ATHENA INSTITUTE AND OPEN SCIENCE

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IS VERDER KIJKEN

ATHENA INSTITUTE

1982: Athena established for societal aspects and responsibility in education

2024: center of excellence in transdisciplinary research and education, 110 FTE

Mission:

Connecting science and society for a better tomorrow

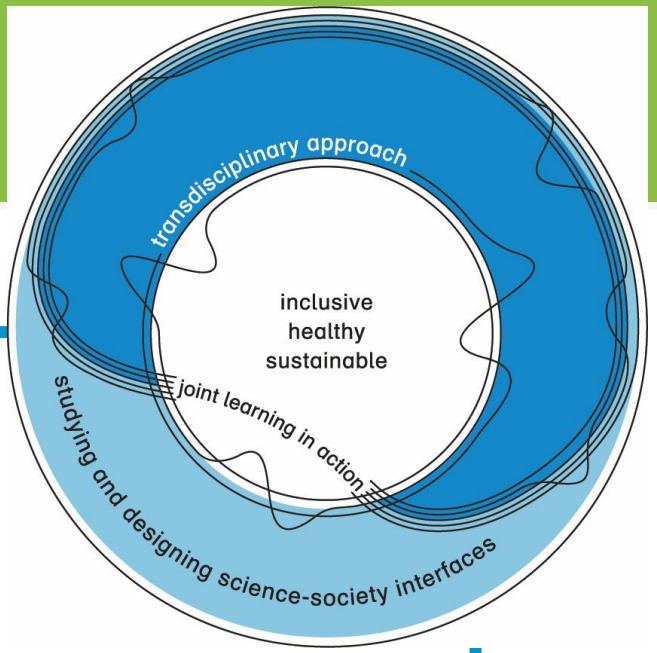
Goal:

- Increase understanding of key factors in innovation processes,
- Enrich science with increased societal legitimacy and improved research utilization,
- Improve societal awareness of how innovations may benefit the sustainability, equity and fairness of societies

How can science and technology development contribute to improved health and wellbeing in a sustainable and equitable way?

participation - inclusion - integration - transparency - reflection - action

ATHENA'S RESEARCH



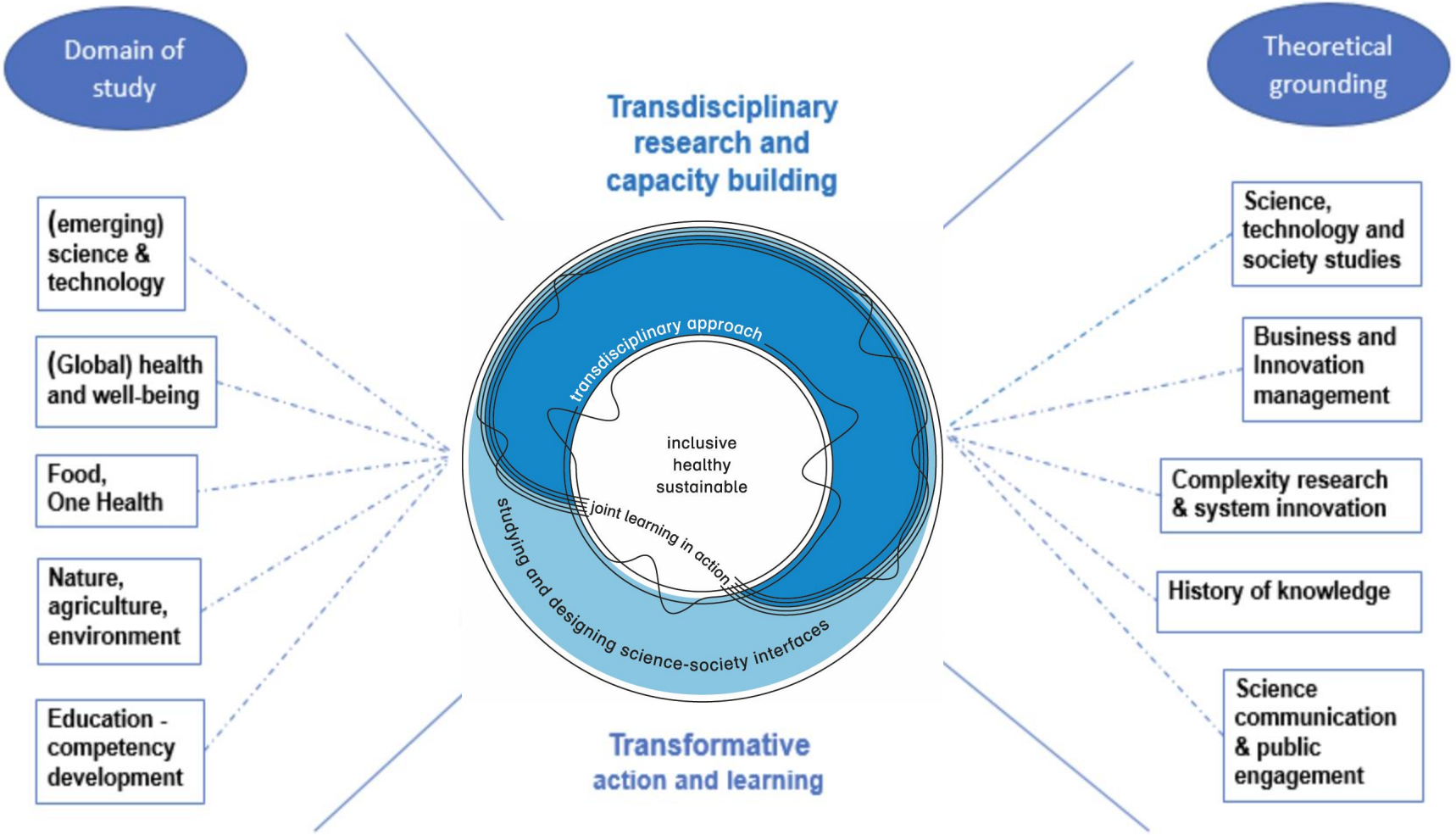
Our research focusses on:

understanding, facilitating, sustaining, upscaling, and monitoring and evaluating **inclusive multi-stakeholder innovation processes**

developing methodologies for knowledge integration and problem-solving, through reflection and learning

training and empowering stakeholders, professionals and students, for them to participate in and facilitate these processes

ATHENA'S RESEARCH



OPEN SCIENCE: SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP

Open Science is about:

- improving quality of science – **socially robust knowledge**
- optimizing its benefits for as many people as possible – **societal impact**
- increasing its efficiency, accountability and sustainability – **societal responsibility**

- Athena practices Open Science in all research phases

OPEN SCIENCE: SOCIETAL IMPACT

Business as usual

R&I

Transformative change

6

- Determine extent of the problem
- Understand causes of the problem
- Identify and experiment with innovations (both technical and social)
- Support governance of transformation process

OPEN SCIENCE: SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP

Much R&I done to solve complex challenges

However… although there are examples where innovations find their way into society relatively smoothly, often there are problems:

- Low rate and level of adoption
- Slow or no scaling up (embedding in existing structures)
- Unforeseen side effects (trade offs)

Science and technology do not merely happen to us

How do we shape research and innovation as process?

SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP

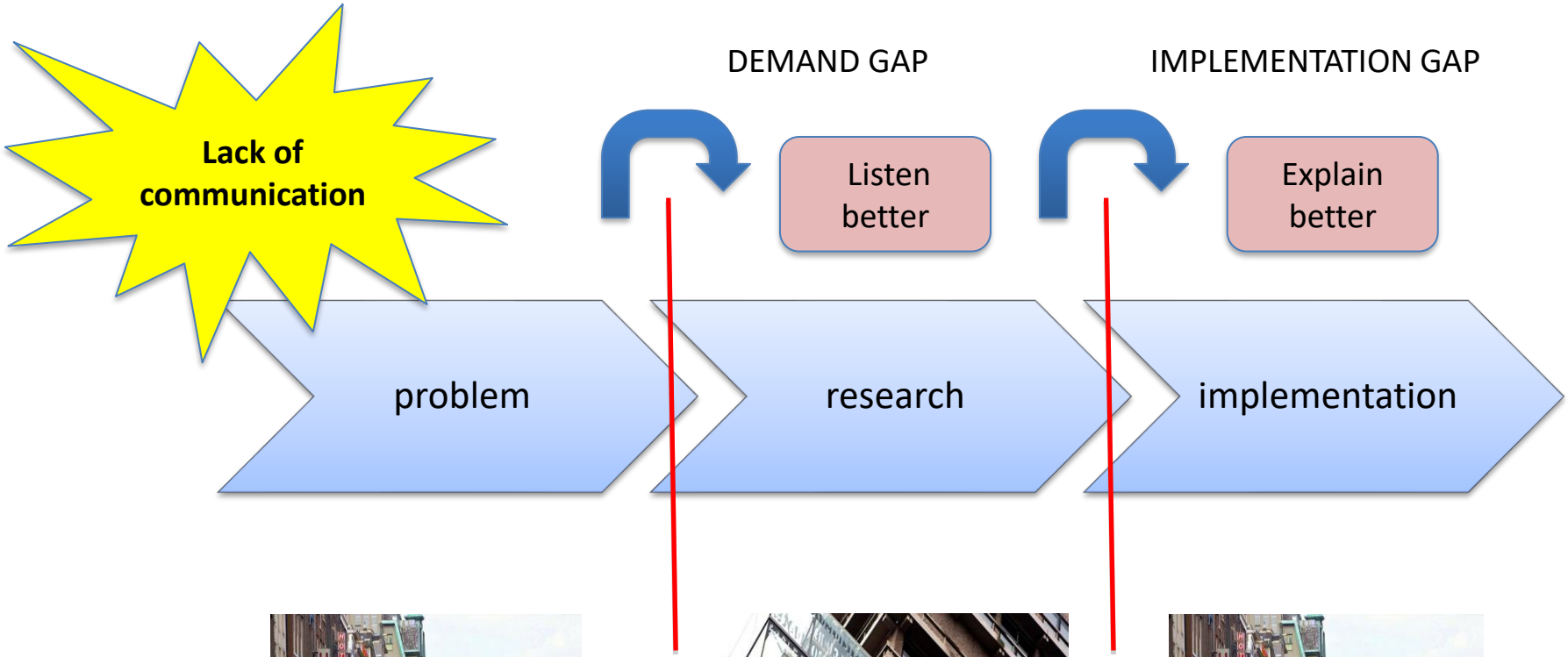
Lack of communication

IMPLEMENTATION GAP

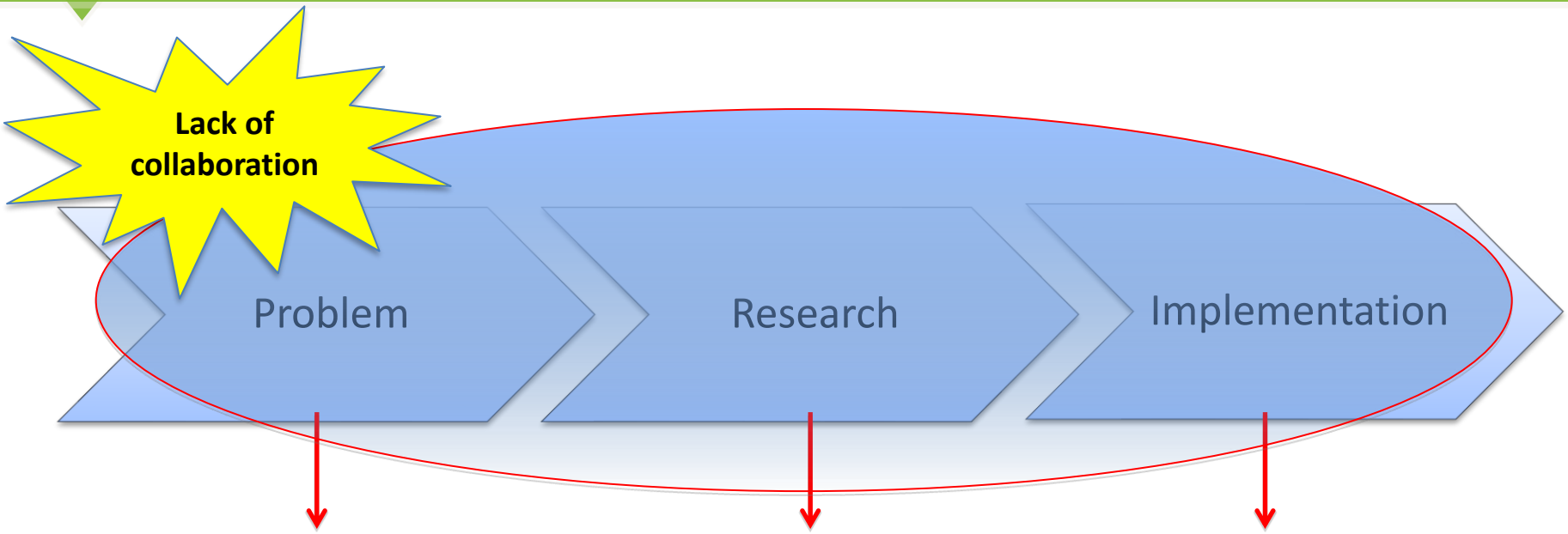
Explain better

problem → research → implementation

SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP



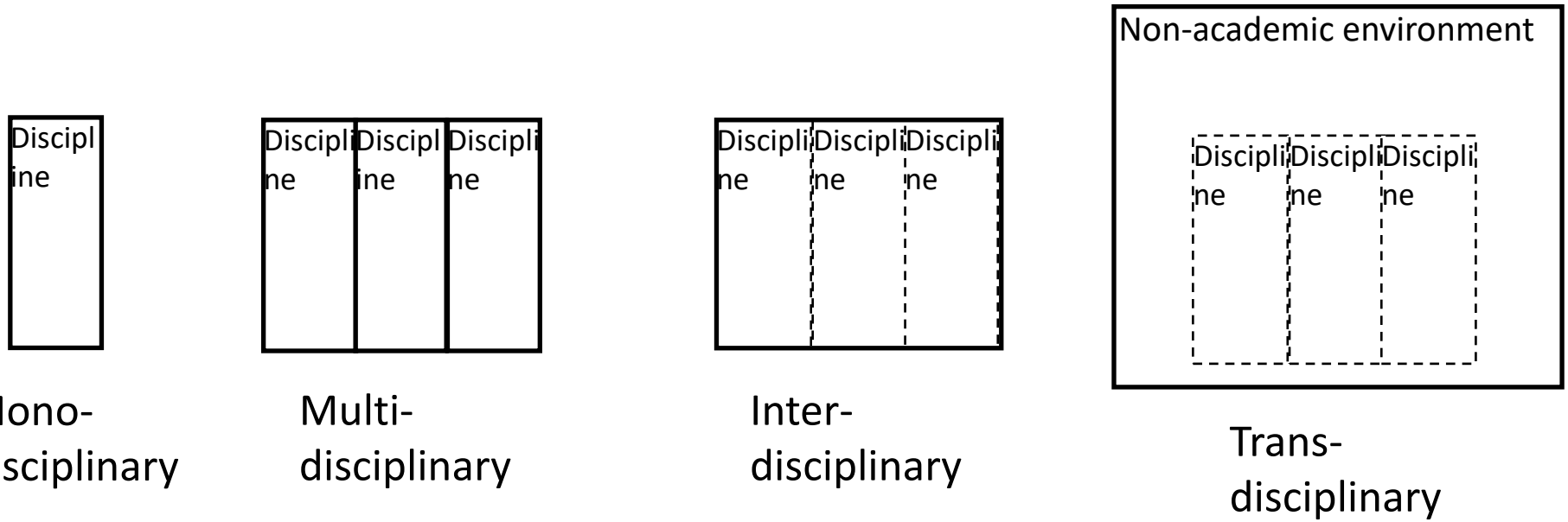
SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP



Science and practice join hands
→ **Transdisciplinary research**

WHAT IS TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH?

"A new form of **learning** and **problem solving** involving cooperation among **different parts of society and academia** in order to meet **complex challenges of society**" (Klein et al., 2001)



Mono-disciplinary

Multi-disciplinary

Inter-disciplinary

Trans-disciplinary

OPEN SCIENCE: DEMONSTRATE RELEVANCE AND IMPACT

- Addressing complex problems based on **societal needs**
- Facilitating research designed for impact (transdisciplinary research)
- Creating research products for societal groups
- Use and recognition of research products by societal groups

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ATHENA – EXAMPLES GLOBAL HEALTH

- Stigma-reduction interventions in Indonesia
- Mental health interventions for homeless people in India and migrants in Europe
- Maternal health in LMICs – Safe Motherhood, teenage pregnancies, anti-natal care
- Sexual and reproductive health in Laos – teenage pregnancy, health literacy

ACCESS TO HEALTH - SARI PROJECT

Aim: assess the effectiveness of three stigma-reduction interventions for people affected by leprosy in Cirebon District, West-Java, Indonesia

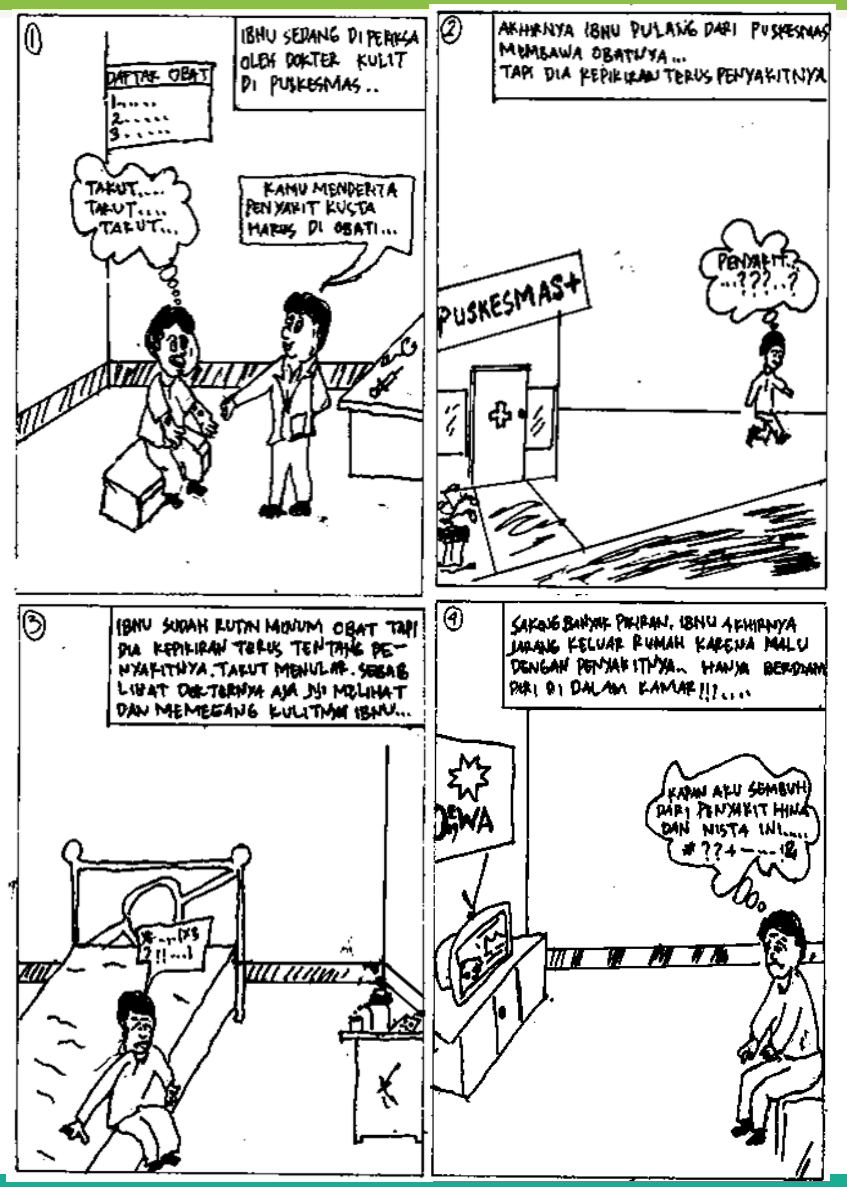
- Large mixed-method intervention study
- Inclusive & participatory
- Transdisciplinary

91 Events in the villages

CREATING RESEARCH PRODUCT FOR SOCIETAL GROUPS

Aim is to enhance:

- Project-specific products: informational materials, dialogue meetings and dialogues, presentations
- General products: open access publishing, popular writings, presentations, trainings



USE AND RECOGNITION BY SOCIETAL GROUPS

Direct route:

- Commissioning organizations requesting certain products and subsequently use these in practice

Indirect route:

- Use beyond the project context
  - Handbooks used in trainings
  - Articles and reports used in policy documents
  - Memberships in committees, advisory board, etc.



Assessment dimensions

	Relevance to society
Demonstrable products	*Research products for societal target groups* - Reports for non-academic readers: **125** - Articles in professional journals for non-academic readers: **34** - Books for non-academic readers: **11** - Other materials (booklets, brochures, blogs, tools): **numerous** - Many Athena staff are involved in outreach activities (lectures for general audiences, workshops and exhibitions): **>30 per year**
Demonstrable use of products	*Use of research products by societal groups* - Projects in cooperation with societal parties (NGOs, DPOs, government departments, private sector): **20-35 new projects per year** - Training courses: **15-20 per year** **-** Use of Athena products in higher vocational education and secondary schools: **8** - Use of Athena products in policy documents: **>60** - (Social) media attention: see p. 26
Demonstrable marks of recognition	*Marks of recognition by societal groups* - Number of appointments/positions paid for by societal parties: **2** - Membership of civil society advisory bodies: **12** - Letters of appreciation: see *Appendix G* for examples

SOCIETAL IMPACT AND RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

THANK YOU!