People's Action for National Integration - PANI

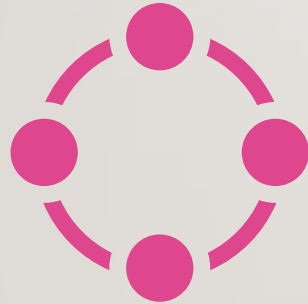PHICUS
AMPLIFY SOCIAL IMPACT
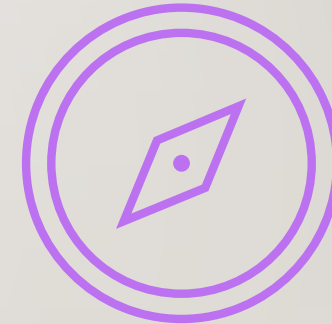
PROCESS STRENGTHS AND GAPS

PROGRAM SWERA

MAY 2020
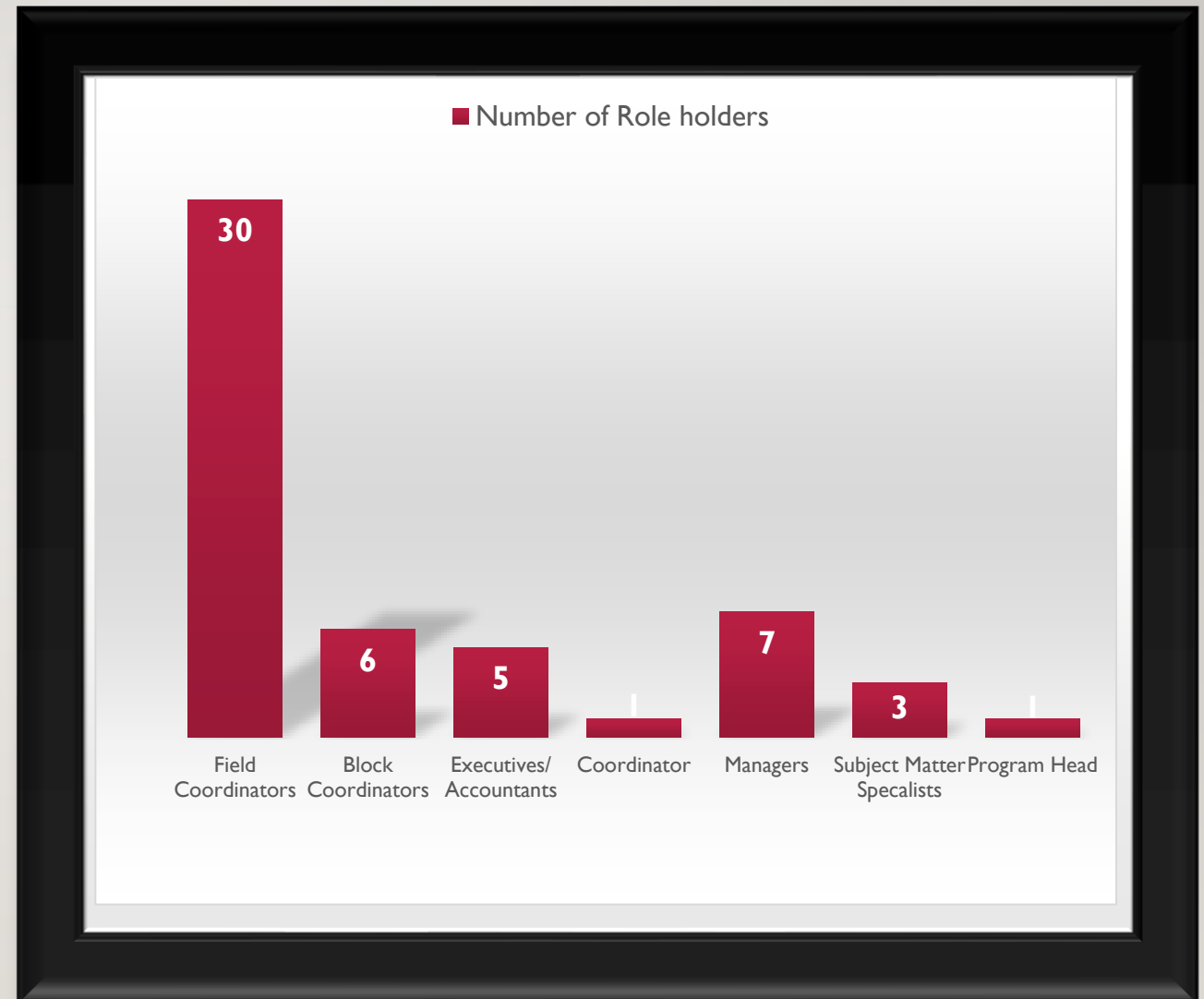
IN THIS PRESENTATION

Details of Data Gathering Process

Program, People, Processes – What is working and Recommendations from Phicus

RESPONDENTS FOR THE DATA GATHERING PROCESS

- A total of 53 people were interviewed for this exercise

- 101 phone conversations for all roles up to the Block Coordinator

- Focus group discussions with Field Coordinators of each Block

- Review of existing job descriptions and profiles of participants

■ Number of Role holders

Field Coordinators	Block Coordinators	Executives/ Accountants	Coordinator	Managers	Subject Matter Specalists	Program Head
30	6	5	1	7	3	1

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DATA GATHERING FRAMEWORK

ME (drivers, motivators, aspirations)

Me and my team

Me in the ecosystem/ community

My role
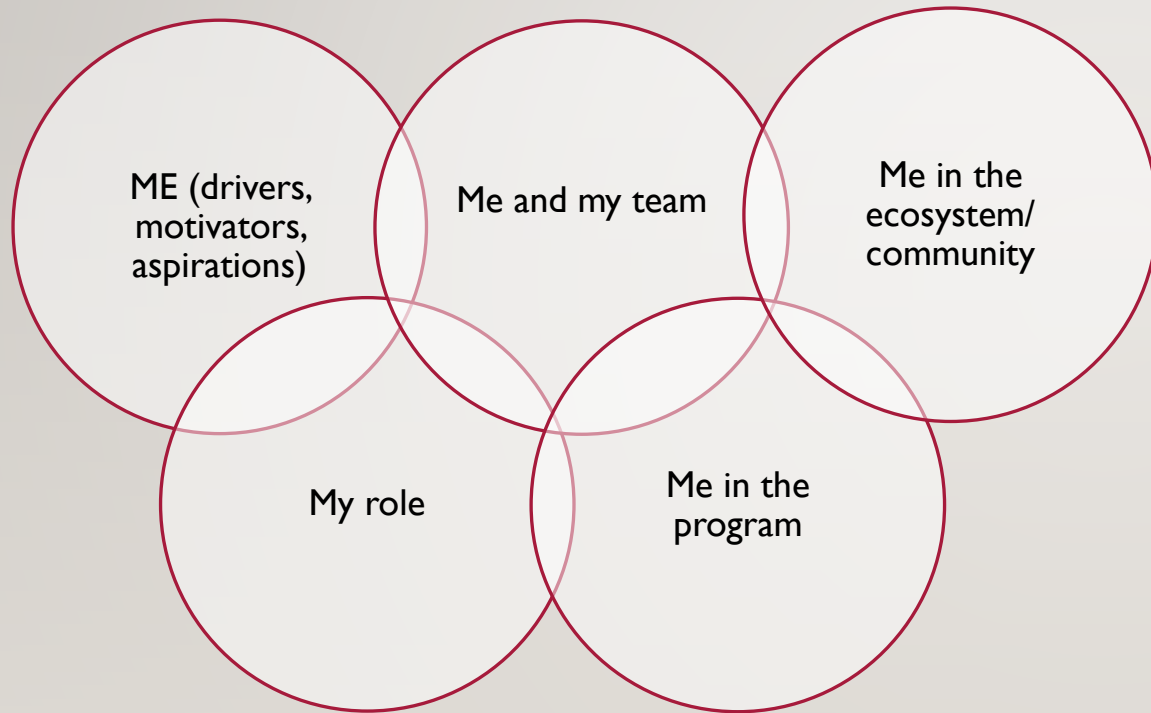
Me in the program

- Their background and journey so far

- Their role; contribution towards the program; strengths and areas of improvement

- Their role transforming over the next 4-5 years

- Experiences, knowledge and skills they need to build

- Aspirations, motivation and drivers that inspires them

- Critical success factors that will help the program achieve its goals

- The program's culture and unique aspects that enable the role holders

- Their dream for the program and the organization

Please note: The data gathering tool was created using Design Thinking and Appreciative Inquiry concepts

WHAT IS WORKING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

THE 3PS

- The findings from the data gathering exercise are divided into 3 sections:

  - Program

  - People and

  - Processes

- For each of the sections, there are strengths and areas of improvement highlighted

- There are recommendations provided for each of the sections

PROGRAM

VISION AND GOALS OF PROGRAM SWERA

- The vision is very clearly articulated by the leaders of the program team

- Milestones and goal posts are defined for the short term and the long term

- EVERYONE in the program team, including Field Coordinators understand the vision. Some have more clarity than the others, but it is a great start

- Every vertical is clear about 'what' they need to contribute towards the vision. In some cases the 'how' is well defined and in some it needs to be defined further

PROGRAM DESIGN

- Design of the program is well thought through – MSK; CRPs; FRC; Video dissemination; access to pico projectors; Multi-crop strategy; foresight on resolving water issues – all critical and unique aspects of the program

- Bringing on board all women CRPs is a huge strength

- Working in an aspirational district like Balrampur is going to make an impact on the overall development of the state

- Extremely involved, connected and supportive funders who provide timely, valuable inputs
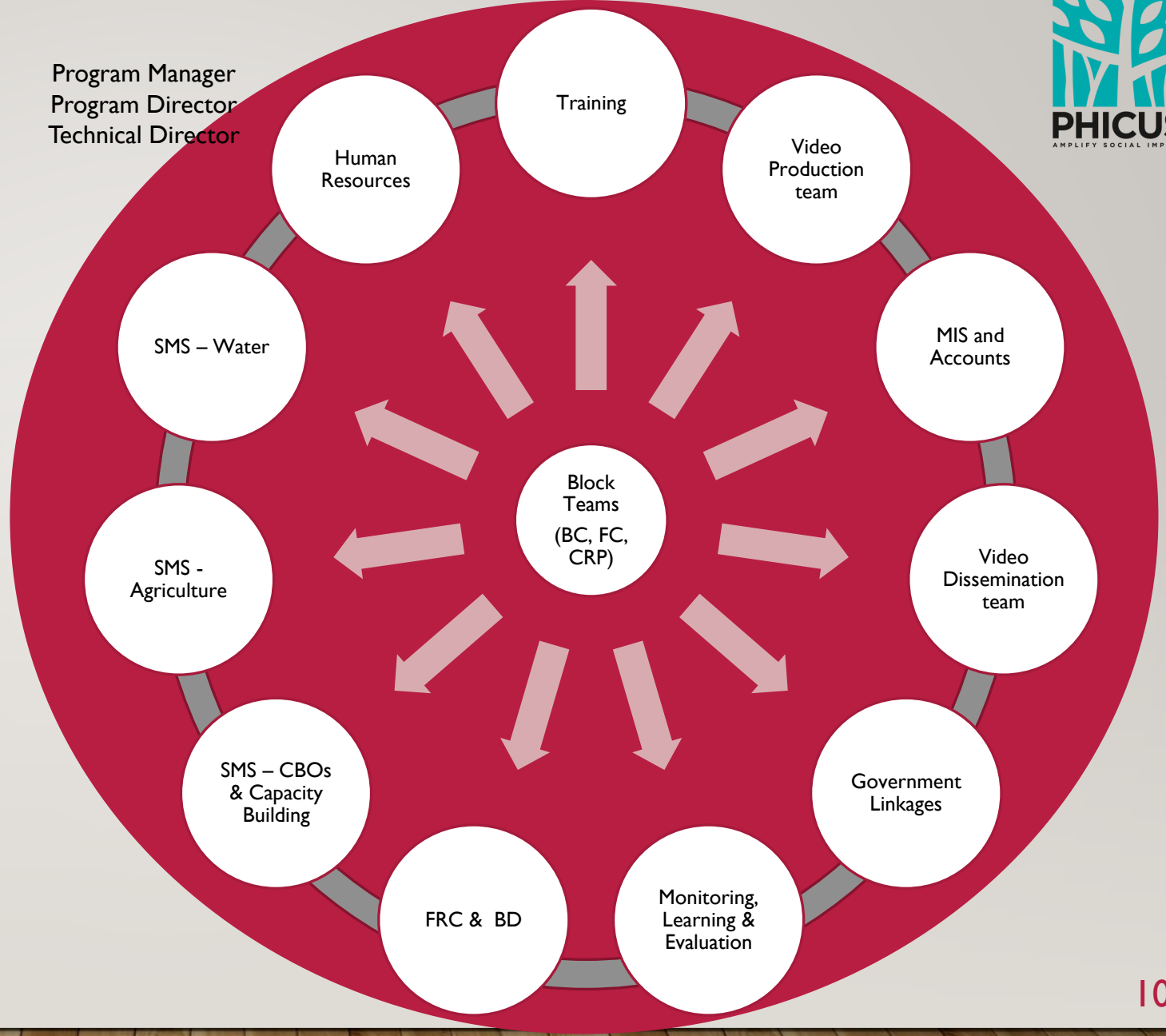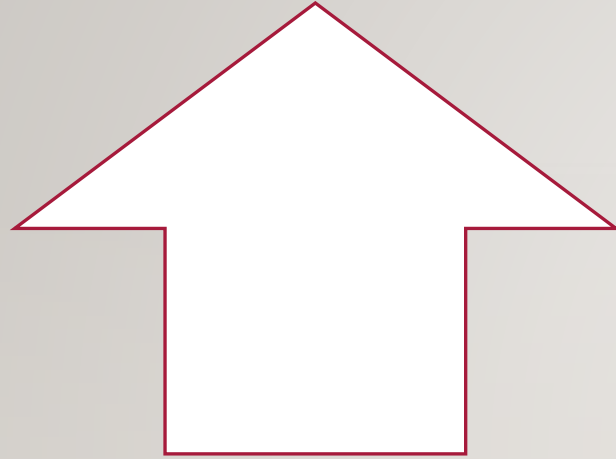
PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- The Block teams are at the heart of the structure and everything else is structured around them
- 12 different verticals are set up to help, support, build capacity of the block teams
- The verticals are also expected to interact with each other, learn and support each other to deliver program goals
- The core management team provides direction and reviews progress periodically

Program Manager
Program Director
Technical Director

Training

Video Production team

Human Resources

MIS and Accounts

SMS – Water

Block Teams (BC, FC, CRP)

Video Dissemination team

SMS - Agriculture

Government Linkages

SMS – CBOs & Capacity Building

Monitoring, Learning & Evaluation

FRC & BD

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PROGRAM STRUCTURE

What is working?

- Experts for various aspects of the program

- Capacity building of the team on various aspects (water, agri, govt. schemes etc.)

- Immediate help and support available for the block team (on call support as well)

- Visits and meetings between district and block teams create a sense of purpose and bonding
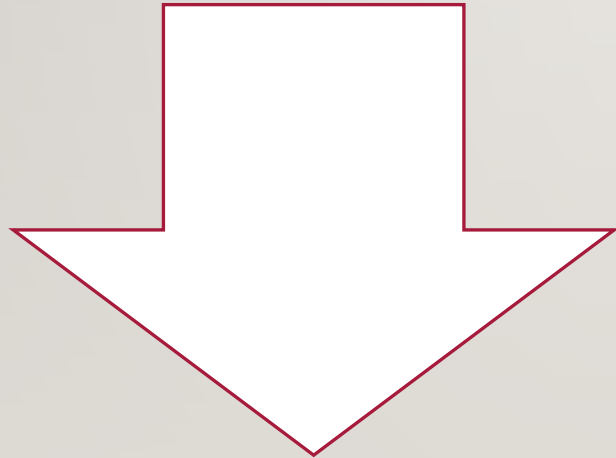
What is not working?

- There is a crisscross of communication leading to chaos and confusion

- Too many people to coordinate with and causes confusion/ frustration

- Lots of pressure on the Block team to turn around documentation or reports required by multiple verticals

- Some instances of contradictory information from different people for the same issue
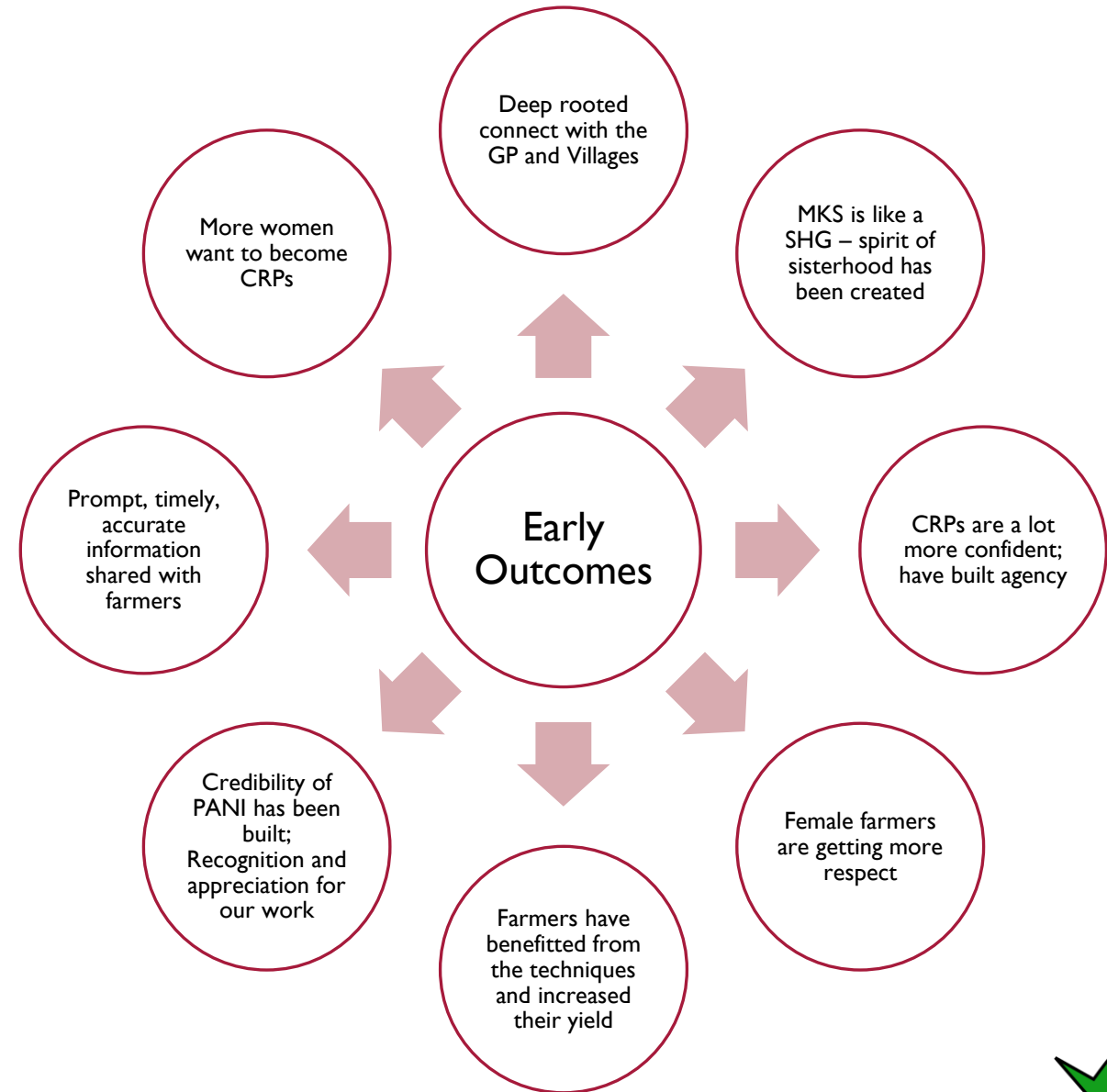
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EARLY OUTCOMES ON THE FIELD

It has been 1 year (or less in a few blocks) that Program Swera has been implemented.

A lot of positive changes are already visible at the field level and have been articulated by the program staff

These early results have inspired confidence amongst the program team (block teams in particular)

Early Outcomes

- Deep rooted connect with the GP and Villages
- MKS is like a SHG – spirit of sisterhood has been created
- CRPs are a lot more confident; have built agency
- Female farmers are getting more respect
- Farmers have benefitted from the techniques and increased their yield
- Credibility of PANI has been built; Recognition and appreciation for our work
- Prompt, timely, accurate information shared with farmers
- More women want to become CRPs

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHICUS

- It maybe time to induct the CRPs into the vision and create a 'shared vision'
- Continuously reinforce vision and long-term goals in all events, meetings with the team
- Align new team members to the program vision and goals faster, so their learning curve is shorter
- Create a simple video that outlines the 'grand vision' and demonstrates 'what good looks like.' Use it to share during orientation/ induction for CRPs and others
- Create a visual dashboard that can capture consolidated data of all blocks (including stories from the field/CRPs). This dashboard can have the program goals vs current achievement which gets updated frequently. This can be accessible on their phone or a picture can be sent on WhatsApp regularly
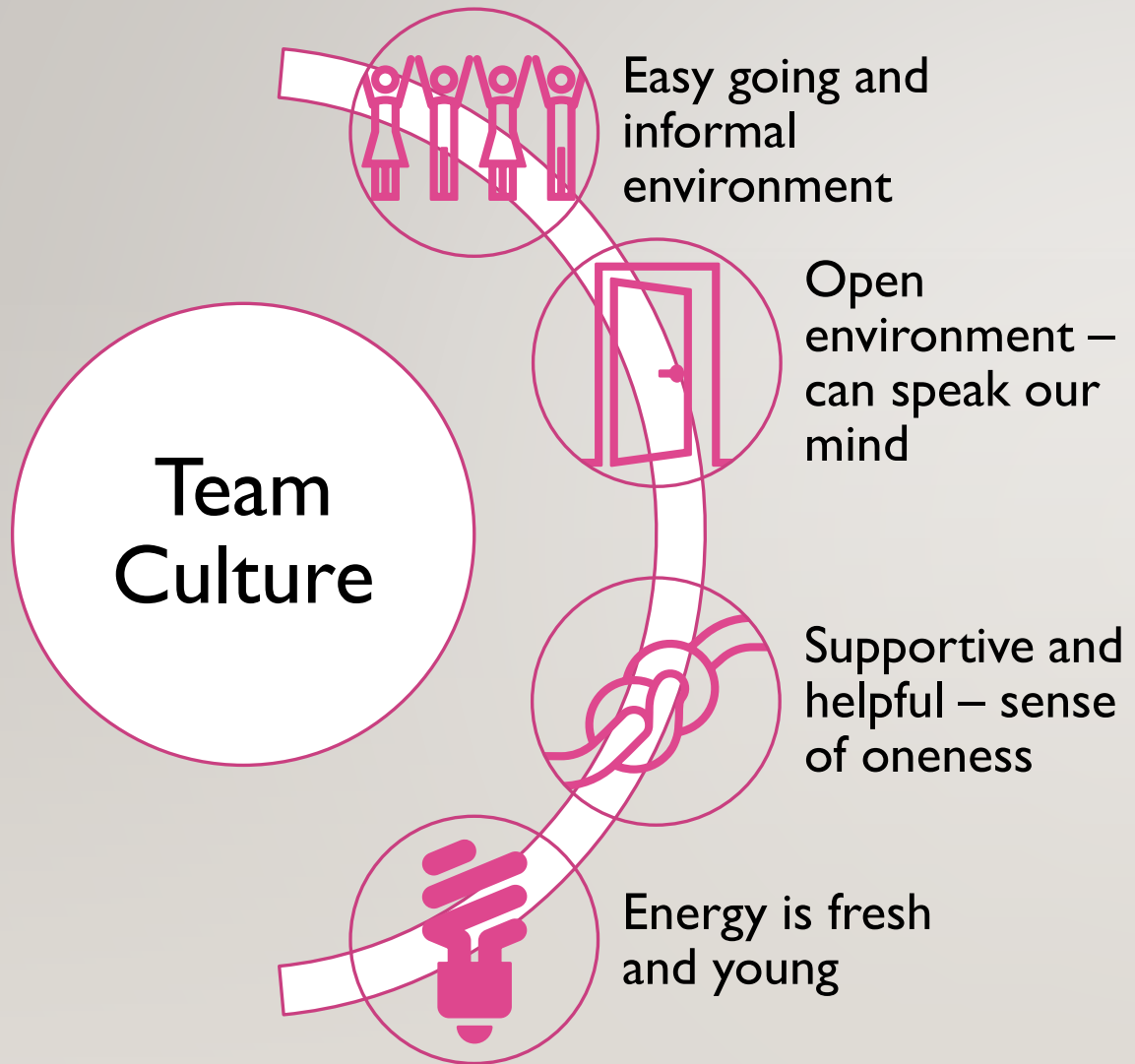
Vision and Goals

- The structure is a top-heavy structure with a lot of managers involved in providing support
- At this point of time, there is a need for 'all hands on the deck', which may justify all these roles
- As the program matures, it may get difficult to keep some parts of the district team engaged and fully occupied
- As the program matures, think of all the additional activities that will become priority. Identify Managers who can contribute towards those activities. Upskill them to manage those activities as well
- Set expectations with Managers that they profiles may see some changes in the medium term

Program Structure

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PEOPLE

TEAM CULTURE ACROSS PROGRAM SWERA

Team Culture

Easy going and informal environment

Open environment – can speak our mind

Supportive and helpful – sense of oneness

Energy is fresh and young

- Great team and experts in their own field
- The team feels appreciated as they have an opportunity to speak their mind, learn from each other
- The opportunities created to bring teams together to know each other and build rapport is important and will help in team building
- The people who have been in the program for a long time feel more connected to each other. People who have joined over the last 6 months, don't yet feel a part of the team

CORE MANAGEMENT TEAM/ LEADERSHIP

- Provide enough support and direction for the team

- Approachable and available when needed

- Highly inspirational and provide motivation to work harder

- Treat everyone equally, irrespective of gender, role, socio economic positioning
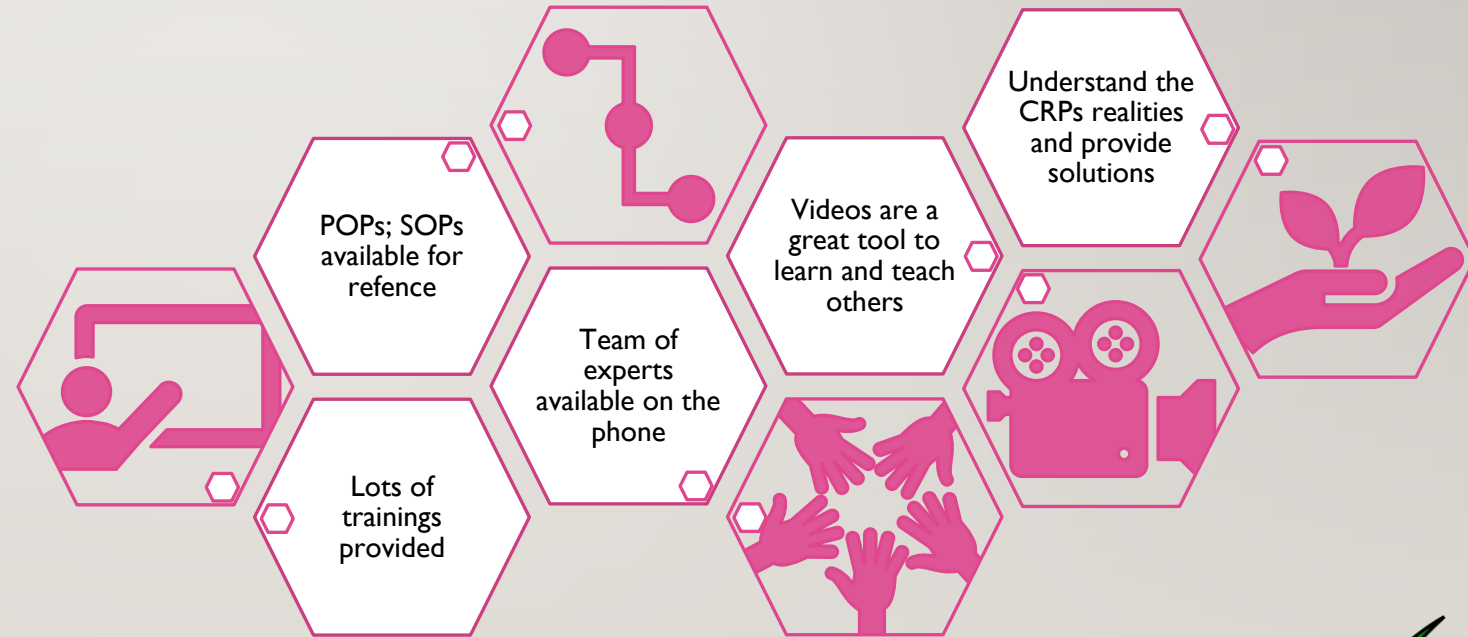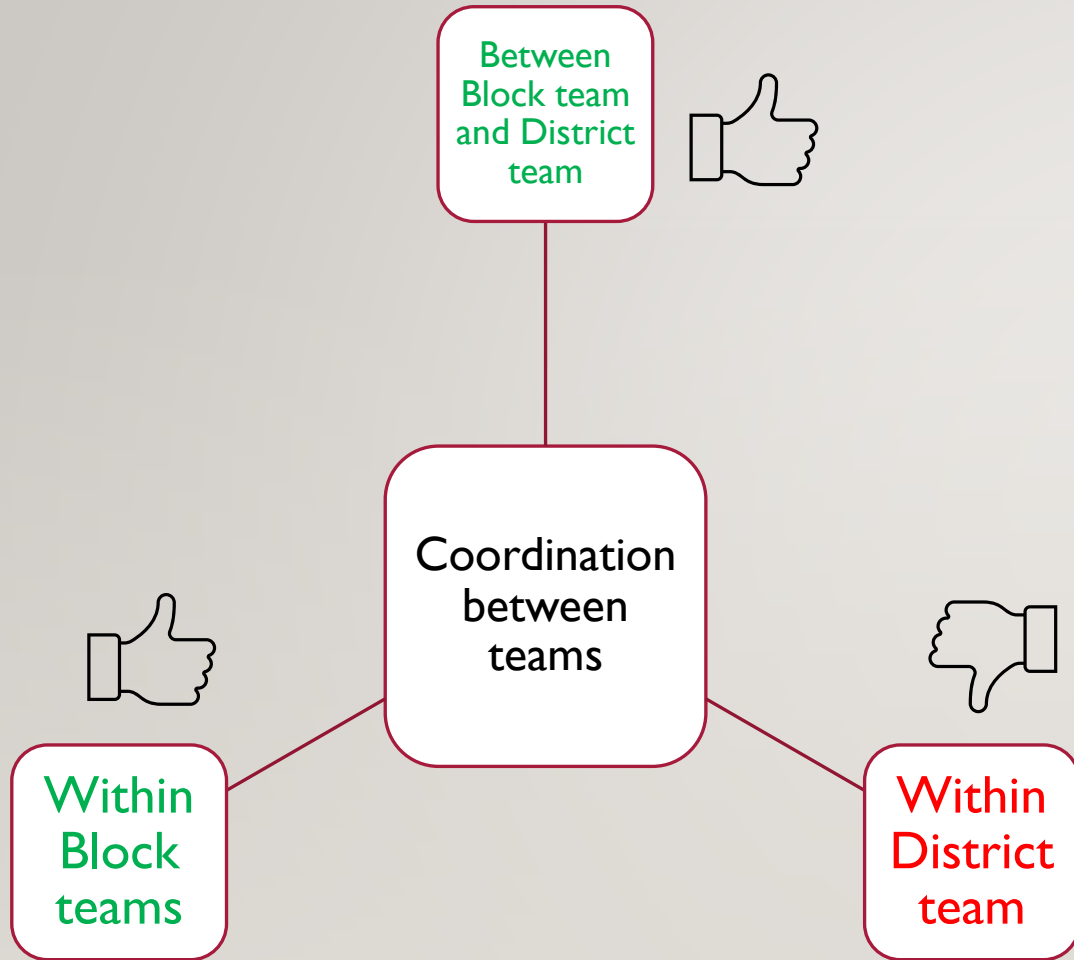
SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE BLOCK TEAMS

- If someone is not performing well, the whole team is invested in handholding and supporting the individual
- Lots of opportunities are provided for people to learn and contribute
- The district team is always trying to see how to make the block team's work easier

The District team has lived up to its expectations of providing technical support and handholding the block teams in a proactive, responsive manner.

POPs; SOPs available for refence

Lots of trainings provided

Team of experts available on the phone

Videos are a great tool to learn and teach others

Understand the CRPs realities and provide solutions

COORDINATION BETWEEN TEAMS

Between Block team and District team 👍

Coordination between teams

Within Block teams 👍

Within District team 👎

- There seems to be good coordination among the Block teams. Some teams are more connected than the other, which maybe evident in their performance
- Some block teams are a little behind because of some discontinuity due of FCs or BCs transition
- The coordination between the District team and the Block teams are also good. Block teams are highly appreciative of the timely support and handholding they receive
- The coordination between verticals in the district team needs some additional focus and attention. Events like Manthan, which create an environment for open conversations are helping to some extent

BUILDING A TEAM – AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

- The teams are going through a natural transition that any new team goes through

- The District team seems to be in the 'forming stage' of team development

- This is a critical stage and efforts need to be made to move from a group of people to a team

- The capacity building plan for the District team is focused on building a strong, performing team (please refer to the presentation on People Personas and Capacity Building Plan)
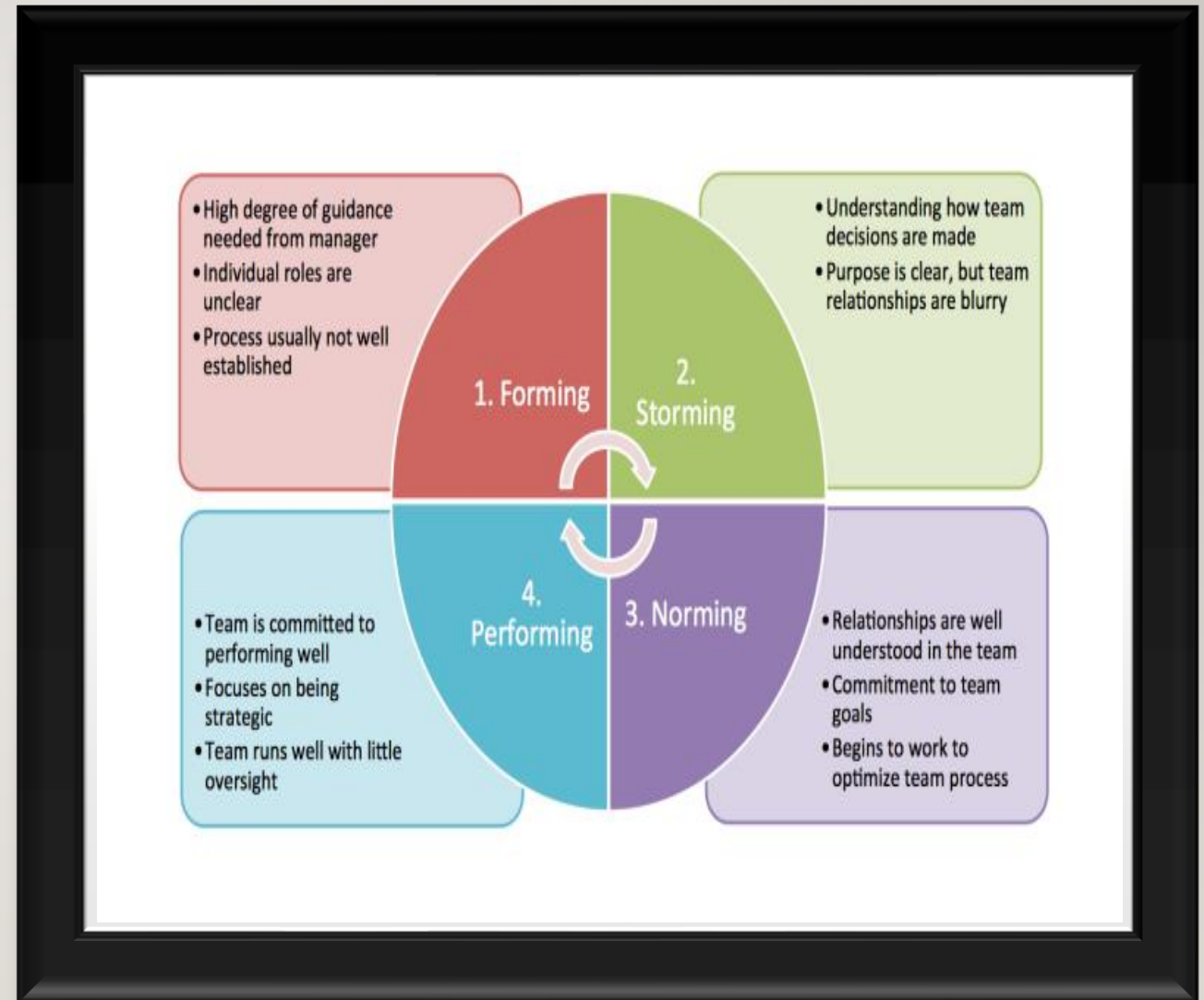
PHICUS RECOMMENDATIONS - BUILDING A TEAM

- Put together a robust induction/ orientation process for anyone who joins Program Swera. This process should help the new joiner understand about the program and break the ice with the team

- During monthly meetings, conduct simple activities that help people get to know each other and learn from each other

- Create an open, non threating space in meetings so people can speak their mind – put together ground rules for the meeting

- Check in with key people through 101 discussions on a monthly/ quarterly basis

- Put together a process to share feedback with each other. For ex – last 15 mins they could go around the room and seek feedback for themselves for the last month's progress

PROCESSES

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF CRPS

- The process seems to have worked:
  - CIP helps identify interest and potential
  - Identifying 2 people from the GP is helpful as backup
  - Quality of CRPs seem to be slightly better
  - Attrition is in control

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REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION

- Too much documentation for CRPs and FCs

- Maintaining it manually is becoming very challenging

- Many people request for data regularly which is time consuming

- Same data is asked in different formats' multiple times

- There is no structure/ process to gather,/ manage and report data

- Ad-hoc/ urgent reports create a lot of pressure on the block team

- Accuracy of data maybe an issue as all of this is manually captured

This is a big area of frustration and irritation for the block teams.
The digitalization of documentation and reporting needs to be fast tracked on priority

A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Block Teams

- Opportunities are created to learn
- Don't get reprimanded if we make mistakes
- If we want to try something new, we are given approval and adequate support

The District team

- Learning environment is not created
- There is no room for mistakes
- Feedback is in the form of criticism and is de-motivating
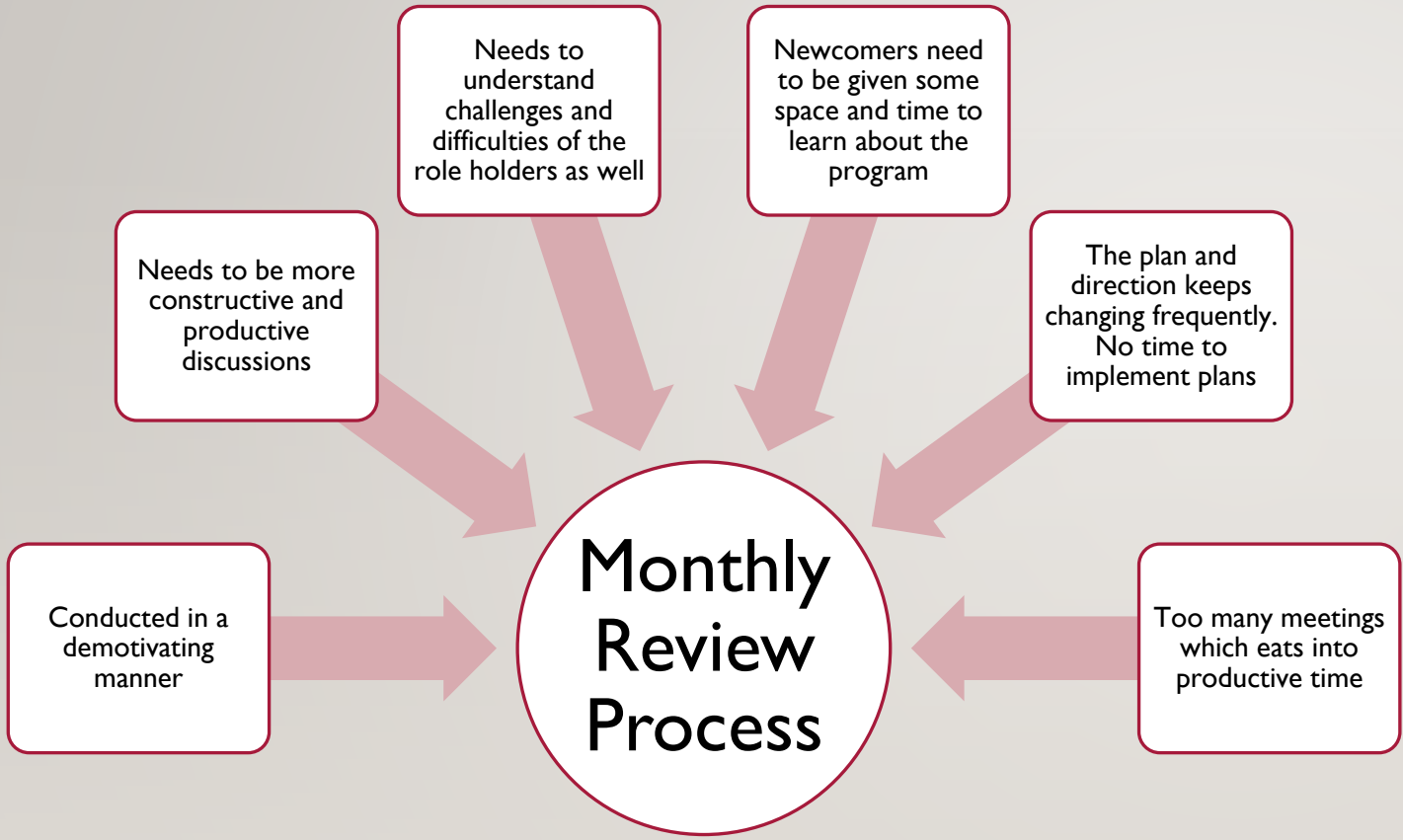
- The block teams and District team have experienced this aspect differently

- While there is scope for learning from mistakes for the block team, the district team does not have that luxury

- It could be because of the intensity of the role and stakes involved at the district level.

- This experience is creating a bit of unrest amongst many district team members

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Needs to understand challenges and difficulties of the role holders as well

Newcomers need to be given some space and time to learn about the program

Needs to be more constructive and productive discussions

The plan and direction keeps changing frequently. No time to implement plans

Conducted in a demotivating manner

Monthly Review Process

Too many meetings which eats into productive time

- Most team members do not enjoy the review process and feel dejected/ demotivated after the process

- This feedback is mostly from the district team. Block teams didn't seem to perceive this process as difficult

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PHICUS RECOMMENDATIONS - DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

- A burning platform that needs to be fixed immediately!

- There is already work underway to digitalize the documentation and reporting. This process needs to be fast-tracked and implemented as soon as possible

- Put together an interim process to capture data from the block teams. Until the technology platform gets implemented, consolidate existing data in a format that can be accessible by all (on google sheets). Any past/ historic data that is required, needs to be accessed from this central space. Only if the data is not available with the District team, a request can go out to the block team

- Review data requests across verticals and identify duplication of data. Is it possible to have the MIS team as a single point of contact to request data from the field?

- Can we get a few volunteers (maybe from HUL or other corporate donors) who can help with building some standard queries on excel to help with accessing data in a structured manner

PHICUS RECOMMENDATIONS - CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Alter the format of the monthly reviews every few months to avoid monotony. Get the program team to share ideas on how the reviews can be done differently

- Create a reflection space in these meetings. Some simple questions could be:
    - What were some successes you had at work?
    - What were some challenges? How did you overcome them?
    - What has been you biggest learning last month?
    - What are you struggling with?

- Whiteboard/ brainstorming sessions during monthly reviews to discuss/ share ideas around a problem area or for new ideas

- Experiment with 'team led reviews' where the team reviews each other's progress and shares plan/ steps for the next month
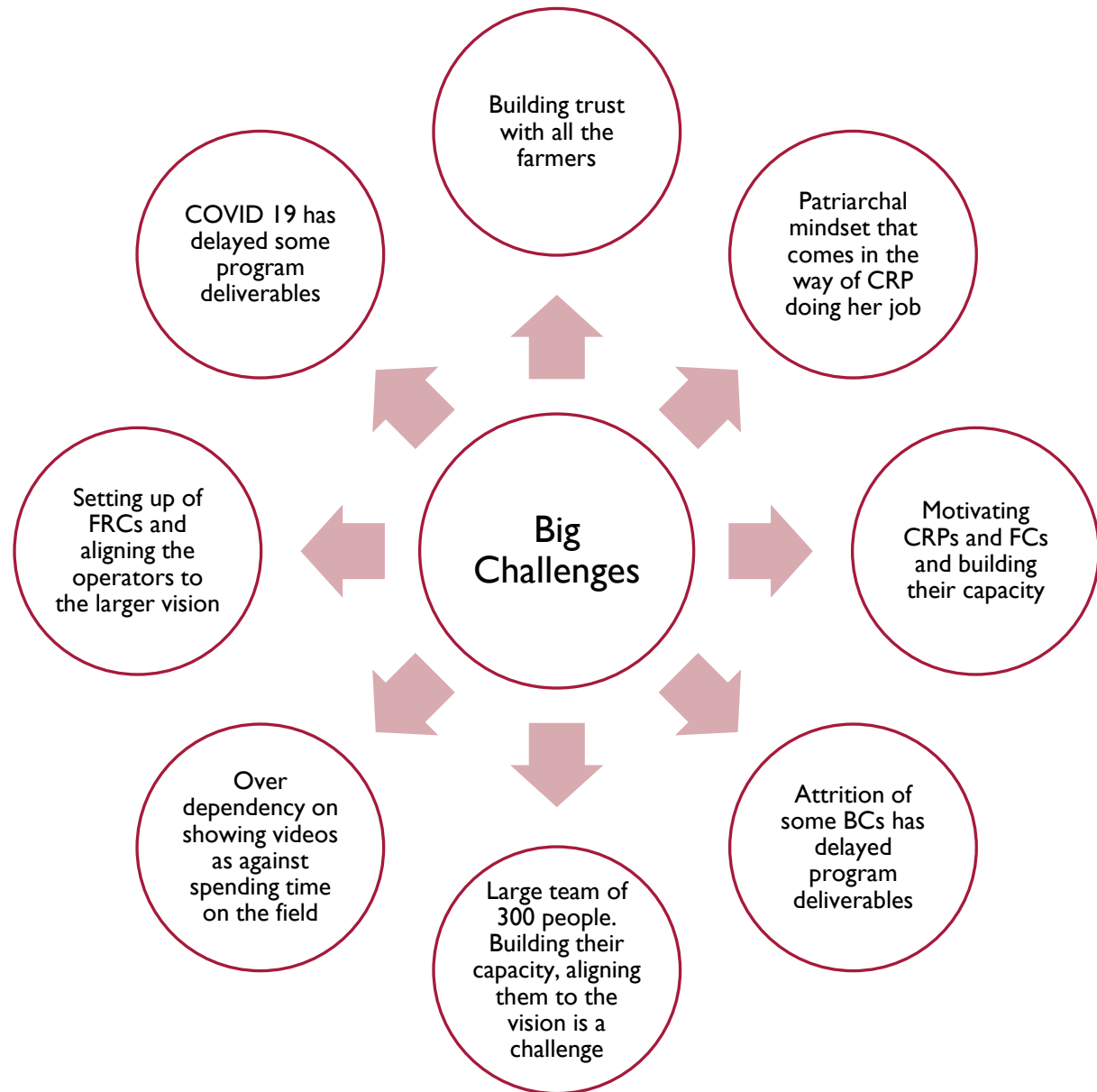
FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE TEAM

While there has been some early results that have been positive, there have been many challenges as well

Some blocks need to be strengthened to deliver program outcomes

The District team needs handholding support to align themselves to the larger vision

Building trust with all the farmers

COVID 19 has delayed some program deliverables

Patriarchal mindset that comes in the way of CRP doing her job

Setting up of FRCs and aligning the operators to the larger vision

Big Challenges

Motivating CRPs and FCs and building their capacity

Over dependency on showing videos as against spending time on the field

Large team of 300 people. Building their capacity, aligning them to the vision is a challenge

Attrition of some BCs has delayed program deliverables

Making MKS a strong entity

Setting up FRCs and enabling successful operations

Building a strong cadre of CRPs who are experts in Agri and Water

Creating model villages that can be replicated in other districts

Getting the Government to adopt this model

THE KEY TO SUCCESS

HOW WILL YOU GET THERE?

The Head (Thinking)
District team

- Strengthen the ability to think out of the box, learn from each other, learn from mistakes, come up with new and improved ways to implement the program

- Strengthen the ability to work together as a team, towards a common purpose

- Strengthen the ability to handhold, train, coach block teams to implement the program effectively

Empathy,
Caring,
Supporting,
Handholding,
Nurturing

Connected by the Heart

The Hands (Doing)
Block teams

- Strengthen the capacity of the FCs and CRPs to operate independently

- Strengthen the leadership and team management capability of BCs

- Strengthen the capacity of working with communities, creating awareness, building resilience and being a self-sustainable community

NEXT STEPS

- PANI team to agree on key processes they would like to improve over the next few months

- Nominate a person/ team to work on each of these processes and implement them

- Some of the recommendations are simple and easy to implement. They can be discussed internally and implemented right away

THANK YOU

Please contract Pavithra Gaikwad (pavithra@phicus.org) for further clarifications