

Videos help improve women's lives

IMPACT
STUDY

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Introduction

It is easier for men to access information than it is for women. This study asked if farmer-to-farmer videos could help overcome this gender bias, and what women would do with new knowledge.

The study

In Bangladesh, videos on rice seed were filmed with farmers and then shown in many villages. Researchers interviewed 140 randomly selected women in 28 video villages and 40 women in four control villages in north-west Bangladesh, about changes in their lives over the past five years. The women had watched the videos six times on average.

The women who watched the videos conducted more experiments, adopted more innovations, helped to innovate and found ways to sell seed and to bargain for better prices. The women reduced their seed rate by almost half (i.e. lowering their production costs). The seed they produced was brighter, healthier and easier to sell. There were no changes in the control villages.

Rice yields increased by 15%, which improved the women's social and economic status. Over 20% of the households attained rice self-sufficiency, with no changes in control villages. 24% more of the video households became surplus producers. They sold more rice, seedlings and paddy. The women's husbands began consulting them more often about rice seed and on spending household income. Households that owned their own land (i.e. were not sharecroppers), and those who had help from household members were more likely to increase their income. Women who watched the videos many times were able to marshal more support and increase their income more. They also more confidently sought and shared new knowledge with service providers and others in the community.

Conclusion

If they had land and labour, women who watched the videos were able to increase their income, their social standing, and their ability to innovate. Knowledge is power (but so is land).



Bangladeshi women who saw the videos produced healthier seed, earned more, and were more confident seeking and sharing new information



Increased rice stocks in a home in video village of Hosnabad, NW Bangladesh

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TO CITE THE ARTICLE:

Chowdhury, A.H., P. Van Mele & M. Hauser 2011 Contribution of farmer-to-farmer video to capital assets building: Evidence from Bangladesh. *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture* 35(4): 408–435.



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Summary and
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