

# **POLICY EVALUATION IN THE AGRICULTURE-HEALTH SPACE: RESEARCH NEEDS**

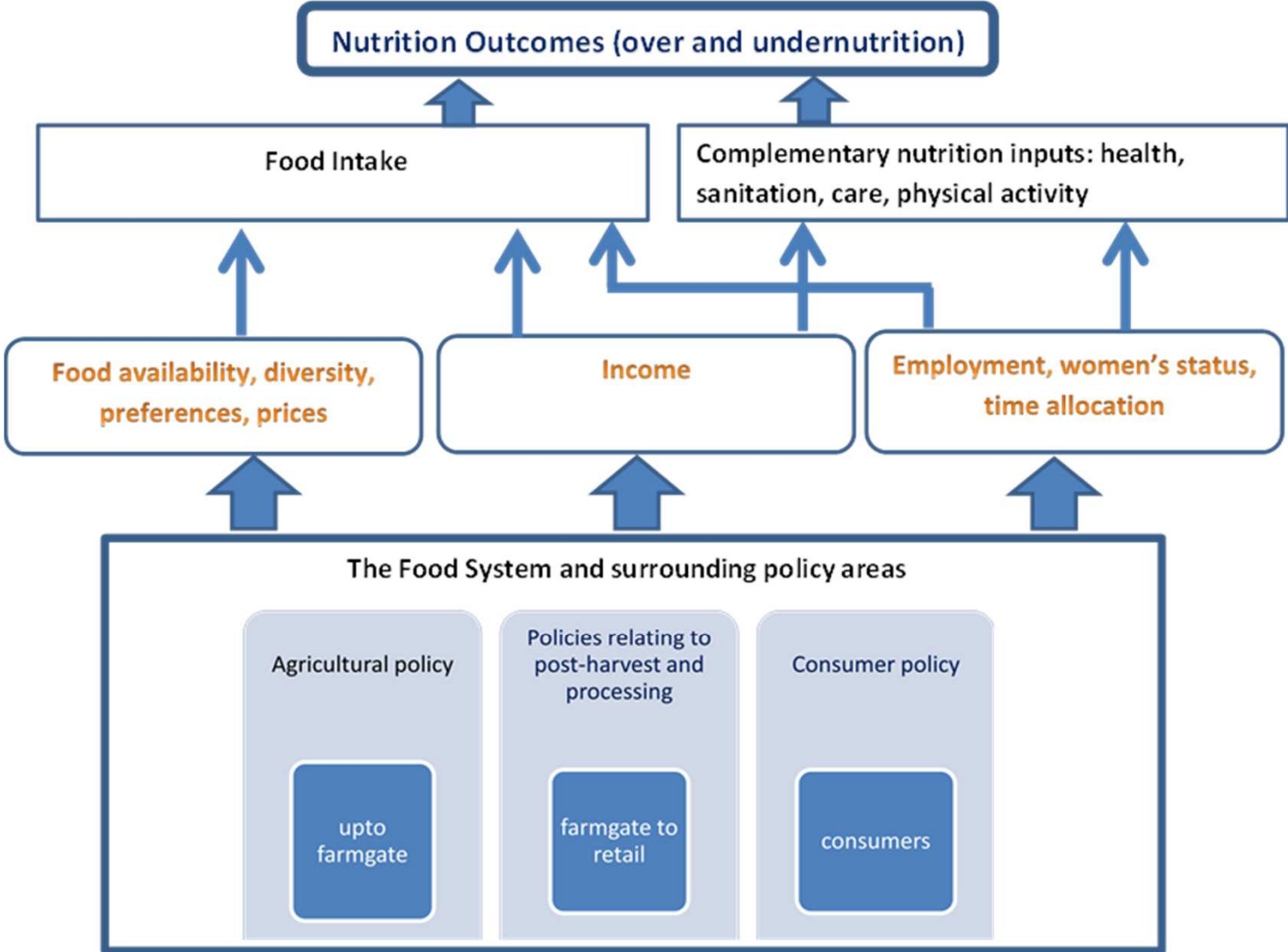
**BHAVANI SHANKAR**



# **THIS PRESENTATION**

- **Quantitative policy evaluation relating to ‘agriculture for health’: research needs**
- **Reflections on current state of evidence**
- **Range of methods likely to come into play**

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Policies in other sectors; Trends; Governance & institutions

# **RESEARCH NEEDS**

**Broadly:**

- **Policy experimentation; simulations to set optimal policy**
- **Ex-post nutrition/health impact evaluations of prominent food and agricultural policies**

# **NATURE OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

- **Preponderance of analysis of trends, anecdotal evidence.**
- **Evidence often only for part of the pathway from ag./food policy to nutrition/health outcomes.**
- **Some conventional wisdom does not stand up to closer scrutiny.**

# PRICE POLICIES SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Open Access

Research

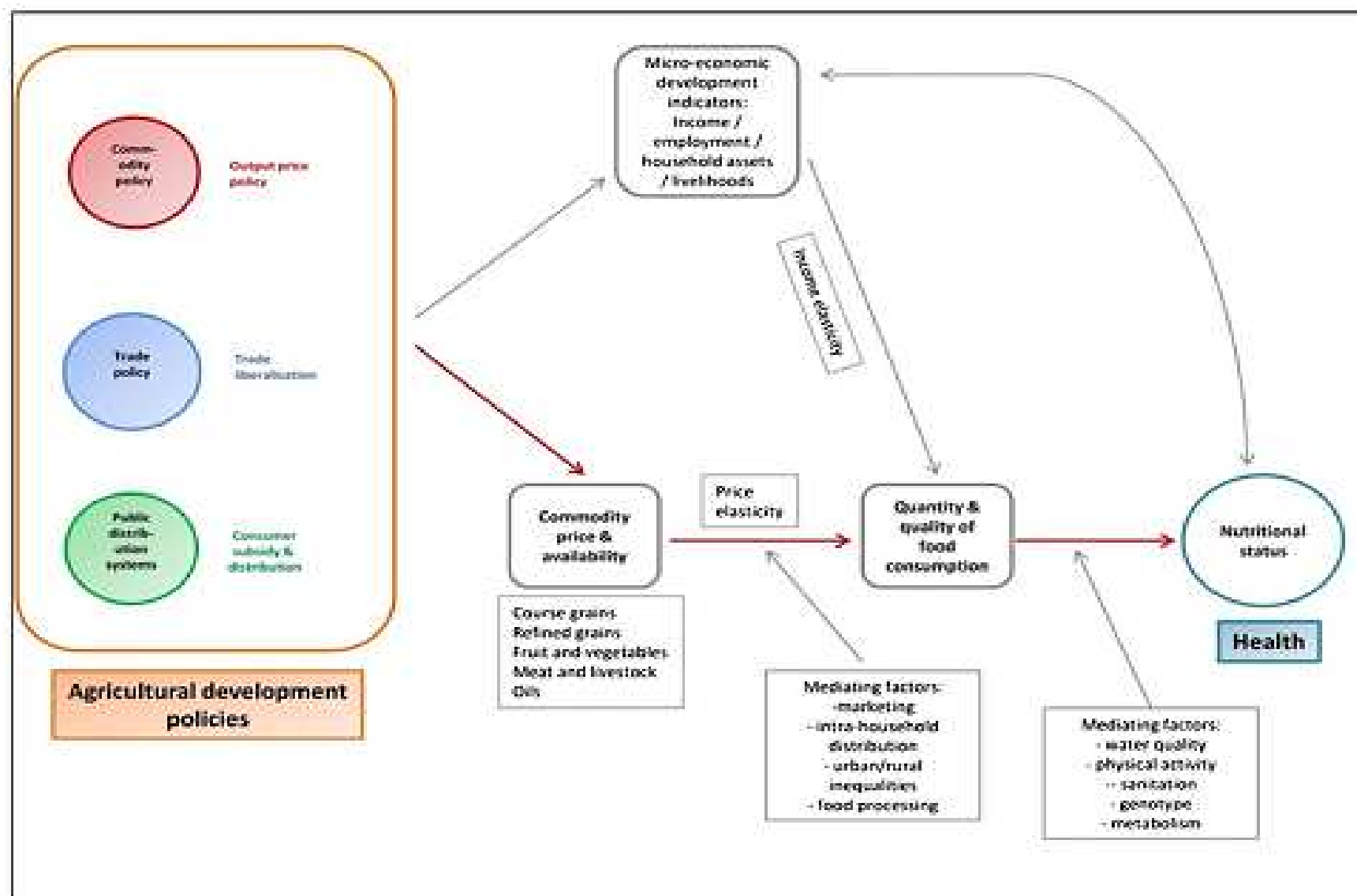
BMJ  
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## Can nutrition be promoted through agriculture-led food price policies? A systematic review

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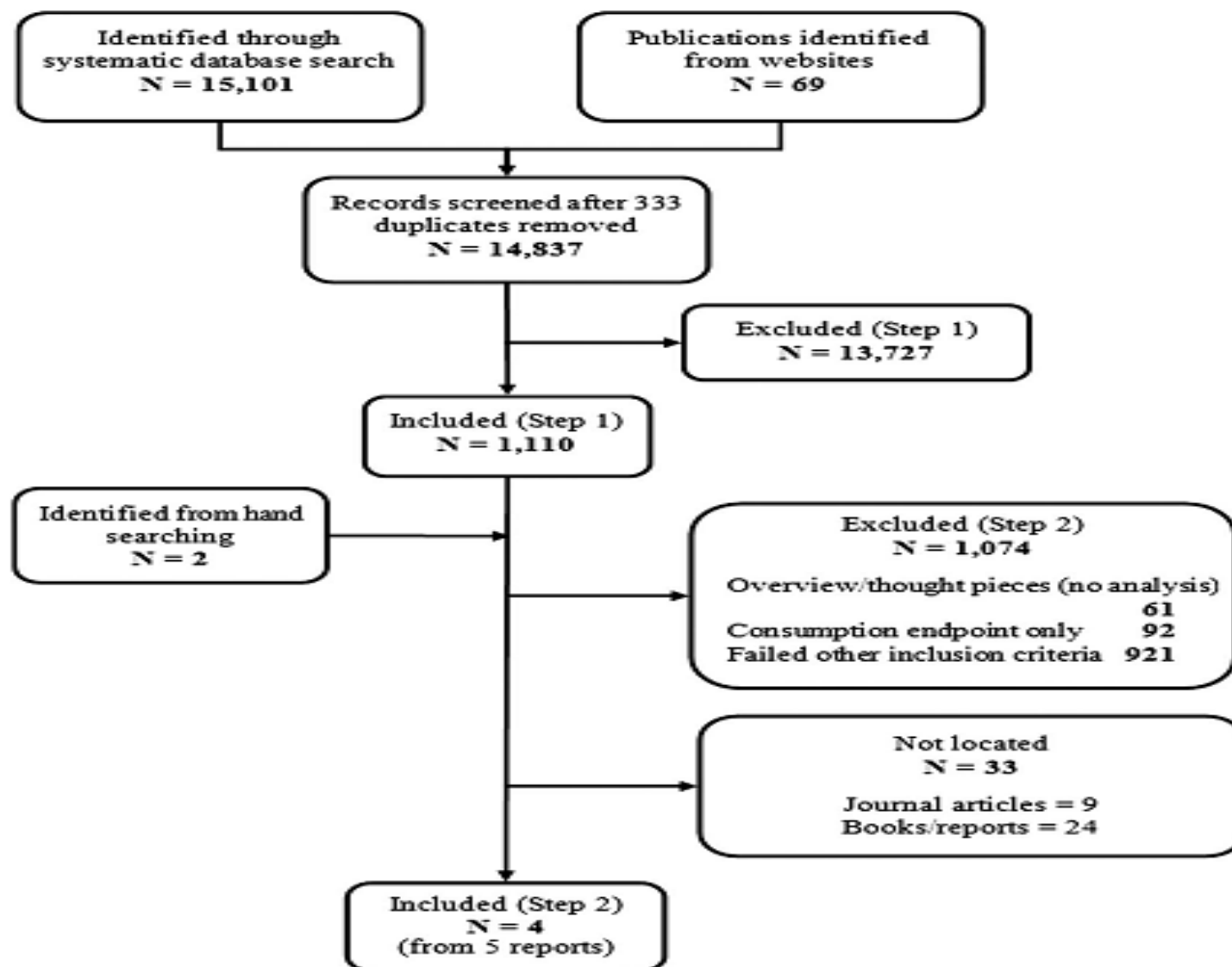
Alan D Dangour,<sup>1</sup> Sophie Hawkesworth,<sup>1</sup> Bhavani Shankar,<sup>2</sup> Louise Watson,<sup>1</sup>  
C S Srinivasan,<sup>3</sup> Emily H Morgan,<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Haddad,<sup>4</sup> Jeff Waage<sup>2</sup>

# PRICE POLICIES SYSTEMATIC REVIEW



\*Pathways in red are the chains of influence that were systematically evaluated in this review.

# PRICE POLICIES SYSTEMATIC REVIEW





# TRADE POLICY: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

The impact of international food-related trade policy on nutrition and health: A systematic review

Helen L Walls, Laura Cornelsen, Sharon Friel, Richard D Smith

- **30 out of 49 retained studies were based on analysis of trends.**
- **Practically all of the evidence on impacts of structural reforms on nutrition/health outcomes is based on trends.**
- **Most robust evidence is for developed countries showing traditional agricultural support *lowered* weight and NCD prevalence.**

# QUESTIONING CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

**Previous narrative: Producer subsidies in the EU encourage overproduction and thereby overnutrition.**

- **However, Schmidhuber (2007);**
- **Market Price Support in EU amounts to food consumption tax → discourages overnutrition**
- **Largest implicit tax on commodities most associated with overnutrition: milk, beef, sugar**

# QUESTIONING CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

## Nominal Protection Coefficients in the EU

	1986	1992	1998	2004	2011
Wheat	2.2	1.7	1.2	1.0	1.0
Rapeseed	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Sunflower	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Soybeans	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<i>Sugar</i>	3.4	3.0	2.8	3.2	1.0
<i>Milk</i>	4.6	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.0
<i>Beef and Veal</i>	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.1
Sheepmeat	2.3	1.9	1.4	1.2	1.0
Pigmeat	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.0
Poultry	1.3	1.8	1.4	1.8	1.3
Eggs	1.7	1.5	1.1	1.0	1.0
Other commodities	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0

# **NATURE OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

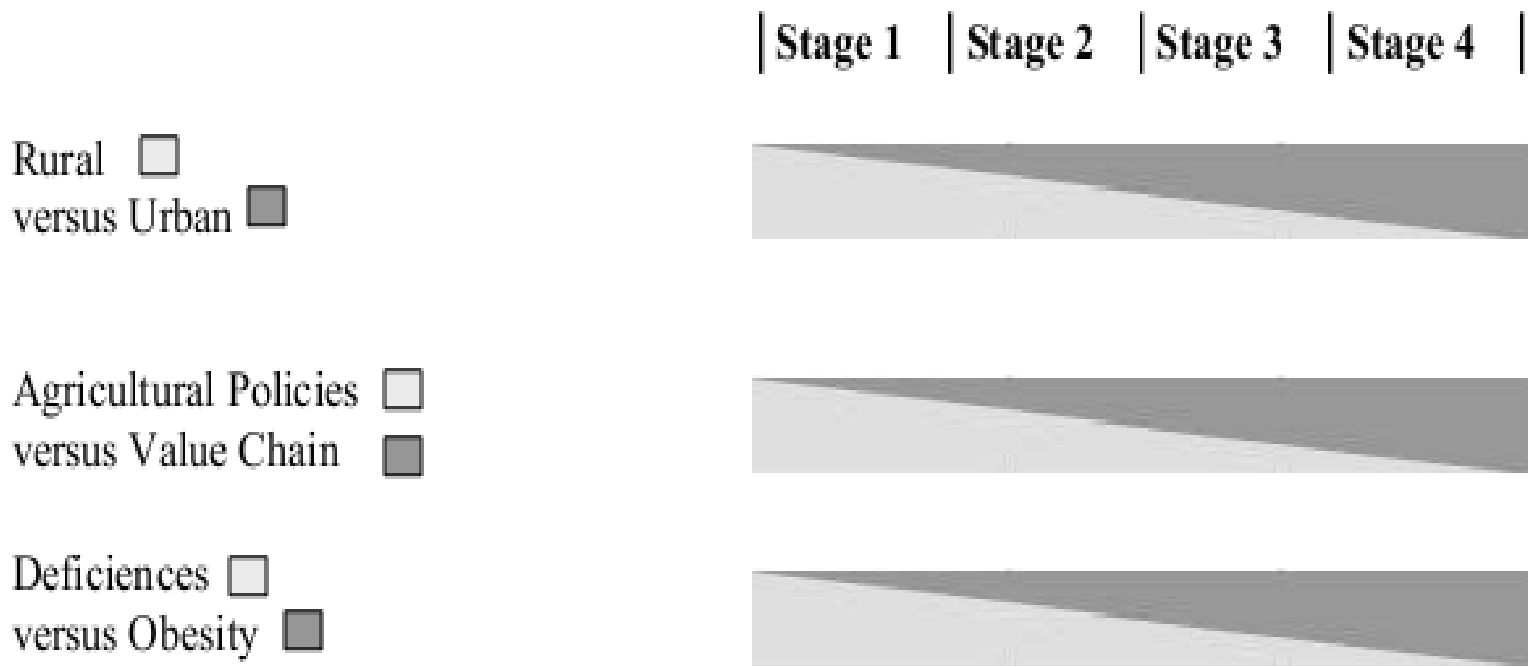
- **Is this surprising? Should we beat ourselves up over this? NO!**
- **Does this render us incapable of providing policy advice? NO!**
- **Does it point to a major research need? YES!**

# **RESEARCH NEEDS: NUANCES**

- **Not just population level impacts, but disaggregated**
- **Policy tradeoffs: income, health, environment**
- **Different policy questions relevant in different stages of food system transformation (value chains perspective)**

# RELATIVE POLICY EMPHASIS

## Pinstrup-Andersen (2013):



# **THE RANGE OF METHODS**



# MORE RCTs FOR 'SHORT PATHWAY' POLICY QUESTIONS

The Review  
*of*  
Economics and Statistics

DO CONSUMER PRICE SUBSIDIES REALLY IMPROVE NUTRITION?

Robert T. Jensen and Nolan H. Miller\*

Though, Pinstrup-Andersen (2013) notes, '*Health and nutrition effects resulting from agricultural and other food-system policies [...] are very difficult to assess with RCTs [...]. Yet the most promising opportunities [...] are undoubtedly found in such policies, and not in home gardens and other minor projects which are amenable to study within the framework of randomised trials*'



# **MORE QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL WORK WITH OBSERVATIONAL DATA**



# **POLICY SIMULATIONS INCLUDING HEALTH IMPACTS**

THE LANCET

Health, agricultural, and economic effects of adoption of  
healthy diet recommendations

*Karen Lock, Richard D Smith, Alan D Dangour, Marcus Keogh-Brown, Gessuir Pigatto, Corinna Hawkes, Regina Mara Fisberg, Zaid Chalabi*



“Dear Mr. Gandhi, We regret we cannot fund your proposal because the link between spinning cloth and the fall of the British Empire was not clear to us.”

Written by *M. M. Rogers* and illustrated by *Ari: R. Patazai, Wahyu S., Ary W.S.*  
Creative team for Search for Common Ground in Indonesia