



## Improving Socio Economic Conditions of Paddy Farmers: Sri Lanka 2012/13

Sri Lanka's "Improving socio-economic conditions of paddy farmers in east Sri Lanka" project was implemented from 2009 to 2013 in partnership with three organisations – ESCO, SWOAD and Sarvodaya - which aimed to contribute to conflict mitigation and recovery in the north and east districts of Sri Lanka. Specific project activities included renovation of large-scale infrastructure, including rehabilitation of dams and irrigation schemes. This was supported by interventions to positively affect the paddy value-chain, such as establishing producer organisations, improving access to value-added processing (such as milling or seed-grading), promotion of organic fertilisers and crop insurance. Together with agricultural support, associated interventions related to improving access to services which aim to reduce gender-based violence, and interventions aiming to improve hygiene practice, were also implemented. This effectiveness review particularly covers the results related to the first outcome, which is linked to the direct livelihood and infrastructure support provided to 33 communities in Ampara and Batticaloa districts.

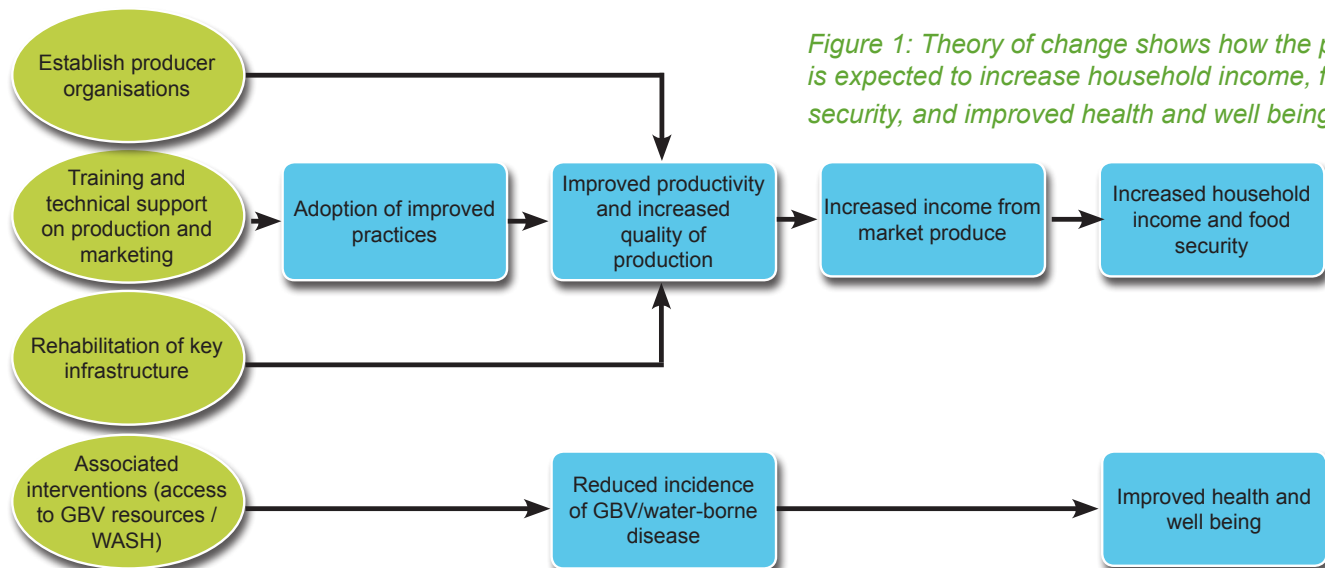


Figure 1: Theory of change shows how the project is expected to increase household income, food security, and improved health and well being

## Evaluation Method

In March 2013, with the support of an external consultant, a household survey was administered to 896 households from the two districts – 410 from households targeted by the project and 486 from appropriate comparison households. In order to compare 'like with like', statistical analysis of the resulting data was undertaken using propensity score matching (PSM) and multivariable regression (MVR) to control for observable baseline differences between the intervention and comparison households.

The outcomes assessed included those related to the adoption of improved agricultural practices, production and sales of agricultural products, household income and wealth status, access to legal services and measures of household hygiene practice.

*Photo credit: Abir Abdullah/Oxfam*

**Rating key:** ● - Evidence supporting large impact; ● - Evidence supporting more modest impact; ● - Evidence of large impact, but only for specific sub-groups/measures; ● - Evidence of modest impact, but only for specific sub-groups/measures; ● - No evidence of impact

## Results

The survey data provided evidence that supported households have, on average, adopted improved production techniques at greater rates than the comparison households, and during 2012/13 produced and sold larger quantities of paddy and other crops than comparison households. This increase in sales appears to have led to a significant increase in overall household income. Household income is estimated to be approximately eight to 10 per cent higher than it would have been without the project; the boost to income among supported households in Batticaloa is slightly greater. Other related measures, such as the analysis of changes in household asset ownership, make it apparent that there is more robust evidence that the project has successfully affected household income and wealth among supported households in Batticaloa district. In terms of food security, there is evidence that the project has successfully affected the availability of rice among supported households in Ampara district. While there is no evidence of an increase in the security of rice availability in Batticaloa, there is evidence that supported households have a more diverse food and crop base than those in Ampara.

Outcome	Rating	Commentary
Outcome 1 – Adoption of improved production techniques	●	Rates of adoption of improved production techniques were generally higher among the project participants than among comparison households.
Outcome 2 – Revenue generated from paddy cultivation activities	●	Considerably greater production and sales of paddy in 2012/13 by project participants compared to comparison households, resulting in significantly greater revenue being generated by the average participant household.
Outcome 3 – Improved household income	●	Household income is estimated to be approximately eight to 10 per cent higher than it would have been without the project; the boost to income among supported households in Batticaloa is slightly greater.
Outcome 4 – Increased food diversity and security	●	Evidence of a significant increase in food diversity in Batticaloa, but no increase in rice availability. Evidence of a marginal increase in rice availability in Ampara, but no changes in food diversity.
Outcome 5 – Increased asset wealth	●	Evidence of a significant increase in asset ownership since 2008 among the supported households in Batticaloa. No corresponding increase among supported households in Ampara district.
Outcome 6 – Increased awareness of how to access legal services	●	Project participants exhibit significantly greater awareness of how to access services for victims of gender-based violence, as well as legal/referral services related to land and property rights.
Outcome 7 – Improved household hygiene behaviour	●	Evidence of significant increases in the proportion of supported households in Batticaloa treating their drinking water, and reporting improved hand-washing behaviour.

## Going forward

Oxfam in Sri Lanka will be reviewing this project in a final evaluation later in 2013, particularly following up on some of the issues raised by this effectiveness review. Additionally, plans are established to take forward the learning and best-practice highlighted in this review in order to develop an advocacy strategy with district and national government.