



HKI's EXPERIENCE EMPOWERING WOMEN IN BANGLADESH

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Women's Empowerment Working Group – Policies Against Hunger

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- **Overview of HKI's work in Bangladesh**
- **Strategies to empower women in nutrition and food security interventions**
- **Synergies and challenges between improving women's nutrition and diversifying agricultural production**
- **Strengthening the supporting environment**



I have learned today that
we need to understand others and consider the situation

SECTIONS

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW



HKI's Mission

HKI saves and improves the sight and lives of the world's vulnerable by combatting the causes and consequences of blindness, poor health and malnutrition.

Our Work in Bangladesh

We bring expertise in helping communities – especially women – increase food security, access income, improve nutrition and prevent blindness.

Homestead Food Production (HFP)

- Works through groups of approximately 20 women, centered around “Village Model Farms”.
- Increases production of nutritious foods, including vegetables, eggs, poultry and fish, for household consumption and sale.



*“Before, we often didn’t have enough to eat and went to bed hungry. Now, we eat vegetables 3 times a day and eggs or chicken 3 times a week. My children are sick less often.” -Beti, Nilpharmari
Photo © HKI*

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW



SOCIAL PRACTICES CONTRIBUTING TO MALNUTRITION...

- Child marriage and early pregnancy
- Women's low status and decision-making power
- Unequal food distribution
- Women's high domestic workload
- Women's limited mobility and ability to purchase nutritious food...



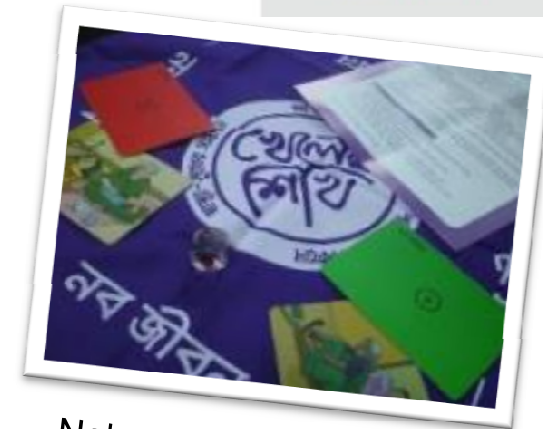
Photo © HKI

SECTION 2: STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER WOMEN



From a “Gender Focus”...

- Eg: REAL Project (2008-2010): Without challenging traditional roles and responsibilities (to avoid resistance from men), we ensured that Homestead Food Production and Essential Nutrition Actions weren't a time burden. **Challenge: lack of men's involvement limits potential to maximize impact.**



Nobo Jibon Ludu game

To Including Men and Boys

- Eg: Nobo Jibon (“New Life”, since 2010): started to include interactive behavior change tools where men and women participate together to improve their nutrition knowledge and practices. **Challenge: status and power still retained by men.**

To Specific Gender Transformative Interventions...

- BEAM (2011-2103): pilot-tested a specific integrated nutrition and gender intervention package, *Nurturing Connections*, that challenges discriminating gender norms within the entire household which lead to malnutrition.



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SECTION 2: STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER WOMEN



NURTURING CONNECTIONS ©



Communication

Trust

Respect



Perceptions



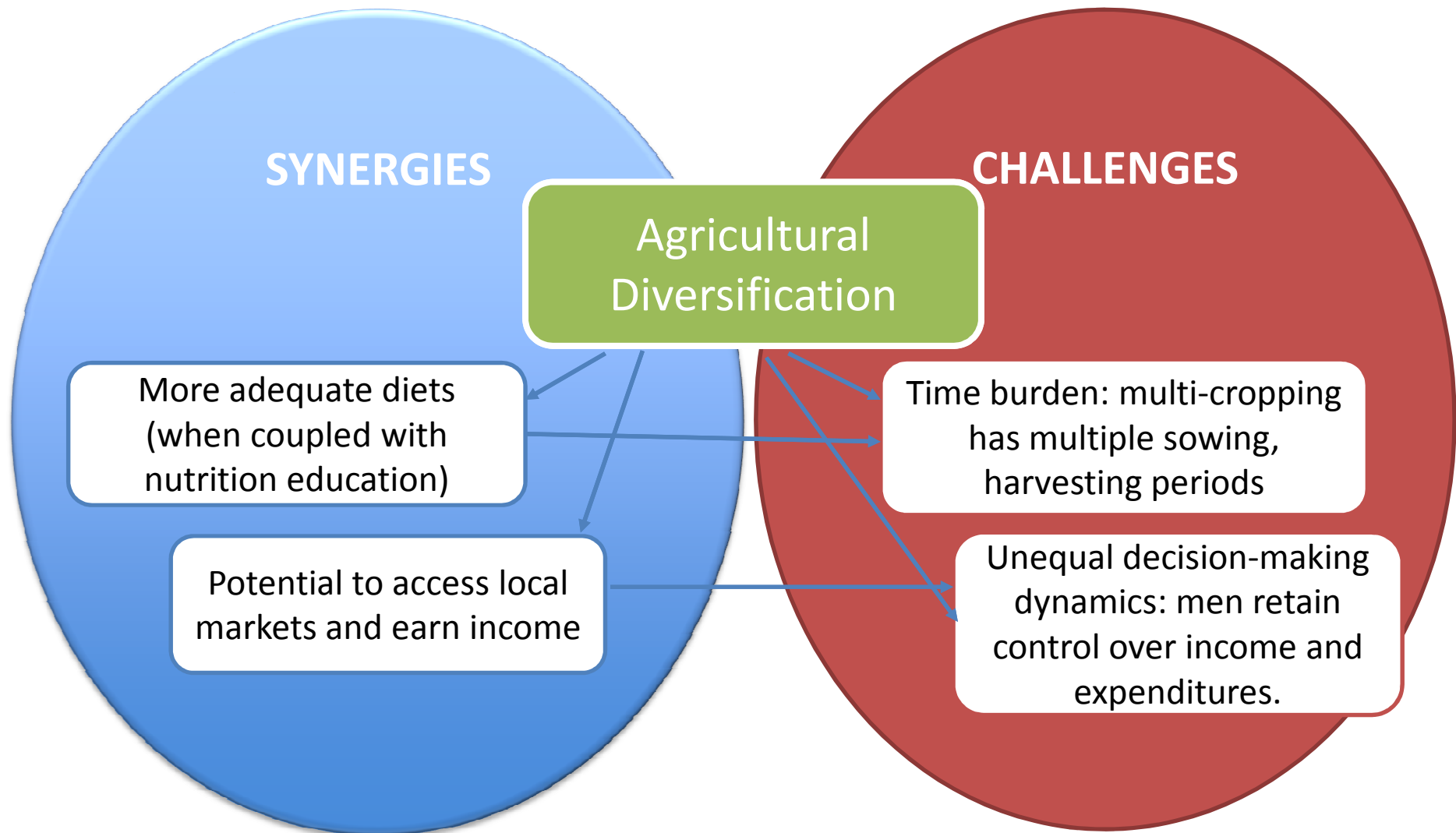
**Negotiating
Power**



**Acting for
Change**



SECTION 3: SYNERGIES AND CHALLENGES BETWEEN IMPROVING WOMEN'S NUTRITION AND DIVERSIFYING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION



SECTION 4: STRENGTHENING THE SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENT



Filling the gap at the community level – working with institutions that influence social roles and relations

PROSHAR (Program for Strengthening Household Access to Resources, USAID, 2010-2015)

Engaged with local leaders to support women as producers.



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Policy framework

- National Action Plan
- Child Marriage Restraint Act
- CEDAW Convention

TOPS-funded adaptation of *Nurturing Connections* (South-West Bangladesh, 2015)

Events and monitoring visits with local Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, religious leaders and healthcare providers.



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FURTHER READINGS...



Nurturing Connections and Women's Empowerment

[Nurturing Connections Impact Stories](#) (South-Asia)

[Nurturing Connections Impact Stories](#) (West Africa)

[Nurturing Connections manual](#) (English version, 2015)

[HKI's Gender Transformative Approach](#)

Nutrition and Food Purchases

[SPRING Report – Market Purchase Motivations Among Men in Bangladesh](#)

[HKI's Homestead Food Production program 2013](#)

[HKI's Essential Nutrition Action](#)



Helen Keller
INTERNATIONAL

THANK YOU

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it.” -Helen Keller