

Stimulating Agricultural Management and Marketing Opportunities for Women (SAMMOW) in Bangladesh

A project funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

PATHWAYS FINAL REPORT



PREPARED BY: CARE BANGLADESH

A. PROGRESS AND RESULTS:

Objective 1: To increase the productive engagement of 1445 poor women in sustainable agriculture, and contribute to their empowerment.

PROJECT DASHBOARD:

Impact and target groups, members and outreach			
	Rangpur	Nilphamary	Total
Number of unions by district	2	4	6
Number of EKATA groups	18	36	54
Number of poor women smallholder farmers (impact population) in collectives by sub impact group			
• Agricultural women farmers	115	296	411
• Agriculture women day laborers	371	609	980
• Agricultural input business	18	36	54
• Total	504	941	1445
• % of women in leadership positions	13.7%	14.7%	14.3%
Total number of other target group			
Men and Boys (e.g. spouses)	18	36	54
Elite (e.g. Union Parishad members, land owners, teachers, religious leaders)	131	252	383
Others (e.g. children at tutorial centers)	18	34	52

Out of the total targeted participants 68% are agri-women day labors, 28% are agri women farmers and 4% are agri women input business owners.

Change Lever 1 - Capacity: Improved knowledge, skills, relationships, self-confidence, and conviction of women smallholder farmers.

Capacity building of project participants: At the beginning of project need assessment is conducted for sub impact groups to assess the capacity on agricultural improved practices and business management. The needs assessment revealed that project participants needed to build their capacities in basic value chain strengthening, basic business, indigo cultivation, chili cultivation, potato cultivation, vegetable cultivation and organic manure preparation. Based on the findings participants are provided training packages described in below table;

SL	Capacity building packages	Participants
1	Basic value chain	489 (411 farmers, 61 wage labor and 17 input business owner who started yield producing after the intervention)
2	Basic business skill development & management	54 Agri input sellers
3	Indigo cultivation and management	387 women farmers (engaged with indigo cultivation)
4	Chili cultivation and management	382 women farmers (engaged with chili cultivation)
5	Potato cultivation and Management	291 women farmers (engaged with potato cultivation)
6	Vegetable cultivation and organic manure preparation	1391 women project participants from sub impact groups

(Please see details in the [Final report on FFBS Tracking Annex](#))

The project facilitated following interventions to build capacity of women farmers:

[Type text]

Demonstration plots: The project staff assisted women farmers to establish 12 demonstration plots on potato cultivation and 9 demonstration plots on chili cultivation. The purpose of demonstration plots is to demonstrate the value of new or improved crop varieties and soil management techniques. For various reasons, land users operate at various technological levels (i.e. some using conservative and traditional practices, others advanced and experimental techniques). In setting up demonstration plots with farmers, groups initially identify their production challenges and major yield constraints, such as soil and climate adaptability to certain crops. The plots were designed to represent the entire prevailing range of environmental conditions in the target areas.

Farmers Field days: The project staff assisted women farmers to farmers' field days where they displayed field exercises on chili value chain analysis as well as evaluated comparisons between the demonstration plot and the control plot. They also shared their successes and challenges with the Union Parishad chairman, agriculture officers, natural leaders, elites, school teachers and members of the community. Through these events, Farmers learned modern technologies of yield cultivation and became able to compare production between modern technologies and traditional practices.

Group Meeting: EKATA group members conducted a total 954 weekly meetings over the implementation period. On average, 79% of group members attended these meetings on a regular basis. 242 project participants from 54 EKATA groups participated in learning visits to nearby unions to exchange experiences and good practices, such as how to deal with landlords and manage chili and potato study plots.

Results:

- As a result of the capacity building initiatives, the women farmers began using modern technologies during crop cultivation and product preservation. Of the 291 women who cultivated potatoes in 2014, the majority used the following best practices and modern technologies for production and marketing as well:

Improved practices	# of Agri Women Farmers practicing recommended practices (of 291)	Percentage
Recommended depth of plough	223	76%
Recommended seeds	217	74.5%
Soil and water conservation structures (e.g. soil tests, ridges, mounds, mulches, irrigation, drainage)	201	69%
Recommended dose of fertilizer	195	67%
Appropriate water management	224	77%
Improved seed processing techniques	216	74%
Improved storage techniques	184	64%
Grading system for better prices	204	70%

(Reference: [Participatory Performance Tracker of potato producer](#)).

- For chili, of 230 women farmers who cultivated chili in 2014, 179 used improved storage techniques and 202 maintained grading systems for better prices([Reference: Participatory Performance Tracker of chili producer](#)).
- Project participants' yields and incomes have improved due to improved practice that resulted on increase of yield and due to better marketing knowledge that resulted better price for their yields. ([Reference: PPT of Chili producer](#) and [PPT Potato producer](#))
- Farmers from nearby communities became interested in and are now adopting modern technologies and improved crop varieties.

Capacity building of agriculture input sellers: The project conducted basic and refresher training in business development and management skills for 54 agriculture input sellers. The main objective of this training was to improve participants' capacities in feasibility analysis, price setting, profit and loss calculations, record keeping, customer satisfaction and overall business management. Besides the project impact group, farmers from the 54 community got easy access to fertilizer, seed and agri equipments from the input shops by the input business owners.

Results:

- Through these initiatives, the project ensured 411 poor women farmers as well as other members of the community had access to affordable agriculture inputs. The project also created job opportunities (as agro-input dealers) for 54 female project participants. The agri input seller's investment and monthly income comparison is as follows:

Table 1: Investment and monthly income status of agriculture input sellers				
	Investment (\$USD)		Monthly Income(\$USD)	
	February 2013	May 2014	February 2013	May 2014
Maximum	192.3	769.2	15.9	64.1
Minimum	6.4	12.8	1.28	2.6
Average	53.4	100.2	4.4	30.4
Standard deviation (σ)	40.3	104.6	3.1	15.67

Capacity building of EKATA¹ Volunteers: 54 EKATA volunteers were provided foundation and refresher training on facilitation, presentation and negotiation skills. Through formal and on-the-job training, they were also taught the basics of value chain approach and participatory wage matrix analysis.

Results: The EKATA volunteers assisted groups to develop their activity plan, conducted sessions to build the capacities of project participants, assisted group members to conduct participatory performance tracking, facilitated wage analysis, assisted to organize mass gatherings, assisted to develop effective relationships with service providers as well as the Union Parishad and assisted to conduct weekly sessions to provide support to the group to implement project activities.

Capacity building of pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls: In collaboration with the SETU² project, SAMMOW facilitated awareness sessions for pregnant and lactating mothers and adolescent girls on reproductive health, sanitation and hygiene, anti-natal and post-natal care, nutritional value of food, food requirements for children under the age of 5, the importance of hand washing, and cleaning the house and premise. 457 pregnant and lactating mothers and 219 girls participated in the awareness sessions.

Results:

- The project impact assessment report shows that after these awareness sessions participants started some good practices in processing food and in taking balance diet.
- The mothers and adolescent girls ages 10-16 received iron and folic acid tablets from the SETU project. [\(Source: Group's meeting minutes and training attendance sheet\)](#)

¹**Empowerment, Knowledge and Transformative Action (EKATA):** EKATA is a platform for women empowerment that is used to develop confidence, self-esteem, and skills of women to broaden their agency, relationships and structure, while improving their social position, human condition and in the creation of an enabling environment for inclusion and participation of women in development processes.

² (Social and Economic Transformation of the Ultra Poor) project of Care Bangladesh

Lessons Learnt

- The Involvement of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) representatives in facilitating sessions created strong linkages between group members and the representatives of the DAE. Farmers now have easy access to services by DAE due to this linkage and they can seek support over phone too.
- The representatives of the DAE felt more confident to provide support to a group rather than individual farmers.
- Learning-by-doing in demonstration plots was more effective than using lecture methods.
- EKATA volunteers were more responsible and accountable to the project and the group when they were provided honorariums.
- During training, adolescent girls were hesitant to share their problems while in the presence of senior women members of the community.
- Engagement and counseling of husbands and other leading persons from the family may bring good result in gender dynamics; through this strategy the family members became more supportive to pregnant and lactating women in taking appropriate food.

Change Lever 2 - Access: Increased access to productive resources, assets, markets, and appropriate and reliable services and inputs for poor women farmers.

Activities around access to equal wage: The project makes the first move to reduce the gendered wage discrimination considering the context of program sites. Poverty is high in the northern region of Bangladesh, where income is highly dependent on agricultural activity. The involvement of women as agriculture day labor is quite common in the Nilphamari and Rangpur districts. Although women work hard, their wages are substantially lower than men doing the same work. Hence, the project facilitated to reduce the gendered wage discrimination through developing relationships between women wage laborers and landlords, men day laborers, local elite, elected union representatives and other influential persons. The project facilitated participatory wage analysis, assisted impact groups to organize mass gatherings aiming equal wage and mobilized community engaging union parishad towards gendered equal wage.

Results:

The baseline information demonstrates that the average daily wage for female agriculture day labor was \$1.06 USD (with a standard deviation of \$0.175 USD), while the average wage for male agriculture day labor was \$1.875 USD (with a standard deviation of \$0.173 USD). The gendered wage differential was \$0.85 USD. In other words, male agriculture wage laborers were paid 1.76 times more per day than female agriculture day laborers for the same work. The program interventions make a notable change in this area; the pre and post intervention results are described in below tables;

**Wage differentials by gender (Treatment vs. Control Group)*

	Participants	Pre-Intervention Wage in 2011 (BDT)	Post-Intervention Wage in 2014 (BDT)	Difference (BDT)	Change
Treatment	Male Ag. Labor	150	184	34	23%
	Female Ag. Labor	85	124	39	46%
Control	Male Ag. Labor	90	127	37	41%
	Female Ag. Labor	42	69	27	64%

Reference: Impact assessment report

The program has successfully improved the wage differentials in the agriculture sector. The gap in terms of female wage has gone down from 76.5% to 48.4% in the program area. The wage gap before and after the intervention is described in below table (by percent and by gender).

**Wage differentials by percent and by gender (Treatment vs. Control Group)*

		In 2011 (BDT)	In 2014 (BDT)	Difference	Percent Change
Treatment	Gap as % of female wage	76.47	48.39	-28.08	(-) 36.72
	Gap as % of male wage	43.33	32.61	-10.72	(-) 24.75
Control	Gap as % of female wage	114.29	84.06	-30.23	(-) 26.45
	Gap as % of male wage	53.33	45.67	-7.66	(-) 14.37

Reference: Impact assessment report

The female agriculture day labor of the villages, adjacent to the program village, also benefit from the program as like as a program village. This is because the female agriculture day labors in those villages are aware of the wage rate of the nearest village and the process of forming group and thereby act in unity. As per the impact assessment report, the agriculture day labors of the villages, very much adjacent to the program village, has restricted their labor supply to the program village under oral agreement with the EKATA group of the program village and informally has taken initiatives to increase the wage rate for women agriculture day labors in these villages. Therefore, it is very much apprehended that the program has created spillover effect, almost equivalent to the program impact ([Reference: Impact assessment of the SAMMOW project on women agriculture day laborers, their household and communities](#))

Lessons Learnt

- When working on wage discrimination between women and men, and working on acknowledging women's contribution in the agriculture sector, we must consider the whole community rather than considering the direct project participants only; as this is a justice issue affecting wage labors from whole community and this social issues can be addressed by adding voice of leaders to local level advocacy
- Positive landlord participation is important for making women wage gathering events successful.
- Common interest of mass people inspires local government to be responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities.
- The involvement of male counterparts makes mass gathering events on wage issues successful as they have some influence besides the local leaders and they allowed women labors to join in the gathering.

Activities around access to financial services, credit and land: The project facilitated access to land for extreme poor women and agreements between the EKATA group and the Union Parishad (UP) to use roadside land for vegetable and indigo cultivation. With the facilitation of project 47 EKATA groups developed three years written agreements with the Union Parishad for 107 km of roadside land to cultivate vegetables and indigo. The agreement allowed farmer to access in road side land cultivation for three years and farmers will cultivate seasonal yields only without long term tree plantation. No benefit or monetary returns farmers have had to pay by the farmers. The project also created a platform to access financial services through the formation of savings groups. There are 1,060 project participants who deposit 5-10 taka per week to meet their agricultural input need and meet other emergencies. Total group savings as of September 2014 was USD \$12,736 and the average group savings was about USD \$236.

Results:

- Project participants now have increased access to productive resources and credit or financial services as illustrated below.

Access Indicators	2013	2014
Group savings	USD \$8,597	USD \$12,736

[Type text]

Cultivating Land/on agreement	85 km roadside land and 2 Km canal side land by 43 EKATA	107 km roadside land and 2 Km canal side land by 50 EKATA
-------------------------------	--	---

The project participants cultivated bitter gourd, sweet gourd, snack gourd, ridge gourd, ladyfinger and other vegetables on the roadside land. 37 participants took 568 decimals of contractual land for agriculture production on individual arrangement. 80 participants of 3 EKATA groups received loans from their savings groups and collectively leased the 107 decimals of land to cultivate chili and potato. (Source: Activity tracking sheet)

The poor women farmers accessed to credit from their savings groups with very low or no interest based on need. Participants used loans to lease land for cultivation, develop agriculture input businesses, produce crops, and treat/rear livestock.

No. of Participants	Use of savings and other income	Amount in USD\$
49	Ag. Input Business	1163
31	Crop Production	547
30	Treatment	309
5	Livestock	99
80	Leased land	1038.6

(Source: Activity tracking sheet)

Activities around access to extension services and agricultural inputs: In addition to conducting training for agriculture input sellers, the project also developed 54 input shops inside community. The project also developed strong linkages between the agro input seller and the private sector (e.g. NCVI), input dealer, wholesaler and market management committee to ensure adequate availability of quality inputs.

The project engaged representatives of the DAE (Department of Agriculture Extension) to facilitate different sessions on crop production. They were also involved in events such as farmers' field days. The project staff attended Upazila coordination meetings and ensured the participation of EKATA members in the UP coordination meetings in oriented the EKATA volunteers on the proceeding.

Result:

Women farmers from sub impact group and neighbor farmers from the 54 communities could access to quality seed, fertilizer and other agricultural equipment from these community level shops that reduced their transportation cost that they have had to pay while purchasing from distant market places. The input sellers established linkages with different farmers groups, allowing them to purchase inputs on credit as well and marketing their yields at community with market competitive price. Besides, NCVI provided 107 kilogram quality indigo seeds to EKATA members free of charge

The project participants received support for pest and disease management of crops from the representatives of the DAE. This resulted to improve the quality of crops, increased production and income that resulted reduce in production costs as well.

Activities around access to output markets: The project facilitated the process of market analysis, agricultural value chain, market survey and linkage with market actors. Based on market surveys, the project assisted producer groups to identify 12 produce collectors and to establish 9 collection points for marketing potato and chili, which are accessible to 32 EKATA groups. The project also engaged the private sector -NCVI³ to ensure marketing of Indigo leaves.

³Nijera Cottage and Village Industries (NCVI) is a workers and artisans owned social enterprise, established in 2008. The Bengal Natural Indigo Dye is being produced by NCVI in various grades and in powder and cake form. The [Type text]

Results: The project created job opportunities for 12 collectors who now started earning an average of USD \$2.75 per working day. The 411 women farmers and other members of the community are getting access to this point to sell their produce from the farm gate that they sold individually to market place before the project intervention. This initiative allowed women farmers to save transportation costs and time they would've spent marketing their product.

Neighboring farmers from the 54 communities also started selling their products at the SAMMOW-established 9 collection points, as they received fair prices and did not need to travel to distant markets.

Activities around access to post-harvest technology and innovation: The project arranged sessions on chili preservation technology for 230 women farmers and sessions on potato seed collection and preservation technology for 291 women farmers. Reference: Participatory Performance Tracker

Result: Of 291 women farmers who cultivated potato in 2014, 184 used improved storage techniques and 204 maintained grading systems for better prices (Reference: [Participatory Performance Tracker of potato producer](#)). Of 230 women farmers who cultivated chili in 2014, 179 used improved storage techniques and 202 maintained grading systems for better prices (Reference: [Participatory Performance Tracker of chili producer](#)).

Lessons Learnt

- Pre-approval from the concerned authorities is necessary to avoid local conflict for using local resources like roadside land.
- Collaborative effort makes the government body more responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities
- Existence of strong savings mechanisms is a great opportunity for a group to invest in agriculture. It also enhances solidarity among women to trigger collective action.

Change Lever 3 - Productivity: Improvements in yield and income through adoption of sustainable and intensified agriculture and value addition.

Key Activities

As indicated above, the project promotes modern production practices for chili and potato cultivation, homestead vegetable cultivation, indigo cultivation and organic manure preparation.

The project conducted vegetable value chain analysis in 6 targeted Unions in October 2013. Most of the farmers was cultivating vegetable to meet their consumption need with a poor volume for marketing though there was opportunity to produce more using modern technologies and by ensuring optimal use of land. They were not aware on different agricultural extension service options too. Besides, to inform them on different market options had been another objective for this analysis. On different agricultural extension service options too. Besides, to inform them on different market options had been another objective for this analysis.

Results:

Chili Cultivation:

In 2013, 341 women farmers cultivated chili on 1825.5 decimals of land in its winter and summer season. In 2014, 230 women farmers cultivated chili in the summer season and most followed modern technologies around fertilizer basal dose, adopting improved variety instead of any local variety, seed germination test, proper timing of plantation, harvesting and multilayer fertilizer use and used improved storage techniques and maintained a grading system for better prices. The yield per decimal of land has increased by 70.6% and total revenue generated has more than tripled. The average income per woman farmer through chili cultivation has increased by 424 %.

quality of the dye of NCVI popular as “Living Blue” is unmatched in the subcontinent. Historically Bengal Indigo has been the most valued and prized indigo amongst the dyer community the world over
[Type text]

Table 2: Yield and income through chili cultivation.		
	Year: 2013	Year: 2014⁴
Total land size (decimals)	1825.5	1571
Total production (MT)	30.700	45.481
Total earning (\$USD)	\$5089	16204
Average production / decimal land (MT)	.017	.029
Average earning / women farmer (\$USD)	14.92	78.28

(Source: PPT- Chilli)

Homestead vegetable cultivation:

The Activity Tracking Sheet shows that 1343 project participants on average produced 21.3 kg of vegetables per month and sold 6.24 kg vegetables per month. Therefore, each household kept an average of 16.06 Kg vegetable per month from their production, which may equate to significant savings as well as improved nutrition. Average income per farmer from vegetable production doubled.

Table 3: Yield and income through vegetable cultivation and situation analysis		
	Baseline	2014
# of participants involved	297	1343
Technology used	Indigenous	Modern technology
Space use	Homestead land	Homestead/road side land
Approach of cultivation	Individual	Individual or collective
Cultivated varieties	6	12
Marketing channels	Neighboring and local informal markets	Local/Wholesale markets through collection points
Production / women farmer / month (Kg)	11	21.3
Monthly income / farmer (USD)	\$1.13	\$2.46

Source - Activity Tracking Sheet (Internal monitoring tools)

Indigo Cultivation:

Through the private sector, Nijera Cottage and Village Industries (NCVI) engagement, the project introduced indigo cultivation in 18 EKATA groups in the Rangpur sadar upazila. As the project participants were not experienced in indigo cultivation, NCVI provided training on indigo production and management. They also provided follow up visits during indigo cultivation and supported project participants to increase production. NCVI provided 107 kilogram quality indigo seeds to EKATA members free of charge and purchased total indigo seeds at reasonable prices.

Table 4: Yield and income through Indigo cultivation		
	Year - 2013	Year - 2014
# of women farmers who planted Indigo	328	386
Total road side land used (Km)	52	44
Total production (MT)	29.23	51.46
Average production / KM road side (MT)	.56	1.17
Total earning (USD)	1873.7	3958.5
Average earning / women farmer (USD)	5.71	10.25

(Source: Activity tracking sheet)

Potato cultivation:

At baseline, 129 women farmers cultivated potato on 790 decimals of land using indigenous technologies due to their lack of technical knowledge and access to services. After value chain analysis training, 291

women farmers took up potato cultivation in 2014, allocating significantly more land (4143 decimals) to this crop. Average income per farmer from potato production increased from \$14.12 to \$72.13.

Table 5: Yield and income through potato cultivation.		
	Baseline	Year: 2014
Total land size (decimals)	781	4143
Total production (MT)	20.30	170.95
Total earning (\$USD)	1821.5	16087
Average production (MT) / decimal land	.026	.041
Average earning / women farmer (USD)	\$14.12	\$72.13

(Source: PPT - Potato)

Organic manure production:

The project provided training to 1391 project participants on organic manure production. None of these participants was engaged with manure production before they were involved in the project. The status of production and income through organic manure during the project period is given below:

Table 6: Yield and income through organic manure production.		
	(January-December 2013)	(January-September 2014)
# of participants involved in organic manure production	1400	1411
# of participants harvested organic manure	1107	934
Total production (MT)	1439.1	1399.6
Average production / farmer (MT)	1.3	1.5
Total earning (\$USD)	11845	13688
Average earning / women farmer (\$USD)	10.7	14.65

Lessons Learnt

A common goal and the win-win relationship help any contract to be progressed smoothly. With support from the program, farmers groups and NCVI established a contract for Indigo cultivation that considers benefit for both parties. With this agreement, farmers get a regular market and NCVI gets the quality and a stable market that they needs for smooth business operation

Change Lever 4 - Household Influence: Increased poor women farmer contributions to and influence over household income and decision-making.

Household influence has been at the center of most of the project activates. Besides, the project went through different gendered awareness sessions and introduces different tools to make those session more effective. The decision making pile short, access control analysis tool, women's mobility mapping and the twenty four hour clock analysis tools are some major of them that project introduced to make address some of the gender barriers. Male counterparts from the households had been invited to those sessions so that both of men and women become aware on the gender dynamics.

The project built strong group cohesion and fostered community mobilization around women empowerment. The project also targeted 100% women participants and facilitated to increase their income by engaging them at different tires of value chain and promoting their business as well. The project build capacity of these women participants so that they are more able to influence and household decision making.

Result:

[Type text]

- The project is successful in various indicators such as empowering women. The qualitative findings from the project impact evaluation reports that the women are now more vocal than earlier and they argue that although every decision of the household is made jointly, they now can play major role especially in financial decision. The program yielded almost a 100 percent spillover effect to its nearest village specially in terms of reducing gendered wage differential.
- Men’s views regarding women’s work have positively changed due to interventions that resulted improved practices by women in agriculture and gender awareness sessions that changed men's view towards gender role. The impact assessment report shows that before the program, the male would take major decisions of the households, but now, women can take some household level decisions side by side of male to some extent. However, most of the women told that they now play important role in the household like their male counterpart.
Reference: [Impact assessment of the project on women agriculture day laborers, their household and communities](#)
- Higher incomes due to higher wage rates induced women from sub impact group to invest in livestock assets such as cow rearing, goat rearing and poultry rearing.

Table: Asset holding status in program and control households (2014)

Asset	Frequency		Percentage		
	Control	Program	Control	Program Follow-up	Program Baseline
Cow/buffalo	21	52	48.84	61.90	17.2
Goat/sheep	1	33	2.33	39.29	16.3
Hen/duck	6	43	13.95	51.19	41.4
Pick-up/van/rickshaw	0	10	0.00	15.47	27.1
N	43	84	100.00	100.00	
Source: Project Impact Assessment Report					

As this is due to reducing gendered wage gap and due to increase in income of women farmers from agriculture thus it might be resulting in the increase of women's asset ownership as well as in household decision making.

Lessons Learnt

- Findings from the household decision making pile sort exercise⁵ reveals that counterpart’s participation creates a space for women to contribute to household income and decision-making.
- Informal savings groups help participants reduce their dependence on credit.

Change Lever 5 - Enabling Environment: More positive and enabling attitudes, behaviors, social norms, policies, and institutions. The project facilitated household decision-making dialogues in 54 EKATA groups. In total, 882 male members of participants’ households participated in this exercise along with 1103 project participants.

An effective linkage has been established between the local government and the EKATA groups. Project participants have been facilitated to attend UP coordination meetings and EKATA members helped local government institutions to select beneficiaries for the safety net program. The project participants partake in the para development committee, school committee and different standing committees of the UP so that they are more able to influence in some decisions taken by these bodies. Besides, CARE

⁵ A gendered awareness tool on household decision making and to analysis the context or pattern of decision making in the community
[Type text]

organized a meeting between day labors, male and female, and landlords in the specific areas and throw the question of justice in paying the wage. The project involved DAE and women welfare representatives during training, women farmers' field days, wage gathering, and demonstration plots.

Results:

- Continuous counseling resulted in motivating landlords to understand the issue of wage discrimination and that women should be paid equal to that of men and the wage differentiation has to be reduced. The impact assessment report shows that, more than 90 percent landlords accepted the proposed wage and signed in an agreement that they will not pay as wage below that proposed threshold.
- The participants now have better access to Govt. line departments and to local government bodies to seek support for their agri-production and for other issues such as in using road side land or other local resources. The UP developed a poverty reduction plan in collaboration with the EKATA participants and the Natural leader organization, which they review every six months.
- During the project exit workshops, DAE committed to include the EKATA group members in their agricultural development projects. EKATA group members are now getting consultation over phone on different agricultural issues from DAE that was absent before the interventions

Lessons Learnt

- Joint planning with male family members contributes to women empowerment as they have great influence in the recognition of women's work
- Coordinated and collaborated efforts of mass people make the UP more responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities.

CHALLENGES AND RISKS:

- During the potato harvest period in 2014, public transportation was hindered due to political unrest in the country. The production and price of potatoes fell which affected the incomes of women farmers. Convincing participants to establish demonstration plots was challenging without cost sharing. The project did share some cost while the demo plot owner has taken responsibility to offer access to the plots for other peer farmers and sharing lessons with them during the field days. In 2014, poor indigo seed germination due to heavy drought hampered indigo cultivation, causing project participants to plant indigo again. The project has aware farmer on such shocks during the time so they are better prepared. Seed storage to tackle such shocks was an example. The Company that buys indigo from farmers has also been aware of the potential crisis of seeds so they have taken measures to offer seeds to farmers in case they are available at the household.
- Sustaining some of the collection points is a challenge due to short duration crops and limited production. The project has facilitated more interactions between farmers and local buyers to solve the marketing issue with proper planning on production, harvesting and quality information. At the initial stage of project interventions, a few of women chili farmers did not adopt the recommended dose of fertilizer (mixed lime, chemical fertilizer) in chili cultivation as they were habituated with traditional cultivation methods. Though this makes some damages in their yield but soon after the establishment of demo-plots and after having exposures to other farmers' fields they begun to use recommended dose and got an increase in chili production. Some landowners were rigid to increase the wage rates of women laborers and tried to influence other landlords. The agri day laborers group in this case has applied peer pressure as the respective land owners were not able to get any laborers from the area with low wage rates. The laborers realized this is the best solidarity example they have to continue to create in different seasons to held the landowners accountable to pay appropriate wages for all laborers both men and women. Initially, the roadside land owners and members of the community resisted to cultivate vegetables and indigo on road side land. Participation of women farmers in group meetings and capacity building initiatives during the harvesting period was a challenge.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

Monitoring and Evaluation	
Monitoring and evaluation activities carried out during the project period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted beneficiary surveys, developed participants' profiles with unique ID numbers • Conducted a baseline survey of the project • Conducted activity progress monitoring of individual participants every month • Conducted group performance assessments (three times during the project period) • Conducted participatory performance tracking of potato and chili producers. • Documented case studies and assessed performance of demonstration plots. • Conducted baseline assessment of women day labor wages. • Conducted impact assessment of the SAMMOW project on women agriculture day labor, their households and their communities. • Conducted baseline and end line surveys of agricultural input sellers. • Developed quarterly, semiannual, annual and final reports.
Monitoring tools developed and used for activity/output tracking and outcome monitoring.	<p><u>Tools for output tracking:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity tracking sheet (ATS) - Monthly production, sale, consumption, income, savings and credit tracking sheet. • Group performance assessment tools <p><u>Tools for outcome monitoring.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Participatory Performance Tracker. • Individual Participatory Performance Tracker: • Agricultural input seller's progress assessment sheet.
Review or reflection meetings held	<p>The project organized staff meetings every month to share lessons, achievements, and challenges faced during implementation and to develop a strategy for the project's future. The following issues have been identified for accelerating project implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire and explain wage discrimination between men and women labor to landowners. • Work in value chain approaches to identify agriculture products that have opportunities for greater engagement and economic empowerment of women. • Increase agro-input shop owners' skills and knowledge and link them to dealers • Encourage group members to utilize their group savings for agriculture production and other income generating activities. • Develop strategies to cultivate indigo even during heavy drought periods. • Encourage Pathways SAMMOW participants to utilize local resources (i.e. homestead space, roadside land and canal side land). • Efficiently utilized FFBS tools.
Program Management	
Planning meetings organized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized periodic planning meeting with all staff. • Annual review meeting with Care global Pathways team • Revised the work plan and budget for no cost extension. • Developed a plan with a consultant for facilitating basic business skills development training and the wage impact study. • Developed an exit strategy with the participation of Pathways SAMMOW staff that directs the project engaging private sector partners, government line departments and local government bodies with the sub impact groups so that agricultural input and services are available even though the program is closed.