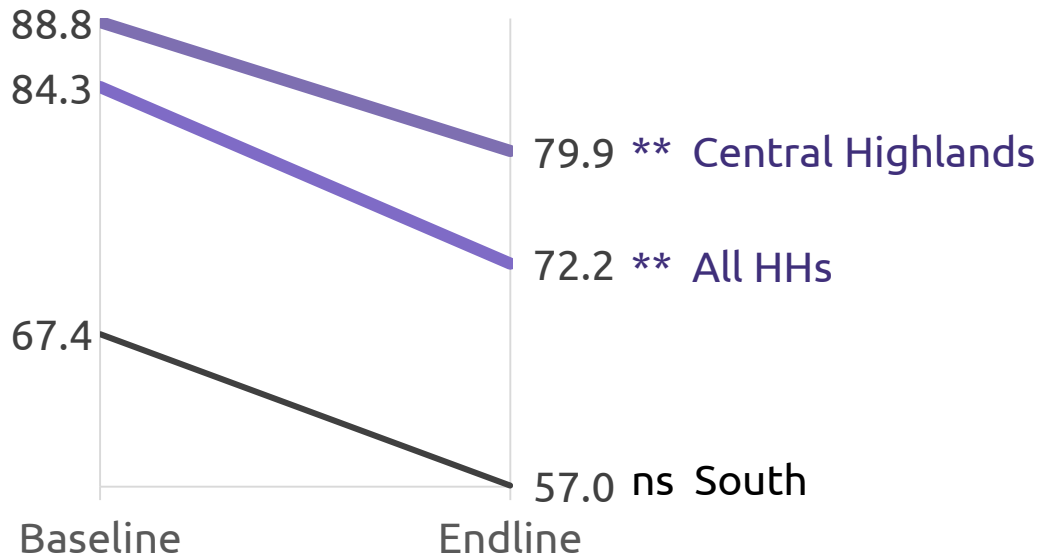


- No change in the overall project area masked the positive change in the Central Highlands
- No change in the South where open defecation is still the norm

ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of WRA and CU5 - WASH

- Decline in % of HHs that can obtain drinking water in less than 30 minutes (round trip) baseline to endline



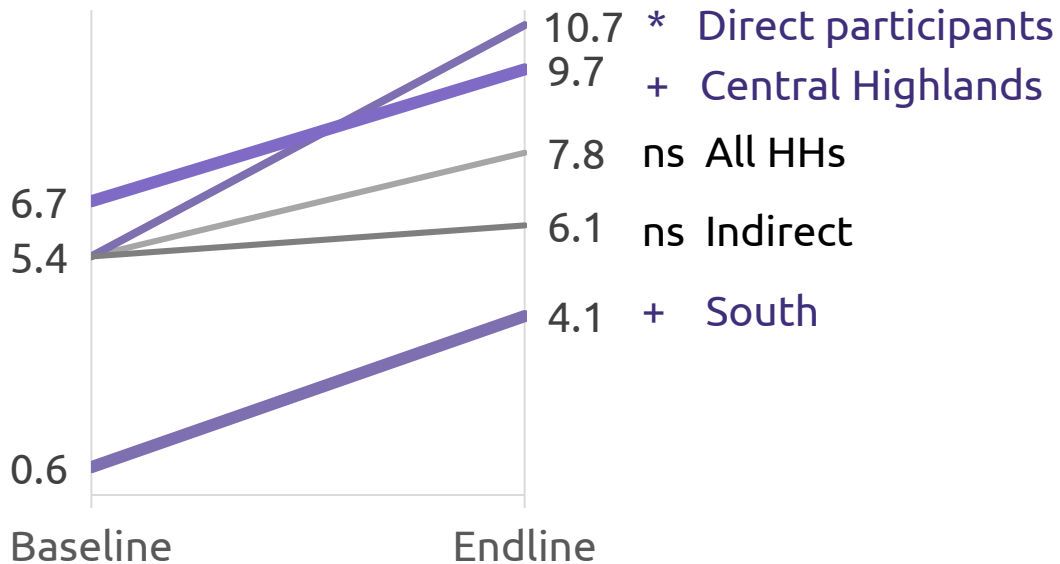
- Driven by change in the Central Highlands
- FGDs and KIIs indicated that the decline in access is likely due to drying up of unimproved water points (not improved ones)
- QET found improvements to be functional and of acceptable quality

ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of WRA and CU5 - WASH

Improvement

Increase in % HHs w with soap and water at a handwashing station for direct participants and in each region taken individually



- Small but statistically significant increase in Central Highlands and the South is masked when both regions are taken together

P1: Improved health and nutrition status of WRA and CU5 - WASH

Challenges/unmet goals remain for dietary diversity, source of drinking water and use of sanitation facilities

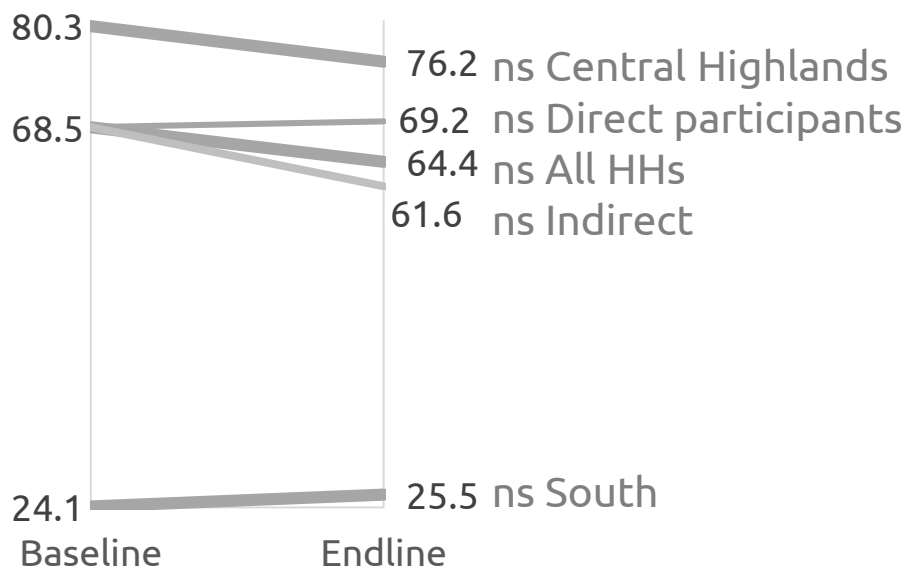
- Qualitative study found three main reasons
 1. need better contextualization of the approach for massive behavior change
 2. strategic activities (*Tsikonina*, WASH, Care Groups) were effective but implemented late
 3. adequate collaboration with public authorities and other stakeholders was lacking, which impeded program quality and sustainability
- AND most communities experienced shocks in the year prior to the survey
 - Adoption of coping strategies may have impacted dietary diversity – especially of women (FGDs, quantitative survey)



Purpose 2:
Increased
sustainable access
to food for
vulnerable
households

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- Quantitative survey results show no change in the adoption of improved agricultural practices during ASOTRY
 - no change in % of farmers adopting at least 3 sustainable crop, livestock or natural resource management practices between baseline and endline



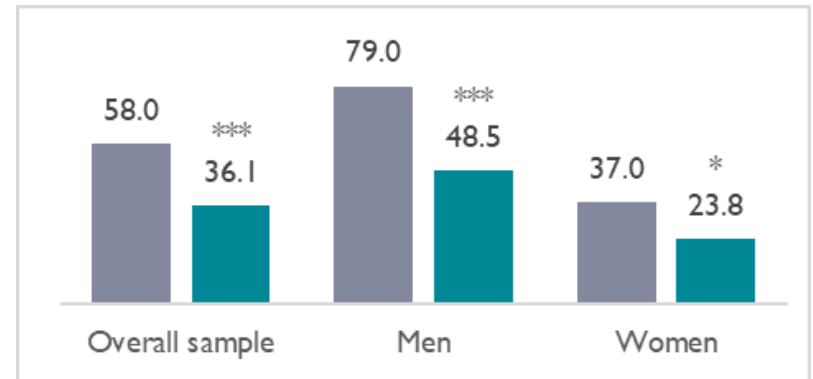
- The only significant difference here is between direct and indirect participants ($p < 0.1$)
- These ambiguous quantitative results are in contrast to more favorable reports in FGDs with project participants

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- Adoption of NRM practices
 - No statistically significant change for overall sample
 - Decrease among indirect participants
- Qualitative data are more favorable
 - FGDs report great interest in “modern technology/techniques”
 - New crops types, subsidized seeds, planting techniques
 - BUT subsidized seed requires a huge effort and expense, with little return to ASOTRY
 - New techniques improved yield in normal conditions
 - In some cases, the new practice grew poorly or produced nothing
 - Integrated Pest Management would have been appropriate but not implemented due to perceived insurmountable hurdles

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- Agricultural sales did not increase significantly
 - A series of poor harvests
 - High transaction costs
 - Mostly semi-subsistence farmers with little surplus to sell
 - > 33% of HHs experienced one or more of several production-related shocks
 - Drought, flood, wind or storm damage, and crop disease
 - Each would negatively impact agricultural sales
 - Explains the significant decrease in % of respondents earning cash in the previous 12 months
- % of men and women earning cash in the last year decreased from baseline to endline
 - Biggest decrease among men
 - Larger decrease in South



ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- % of farmers using improved storage practices declined slightly from baseline to endline



- % farmers using financial services increased from baseline to endline



- Production-related shocks are likely to have reduced the need for long-term crop storage
- Participation in VSLAs was the most important contributing factor in the use of financial services

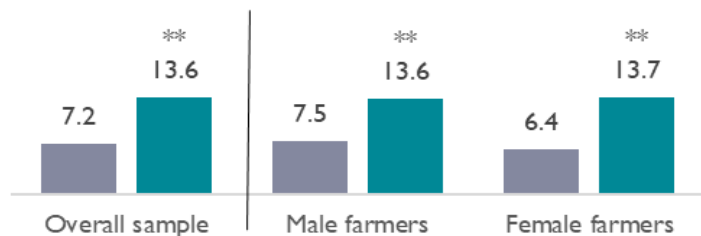
ns = not significant, + $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- % farmers practicing promoted value chain activities declined from baseline to endline



- % farmers (male and female) using agriculture or livestock external services increased from BL to EL



- Many value chain activities are only relevant where there is a marketable surplus
- Production-related shocks are likely to have reduced this for the few who are not primarily subsistence farmers – especially in the Central Highlands
- Conversely, farmers in the South increased their use of external services – as noted by FGD participants

ns = not significant, + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

P2: Increased sustainable access to food for vulnerable households

- Constraints to improved market sales in the project area include:
 - high illiteracy
 - poor infrastructure
 - geographical distance
- For subsistence farming, the more sustainable impacts are seen in
 - Village Savings and Loan Associations
 - better involvement with local markets
- The value chain/ marketing method (based on Farm Business Associations)
 - was not well adapted to realities of rural farmers who are net buyers
 - started too late to bear fruit



Photo Credit: O. Rahamefy

Purpose 3:
Improved disaster
mitigation,
preparedness, and
response in
vulnerable
communities

P3: Improved disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response

- Rehabilitated community disaster mitigation assets: feeder roads, dams, irrigation channels
 - Dual function – productive collective assets and facilitate disaster response
 - Relevant to needs, reasonable quality, in use and appreciated by communities
 - Nominally managed by 2 types of Infrastructure Management Associations (IMAs)
 - Water Users Association (AUE)
 - Road Users Association (AUP)
 - Environmental considerations respected

BUT

- Infrastructure assets were designed by project staff without coordination with relevant state authorities



P3: Improved disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response

- Community Natural resource management (NRM) activities
 - Too small-scale and limited to reforestation to be considered as either effective mitigation measures or to have an impact on land degradation in the uplands of watersheds
 - There exist other, more-viable options and approaches



P3: Improved disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response

- Community resilience to disasters has improved the most and at scale for immediate preparedness and response through the fokontany Disaster Risk Management Committees
 - The disaster warning, preparation, and response system is appreciated and works well for cyclones and fire prevention at the local level (village/fokontany/commune)

BUT

- There has been no change for other types of disasters and at a scale beyond the commune

P3: Improved disaster mitigation, preparedness, and response

Lessons learned

- Communities with better DRM and NRM also have better leadership and governance
 - Future projects should include a more explicit governance component
- Activities that are sustainable and have had an impact are the ones where there is a direct benefit and a community expectation
 - e.g. – regular asset preparation/repair and population warning and encouragement ahead of a cyclone
- Another approach:
 - GoGreen – an activity to motivate people in each fokontany to engage in environmental issues for each project purpose and holds annual group-based self-evaluation exercises, which are then ranked in a project-wide competition



Photo Credit: H. Ralaison

Recommendations

Recommendations

R1: Invest in staff, not stuff.

R2: Involve both NGO and government technical sector specialists.

R3: Engage and empower local governance.

R4: Apply an integrated natural resource management (NRM) approach that engages local government.

Recommendations

R1: Invest in staff, not stuff.

- To “help people to help themselves”, the focus needs to be on personnel to facilitate change
- Should material inputs be needed, the focus should be on IGAs that use local resources and improve a household’s capacity to manage its budget

R2: Involve both NGO and government technical sector specialists.

- Direct involvement of NGO technical specialists in stakeholder learning and coaching is important
- Active involvement of government officials/experts at all stages of the life of a project is beneficial

R3: Engage and empower local governance.

- Intentionally work with local leaders to strengthen their ability to do their jobs.
- Include more explicit governance activities, going beyond forming committees to act on pre-selected activities.

R4: Apply an integrated natural resource management (NRM) approach that engages local government.

- Ensure better awareness, governance and ownership at local and commune level for the management of community/natural resources through joint goal setting and monitoring
- Integrate NRM across components, particularly farming and Food for Assets/ infra-structure activities and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).
- Activities must suit the local agro-ecological context, be timely, and minimize risk of failure.
- Work with local governance structures to facilitate dialogue and change around landscape management, and use holistic approaches such as forest/landscape restoration.

Recommendations

- R5: Contextualize interventions according to household resources, livelihood types, and socio-economic and ecological contexts.**
- R6: Involve local government and institutions.**
- R7: Use the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach as intended.**
- R8: Be intentional about integration across sectors and involvement of various subgroups, especially youth.**

Recommendations

R5: Contextualize interventions according to household resources, livelihood types, and socio-economic and ecological contexts.

- Heterogeneity in the social, economical, and environmental context together with heterogeneity among households regarding levels of vulnerability, resources, and needs necessitates contextualization of interventions for different livelihood groups.
- Finetune activities so that they are doable with the resources available to households and not dependent on subsidies, even at the start.

R6: Involve local government and institutions.

- Strengthening local governance and institutions is essential to sustainability.
- Actively work with government departments/ministries at the local and regional level from the beginning – ensure that project activities align with government priorities and reinforce the capacity of those same institutions.

R7: Use the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach as intended.

- Working with farmers through a multi-year engagement based on FAO's participatory FFS approach has the greatest likelihood of initiating a transformation process to more productive, sustainable and resilient agriculture.
- Proven approaches adapted to smallholders like Conservation Agriculture (CA), System of Rice Intensification (SRI), and Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), as well as dry season vegetable gardens and backyard gardens, can all be experimented with using the FFS approach.

R8: Be intentional about integration across sectors and involvement of various subgroups, especially youth.

- Focus on project integration, impact quality, and sustainability from the start with specific strategies, tools and monitoring.
- By being intentional about integration, it is possible to strengthen project outcomes, as each reinforces the other.

Recommendations

R9: Exploit opportunities for communication.

R10: VSLAs and Care Groups are foundational activities and should be a core component of future work.

R11: Community branding should take precedence over donor branding.

R12: Engage the faith community in social and behavioral change communication.

Recommendations

R9: Exploit opportunities for communication.

- Where people gather for an activity, it is an occasion to share information relevant to multiple objectives.

R10: VSLAs and Care Groups are foundational activities and should be a core component of future work.

- VSLAs build social cohesion and develop important skills. They are the foundation of other nutrition and livelihood interventions.
- Care Groups empower people to take charge of nutrition and health. Other interventions and activities can build on them.

R11: Community branding should take precedence over donor branding.

- While also acknowledging donor support, find ways to implement community branding of assets to encourage local ownership and empowerment.
- Management tools (e.g., registration forms, monitoring forms) should also reflect community branding.

R12: Engage the faith community in social and behavioral change communication.

- Work with local religious leaders to identify how their religious texts and teachings are relevant to community development and social change – and can be applied to motivate positive change.

Recommendations

R13: Review and streamline measurement and monitoring tools.

R14: Sustainability.

Recommendations

R13: Review and streamline measurement and monitoring tools.

- Very long survey also had information gaps
- Continue use of standard food security and nutrition indicators
- Consider replacing the expenditure section with the Poverty Probability Index (PPI) in place of very long expenditure module
- Consider using the Women's Empowerment and Agriculture Index (WEAI) as an indicator of change in gender relations.
- Consider a module to measure resilience, shocks and adaptation.
- Consider a module that characterizes livelihood assets, activities, and allocation of household resources would aid in understanding the context and developing livelihood profiles.
- Survey terminology used to describe agricultural practices needs to be field-tested to ensure it is comprehensible to farmers and aligns with farmers' usage of terms.

R14: Sustainability.

- Sustainability is enhanced by a process whereby the members of a community develop a shared vision of their community's future.
- A facilitated visioning process helps to motivate and empower people to take charge of the changes they want using the resources that they have.



Q&A Session



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