

Suchana's Excellence in Homestead Food Production Interventions to Improve Food Security and Nutrition

Evidence from Suchana Project, Bangladesh

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Suchana Project Experiences and Lesson Learned 2016- 2022



আরডিআরএস বাংলাদেশ
RDRS Bangladesh



Save the Children





Goal

Significant reduction in stunting among children under 2 in Sylhet and Moulvibazar districts



Approach

The program adopts an integrated approach to nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions and aims to develop a sustainable and replicable model that can be scaled.

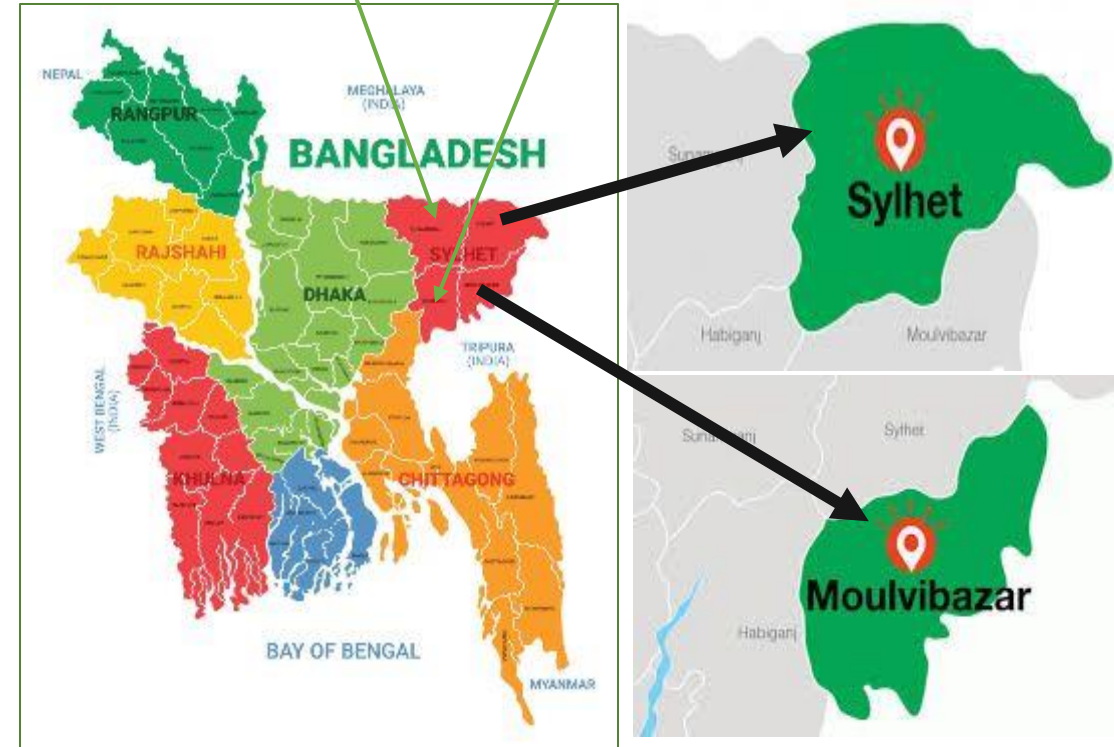


Duration: August 2015 – December 2022



Total Beneficiaries: 235,579 HHs (1.4 million population)

Replication: Habiganj & Sunamganj

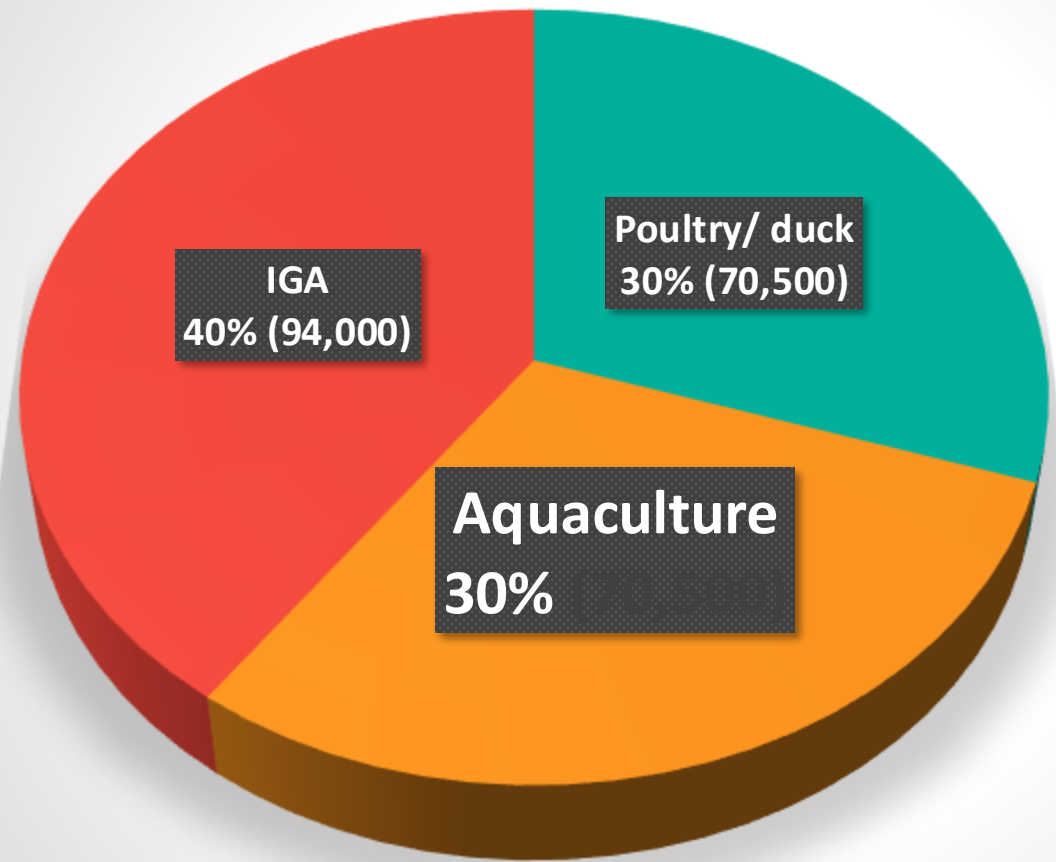


Regular Program: all 20 upazilas and 157 unions

Replication: 6 upazilas and 19 unions

SUPPORT AMONG 235,579 BHH

Intervention and support



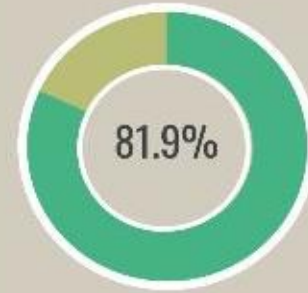
- Horticulture
- Aquaculture
- IGA

Helen Keller's role in the Suchana Project

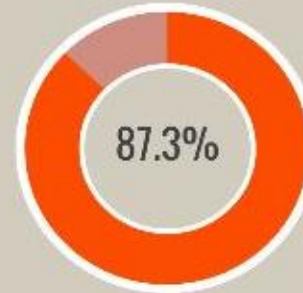
- Promote the production and consumption of nutritious, home-grown food by establishing Village Model Farms
- Lead the integration of Gender Equality across all program areas.
- Coordinate with government and private sectors for aligned, ongoing project implementation (policy and governance).



HH with homestead food production & IGA (final evaluation 2022-23)

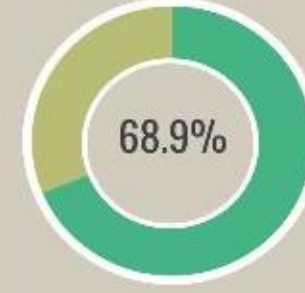


On-Farm

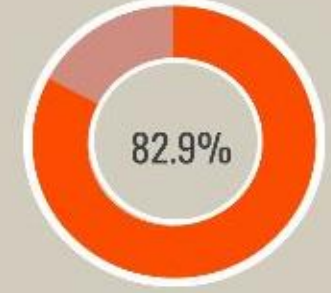


Off-Farm

Participants still involved in IGA/HFP activities across all phases



On-Farm



Off-Farm

Participants able to make profit from IGA/HFP activity across all phases

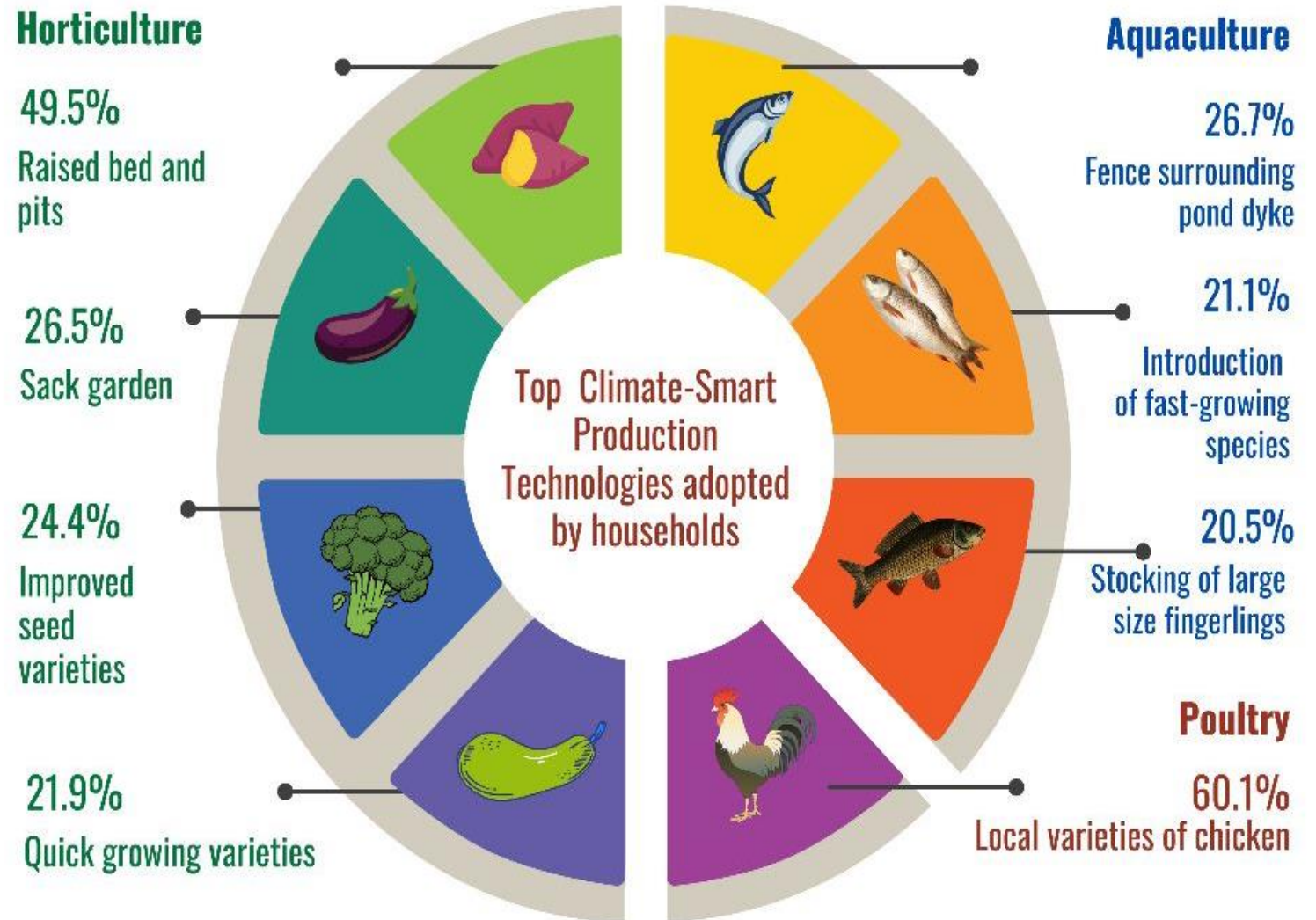


Seedling distribution from VMF



Adoption of climate-smart technologies (final evaluation 2022-23)

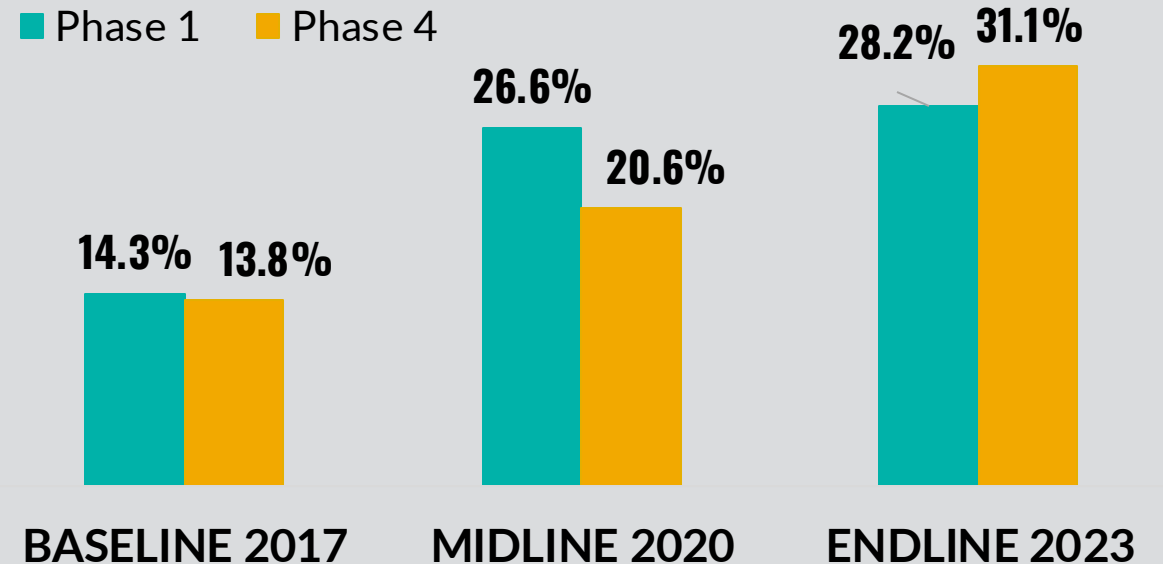
- **63% HHs employed at least one climate-smart horticulture technique, up from 1% at baseline (2017) and 23% at midline (2020) (phase 1).**
- **Uptake of climate-smart horticulture techniques was highest among phase 4 households (67%)**



Household Food Security Indicators

- The proportion of food secure households increased from ~14% in 2017 to ~30% in 2023
- HH Dietary diversity score similarly increased from ~7.2 in 2017 to ~8 in 2023

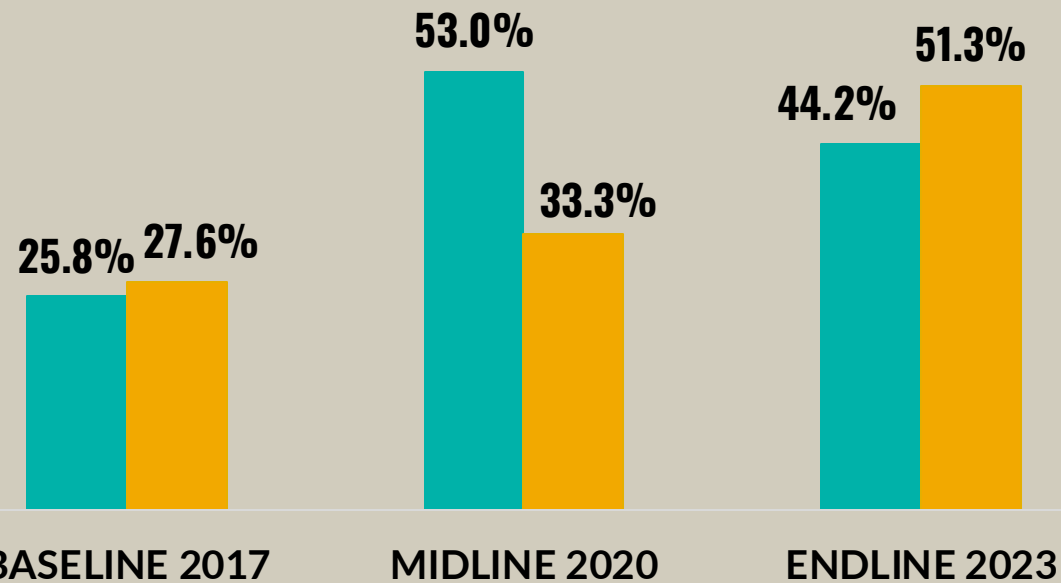
PROPORTION OF FOOD SECURE HOUSEHOLDS (HFAS)



Nutrition Indicators for women and children

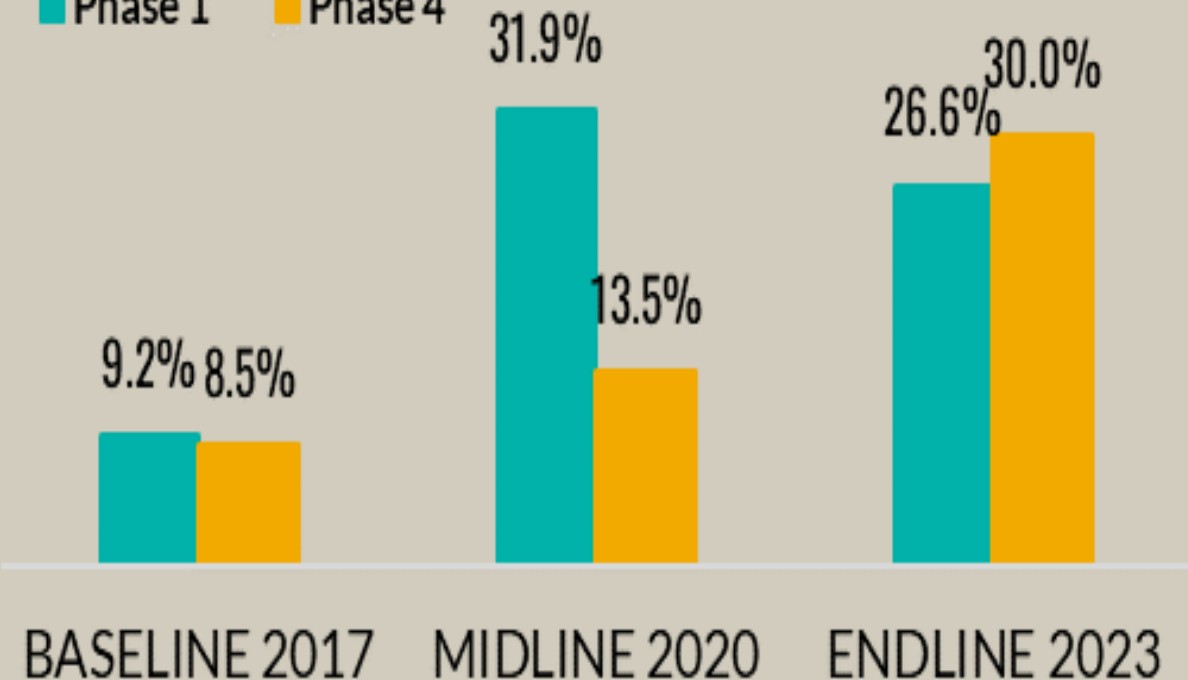
PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH WOMEN'S MINIMUM DIETARY DIVERSITY (MDD-W)

■ Phase 1



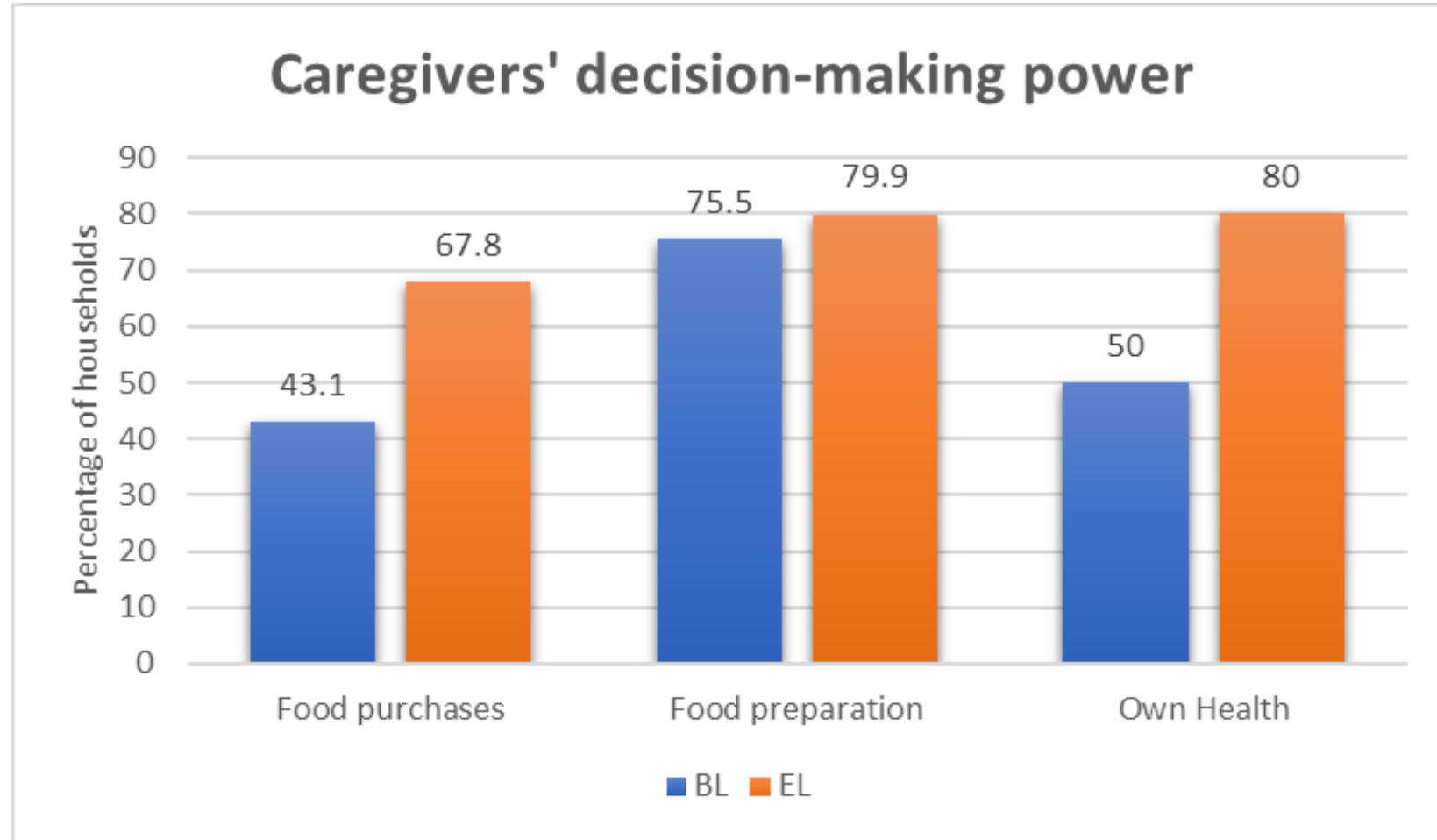
PROPORTION OF CHILDREN WITH MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE DIETS (MAD)

■ Phase 1 ■ Phase 4



Effectiveness and sustainability: Empowerment

- *Suchana effectively and sustainably empowered women with regards to making decisions on nutrition and health.*
- *Limited evidence for empowerment in other areas of life (e.g., decisions on large household purchases).*



Lessons learned

- Joint collaboration and monitoring visits with government officials strengthen relationships, foster project ownership, and enhance sustainability.
- Village Model Farms show strong potential for scale-up and inclusion in government extension programs, as highlighted in the donor's Annual Review.
- Community vaccinators are increasingly accepted due to their regular involvement in government vaccination programs.
- COVID-19 lockdowns led many male beneficiaries to depend on women's contributions in gardening, poultry, and aquaculture for food security and income.
- Suchana's best practices have been recognized and adopted as "Good Agricultural Practices" by national and sub-national government extension services.

Key Recommendations / conclusions

1

Suchana's **intensive SBCC strategy on knowledge and practices** around child nutrition and care merit wide sharing and replication / scaling

2

Homestead food production should be scaled **nationally to improve dietary diversity, food security** and household resilience

3

Off-farm IGAs, like sewing help increase income and empower **women** by providing alternative skills and financial independence

4

Addressing **gender norms and inequalities** is essential for sustainable change beyond health and nutrition

Thank you



Resilience Building

- **Suchana effectively increased households' disaster awareness and preparedness.**
 - **44%** of households said that they knew more about natural disasters.
- **Suchana increased awareness on social protection schemes (54% of households have at least 1 member with access to a SP scheme)**
- **Lack of resources to satisfy increased demand at district level.**
- **Suchana built capacity of disaster management committees to improve readiness.**

Most common shocks faced by households in the last year (%), all phases

