

CEAPRED Newsletter

January – June 2020



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Due to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, Nepal was in lockdown from 24th March to 14th June 2020. Hence, to cope with this global pandemic; field activities of all our ongoing projects planned after March 24 have been affected.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Inception Meeting of Speed for Life Project conducted at Dhulikhel, Kavre

An inception workshop/meeting was conducted among different stakeholders in all the five project areas viz. Dhulikhel, Namobuddha, Teemal, Helambu and Melamchi to share the project objectives, goal, expected output, anticipated results, working modality, detailed activities, linkage, coordination and budget allocated in each activities planned under SPEED for Life Project. The participant stakeholders included; Mayor/Chairperson, Deputy Mayor/Vice Chairperson, Chief Administrative Officer, Social Development Officer, Chief of Agriculture Section of each Palika, cooperative

representatives, group leaders, agro-vets and lead farmers. During the events, detailed project activities were shared and discussed among the participants for shared understanding and creating a common ownership among all the stakeholders. The floor agreed to work jointly and in full coordination among the aforementioned stakeholders for better output. The same forum also agreed to work on the project potential sites that were identified through field visit by the project team and recommended by agriculture section of respective palikas. The participants of the program emphasized the project team

to work on output basis so that the technology and results so obtained can be disseminated to adjoining groups and sites. They actively participated in the discussion session and asked to implement the activities as planned in close coordination with stakeholders. The speakers of the program thus accepted the fact that the nation is heavily dependent up on other nations for the import of seeds (nearly 85%) which should be cut down. The participants of meeting seem hopeful that the project will be implemented successfully so as to reduce the import percentage in the near future.



Figure 1: Remarks by Mayor of Dhulikhel during project sharing meeting, Dhulikhel

Inception meeting of Resilient Mountain Solution (RMS) Project at Rasuwa district

CEAPRED has been conducting action research to test, demonstrate and disseminate climate resilient solutions through establishment of RMS pilot sites in mid-hills of Nepal (Kavre in Bagmati province and Dadeldhura in Sudur Paschim Province). From this year onwards, CEAPRED has been implementing and piloting context specific resilient solutions in newly selected sites at the high mountain region of Nepal in Rasuwa district. Therefore, an inception meeting was organized to officially inform the local government bodies and relevant stakeholders about the RMS program and kick start the implementation on ground, particularly in ward numbers 3, 4 and 5 of Amachodingmo Rural Municipality in Rasuwa district directly benefitting about 200 households in the beginning. On 17th February 2020, inception meeting was organized at the hall of Amachodingmo Rural Municipality with the objectives to inform the local government body of the Ama Chodingmo Rural Municipality in Rasuwa district about the implementation of RMS



Figure 2: Chairperson Mr. Buchung Tamang of Amachodingmo Rural Municipality giving his remarks at the meeting.

program in ward 3, 4 and 5 and to develop and strengthen network with officials from the municipality and align the RMS program to their priority programs and planning. During the inception meeting, chairperson, vice-chairperson, members, chief administrative officer, representatives from agriculture and livestock development sections of the rural municipality, lead farmers, ICIMOD and CEAPRED center had participated.

ICIMOD presentation focused on the RMS framework that highlighted on building climate resilience, socio-economic resilience and future resilience. It also provided some glimpses of the activities

that have been carried out in other RMS pilot sites in Kavre district since 2014 and in Dadeldhura district from 2019. CEAPRED presentation mostly highlighted about the RMS pilot program that is being implemented in Ama Chodingmo Rural Municipality ward number 3, 4 and 5 from this year onwards. The major focus areas in the municipality are in vegetable farming (safe food production), cowshed management and animal health. Chairperson Mr. Buchung Tamang in his closing remarks, emphasized on linking the RMS program implementation to diversify livelihood opportunities through enterprise development.

Speed for Life project identified Potential Spices and varieties in Sindhupalchowk and Kavre

In order to identify potential spices and their variety, a discussion session was carried out in three sites in Sindhupalchowk and Kavre respectively. Altogether 98 participants from Temal, Melamchi and Helambu municipalities participated in this event and offered their valuable feedback while selecting different spice crops

that have shown greater performance and are equally valuable in the market.

After the careful selection, technical profile of each spice will be developed and shared among the stakeholders. This will provide technical idea on the stakeholders about vegetable seed production and thus provide a clear

cut concept on spices crop production, its importance and role in reducing the import of the spices in the long run. Different spices and the varieties have been recommended by the groups during the discussion which provided valuable input in documentation and planning as per the results obtained.

Jholmal trial on Bitter gourd at Kavre and Dadeldhura

Soil nutrient management is essential in obtaining better vigor and yield of the crop. It is also an important component of RMS program. This year the project has conducted efficacy trail of Jholmal-1 in soil nutrient status, insect incidence and crop

productivity. The field trials at Kavre have 12 replications each for efficacy testing of Jholmal -1 concentration and application interval in Bitter gourd. Six replications was carried out in foot hills while remaining six were carried out in top hills for both application

dose and interval trails. Each replication had three treatments in Randomized Complete Block Design.

With the objective to reduce the level of chemical pesticides, different bio-pesticides like Jholmal-2 and Jholmal-3 are under field trails. In order to find out the efficacy of different doses of Jholmal-2 and Jholmal-3 and their comparative performance in controlling the pest trails are being conducted at Kavre and Dadeldhura districts. 12 replications with five treatments are being carried out in Randomized Complete Block Design for each crop. Each plot in the treatments is 25 m² in area. The crops are at the reproductive stage and data on insect trapped, fruit infestation and yields are under recording.



Figure 3: Monitoring of the seedlings for the Jholmal trail in Bitter gourd at Chaurnagefedi, Kavre

CEAPRED's proposed variety of Baitadi Local Onion registered

Technical Sub-committee Meeting held on 5 December 2019, and Variety Approval, Release and Registration Sub-committee (VARRSC) meeting held on 1 March 2020 and later on National Seed Board (NSB) meeting held on 3rd May 2020 registered CEAPRED's proposed variety of Baitadi Local Onion.



Figure 4: Baitadi Local Onion

Onion seed production conducted in Nuwakot with great success

Mr. Mukunda Dhakal of Aarukharka, Belkotgadhi was involved in onion seed production during FY 2018/19. He successfully harvested 272 Kg onion bulb in his 100-m² demo plot. Out of the total bulbs production, he sold 235 Kg bulbs and earned NRs. 30,000. The remaining 37

Kg bulbs were stored in his ventilated room to continue seed production. With the remaining bulbs from the first stage of demonstration, he had planted 100-m² plot for seed production. He happily informed us that he earned NRs 30,000 with the small unit of production.



Figure 6: Onion Flower in blooming stage

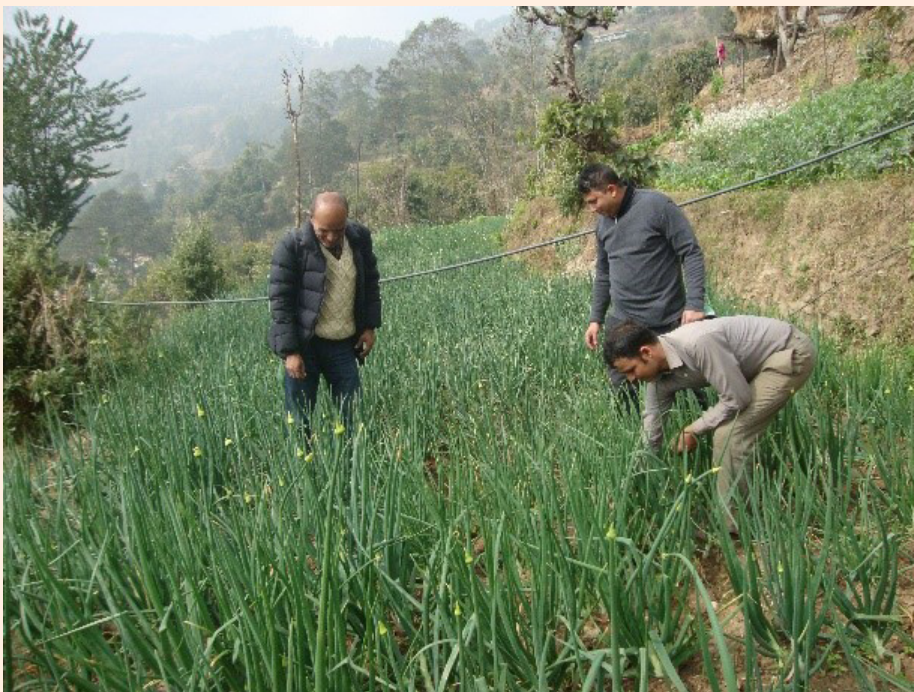


Figure 5: Onion seed production conducted by Mr. Mukunda Dhakal, Aarukharka, Belkotgadhi 1

Having seen the impressive result, he shared that technique with the surrounding farmers and started onion cultivation in a larger area which was also observed during field visit. This is a successful sign of NSAFP's technology dissemination of onion seed production in the farmers' field that will eventually contribute to NSAFP's goal. The current seed production plot was found very well and the plants were at the flowering stage.

MAJOR TRAININGS/WORKSHOPS

One day TCF-ADS Orientation Workshop for Palikas

Technical Cooperation Facility to the Agriculture Development Strategy is a three years' project (1 April 2019 - 31 March 2022) funded by the delegation of European Union to Nepal. CEAPRED in assistance with DT-global and AEC will provide assistance in the project.

As a preliminary step towards rolling out the ADS (adapting and adopting) in the Palika level, one day ADS orientation workshop for the Palikas was organized in all provinces in December 2019 - February 2020. So far, 70 districts have been covered. In all the provinces, ministers of MoLMAC, Secretaries and department directors attended the workshop. Similarly, there has been a good attendance of the mayors or deputy mayors, chief executive officers of the Palikas, officials from AKC and

VHLSEC. Some 80% municipalities attended the workshop and these workshops were coordinated by MoLMAC and convened under the chair of DCCs.



Figure 7: Minister of Land management agriculture and cooperatives inaugurating the workshop, Nawalparasi

NSAFP conducted Fall Armyworm (FAW) training workshop in Dang and Hetauda

CIMMYT in partnership with Province 5 FAW Task Force, and Directorate of Agriculture Development, Butwal organized two days "Training workshop on awareness, identification and management of FAW from February 16-17 at Hotel Mala Inn, Ghorahi/Dang. As per the request of the organizer, Research Associate (NSAFP) Mr. Umesh Poudel participated in the event.

Similarly, CIMMYT in partnership with Bagmati Province FAW Task Force, and Directorate of Agriculture Development, Hetauda organized two days "Training workshop on awareness identification and management of FAW from February 19-20 at Samana Hotel, Hetauda. Agriculture Technician (Resilient Mountain Solutions) Ms. Kashi Ma ya Gurung participated the event.



Figure 8: Participants of the training held in Dang

RMS conducted Jholmal training in high mountains at Rasuwa district

With the objective to reduce the use of chemical pesticides and promote the preparation and application of homemade bio-pesticide; a training was carried out among newly formed farmers groups of Rasuwa district. Training was conducted on one farmer group at Amachodingmo Rural Municipality -5- Chilime but unfortunately, rest of the trainings were disturbed by the onset of COVID 19. A total of 20 farmers (4M / 16F) benefited from the training. The farmers were trained practically to prepare Jholmal 1, 2 and 3 during the program. The farmers were also made familiar with the methods and doses of application. They also learnt the loss that could happen by the

application of chemical pesticide in human health, economic aspect and environment. The farmers were excited on learning about the preparation and application of new technology in the area.



Figure 9: Farmers preparing Jholmal in training at Amachodingmo RM -5- Chilime, Rasuwa

TCF-ADS conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) on Agriculture Development Planning

Technical Cooperation Facility to the Agriculture Development Strategy is a three years' project (1 April 2019 - 31 March 2022) funded by the delegation of European Union to Nepal. CEAPRED in assistance with DT-global and AEC will provide assistance in the project.

Two ToTs on agriculture development planning was conducted targeting the officers representing MoLMAC, ADD, LFDD, AKC and VHLSEC in i. Nepalgunj for provinces: Sudurpaschim, Province 5 and Gandaki; and, ii. Bardibas for provinces 1, 2, Bagmati and Karnali. In total 41 officers received training for seven provinces. The objective of the training was to create a group of planners who trained the local level technicians in agriculture development

planning aligning ADS in preparing local level agriculture development plan. This training took place in February 2020.



Figure 10: TOT Participants of ADP planning from Province 1 and 2



MAJOR EVENTS

CEAPRED election

On 26 January, election of the Executive Committee Members of CEAPRED was conducted and accomplished successfully at the CEAPRED head office. The newly elected members are as follows:

1. Dr. Hari Krishna Upadhyaya (Chairperson)
2. Dr. Pius Raj Mishra (Vice-Chairperson)
3. Dr. Munni Sharma (Treasurer)
4. Mr. Indra Raj Pandey (Member)
5. Mrs. Sarala Paudel (Member)
6. Dr. Ram C. Lamichanne (Member)
7. Mr. Gyan P. Sharma (Member)

Participation in the 11th National Horticulture Seminar

Program Coordinator of NSAFP, Mr. Anil K Acharya participated in the two days 11th National Horticulture Seminar on 6-7 February at Kritipur. During the workshop, he presented the thematic paper on “Smart Agriculture and Safe Vegetable Production: Key Learnings of CEAPRED”. (Anil K. Acharya, Keshab D. Joshi, Sunil Dhungel and Ganesh Acharya jointly prepared the paper).

PHOTO GALLERY

Few glimpses of Skill Up activities from
January – March 2020



Figure 11: Interaction and meeting with cooperative and farmers of Surkhet during feasibility study



Figure 14: In-house training at Shiva Jan School, Salyan



Figure 12: Orientation of the in-house trainee at Janasewa School, Surkhet



Figure 15: Orientation to the Farmers about FFS at Salyan



Figure 13: FFS Practical Training in the field, Kanchanpur



Figure 16: Practical training on preparation of bio-fertilizer during TOT for FFS facilitators in Kanchanpur

SUCCESS STORIES

Linkages provided by Sahaj helps Sabitra increase her revenue by threefold

Sahaj is a joint initiative of the Government of Nepal and the Government of Switzerland. Mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Sahaj is jointly implemented by Center for environment and Agriculture Policy Research, Extension and development (CEAPRED) and Swiss Contact.

Sabitra Goat Farm, one of the partners of Sahaj in the goat sector, is on track to increase its sales revenue by threefold within a year after it started trading of boer goats relying on the linkages provided by Sahaj. According to Phanindra Raj Subedi, proprietor of the farm based in Rangeli, Morang, sales revenue for the current fiscal year (mid-July 2019 to mid-July 2020) has already reached NPR 8 million. Their farm generated only NPR 3.2 million in the previous fiscal year (mid-July 2018 to mid-July 2019). "Considering this trend, we are expecting the sales revenue of around NPR 10 million by the end of this fiscal year," he added. Subedi credited Sahaj for the turnaround in his business.

A year ago, although boer breed was popular as one of the highly productive breeds of goat in Nepal, there were not enough players supplying the breed in the eastern region. By then, only a few large farms in the region had started rearing boer, but they were neither selling the baby nor providing the buck services to other farmers. Sabitra was one of such farms with a boer buck being used to service their own does. As Sabitra had some experience of rearing boer, Sahaj entered into a partnership with the farm to promote paid breeding services and boer breed in the region.

"After signing the partnership, officials from Sahaj suggested me to provide boer buck service as well as supply boer goats to the farmers of Province Number 1," said Subedi. "They also connected me to a network of commercial farmers (their partners) who were already rearing boer. I realised that they could be a reliable source to supply the new breed in the eastern region."

In the first lot, Subedi imported 11 crossbred boer goats from a farm introduced by Sahaj in Surkhet. There was no looking back for the family run farm after its decision to trade on boer goats. "It was one of the best decisions I have made," said Subedi. Currently, the farm is importing crossbred boer goat kids from Gorkha and Surkhet to supply in the Eastern districts.

As of now, Sabitra has imported around 350 goats from Surkhet and Gorkha, and supplied them to various districts in Province Number 1 as well as Kathmandu. Besides selling goats, the farm is providing boer buck services, seeds and saplings of fodder and forage, consulting services on shed construction, and overall goat rearing to farmers willing to go commercial. Also, Subedi is buying back its babies paying fair price from those farmers who sought boer buck services from him. Implementation of systematic and weight-based pricing of the goats was also the main rationale behind Sahaj's partnership with Sabitra.



Figure 17: Phanindra Raj Subedi, proprietor of Sabitra Bakhra Farm, Rangeli, Morang

The family run business managed by Subedi, his wife, two sons and two daughter-in-laws is inspiring many to undertake commercial goat farming in the region. “Almost every day there are visitors in my farm seeking advice for boer goat rearing,” he said. “I am happy to share with them my story as well as my ways of doing things.”

However, things were not similar eight years ago when

Subedi started the enterprise with 20 locally sourced goats. Time and again, Subedi was frustrated with the low productivity and even thought of closing down the enterprise. But the support and the direction he received after partnering with Sahaj has encouraged him to go bigger and develop his farm as a resource center. “Apart from Sahaj, I have received support from various government agencies but partnership with

the former was like a game changer for my enterprise,” he said. “At times, government officials even ask me why I praise Sahaj so much while their financial support is much larger. To that I say, it’s not the value of money but the linkage, regular follow-up and feedback that Sahaj provided us. It is of more value to us. It is only after collaborations with Sahaj, I have felt that goat rearing can be a very profitable business.



Figure18: Gaderbesai Farmers group working in their commercial vegetable field

Transforming the Lives of Temal farmers in Kavrepalanchowk through commercial vegetable seed production

Farmers of Temal village have been traditionally growing different vegetable crops for the past two years, based on their personal experiences and selling them on individual relationship with traders. Hence, there was always a risk factor and uncertainty for the marketing of their produce and to get fair price. With the introduction of buy back guarantee by the traders/vendors and technical support through CEAPRED, farmers among the group started to grow vegetable seed at commercial scale to maximize profit especially from spinach seed production. With the support of Speed for life project during Jan 2020, 15 small holding farmers

comprising of both male and female came together in a group with the name Gaderbesai farmer group and started to grow vegetable crops. The project conducted different seed production management orientations, participatory crop mapping with SWOT analysis for potential crop identification, organized and coordinated interaction program with different seed vendors and companies to ensure marketing of the products and so on. Noticing these activities Life seed company in Banepa, Kavre came to the farmers with buy back guarantee of their products including technical support when and as required for

quality seed production and its post-harvest management. With this, the groups started to grow Spinach in 5 ha (100 Ropani) of land under buy back guarantee from Life seed company.

After 3-4 months, the group started to harvest the crop and by 20 May 2020, it was able to produce high quality Spanish seed of 7.5 MT that was sent to Life Seed Company at NPR 400 per kg. As per the group records, the total income from the Spanish seed was NPR 30,00,000 in 5 months (Jan- May, 2020). The average production and income per household was 500 kg and NRs. 2 lakh respectively. This is the success example, which meets the requirement of projects outcome: SEEDs value chain improvement for rural development through collective farming enhancing women & youth empowerment.

Story of Nirmala Chaulagain - From Kitchen gardener to semi commercial farmer

Sahaj is a joint initiative of the Government of Nepal and the Government of Switzerland. Mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Sahaj is jointly implemented by Center for Environment and Agriculture Policy Research, Extension and development (CEAPRED) and Swiss Contact.

Nirmala Chaulagain of Buddha Sahanti, Jhapa is one of the semi commercial farmers of the region. Chaulagain, who started vegetable farming as a kitchen gardener switched to commercial vegetable production just a year ago. This transformation was possible after she partook in

a training service provided by Sahara Cooperative, one of the partners of Sahaj. Chaulagain was involved in subsistence farming for a decade after she migrated to Jhapa with her husband and was willing to go commercial. But she was unaware of various aspects of commercial farming. Chaulagain heard about the technical training being provided by the cooperative from one of her friends

She enrolled into the training where she learnt about commercial farming of different off-seasonal vegetable farming by constructing tunnels. During the training, she received

comprehensive knowledge on post-harvest, integrated pest management and financial literacy (calculation of cost, revenue and profit). The training gave her the confidence to scale-up her farming and go commercial.

“I was confident enough to venture into commercial vegetable farming and have a business of my own,” said Chaulagain. “The cooperative also provided me a subsidized agricultural credit of NPR 100,000.” She used the amount to start tunnel farming. With the help of the agro-technician, intermittently provided by the cooperative, she began offseason



Figure 19: Nirmala Chaulagain in her semi commercial farm

vegetable production. The technician also educated her on the judicious use of fertilizers and pesticides. This helped her know about the dos and don'ts of commercial vegetable farming. "Availability of credit facility, training and other technical support from the cooperative made a huge difference and were crucial factors for my success as a commercial farmer," she said.

Currently, Nirmala produces a wide variety of vegetables including beans, bitter gourd, tomato and other leafy vegetables on a bigger scale. Last season alone, she managed to sell vegetables worth NPR 85,500. The sales volume increased by more than 200 percent from the previous season.

Sahaj signed partnership with Sahara Cooperative in March 2019 in order to improve smallholder women farmers' access to information on proper vegetable cultivation practices, financial services, market and irrigation. During the partnership period that ended in October 2019, Sahara Cooperative provided technical vegetable production training, financial literacy training, a few full-time technicians and subsidized plastic tunnels to farmers in Jhapa to promote commercial production of vegetables. Chaulagain is one of the many farmers that benefited from Sahaj's partnership with Sahara Cooperative.

Providing Agriculture Services in Hard to Reach Places

The Knowledge-Based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture in Nepal (KISAN - II) project is a Feed the Future Initiative funded by the USAID. A consortium of national and international organizations including Winrock International as the lead and CEAPRED as the main national partner has been implementing the project.

Kasturi Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. ("Kasturi") is a long-standing cooperative in Jajarkot, Nepal – a district with difficult terrain and limited access during certain parts of the year. Kasturi, with an aim of empowering rural communities through saving and credit services, has more recently begun promoting agriculture business improvements to guide rural communities towards sustainable farming businesses. Since then, the cooperative's business is booming, their members are thriving, and the local government is supporting and recognizing their efforts in multiple ways.

Working with KISAN II helped Kasturi members gain new skills and a platform to perform better in the agriculture sector. Expanding their agriculture service offerings gave the cooperative a good opportunity to closely

coordinate with their members and with different agriculture-related stakeholders. They began offering trainings, technical demonstrations, and field days to coach members on better agriculture practices. They also engaged with market actors to strengthen marketing linkages. Kasturi soon saw membership grow from 890 members to 1,636 members—an increase of 54% in roughly one year.

Collaborating with KISAN II also led to new linkages with local government and resources to help Kasturi pursue new developments. For example, they received a wholesale loan of Nrs.10 million from the National Cooperative Bank Ltd. in order to fulfill the credit needs of members and farming households. Kasturi initiated remittance financing, along with producing and disseminating a low-cost short video on remittance finance to raise awareness on the productive use of remittances. The cooperative also collaborated with their district's Agriculture Development Office (ADO) to construct a vegetable collection center, which will not only boost the cooperative's income, but will also contribute to a strengthened local vegetable market system. The ADO, which covered 70% of the Nrs. 3,600,000

(USD \$32,000) cost of the collection center is currently underway. The ADO also supported the cooperative with Nrs. 960,000 (USD \$8,500) towards the purchase of a small truck to be used for transportation of vegetables from farmers groups to the soon to-be opened collection center, as well as to further flung markets.

According to a senior manager at Kasturi, Raju KC, “After partnering with KISAN II, we got several opportunities to interact and coordinate with different agriculture

stakeholders. This creates good bonds to expand our working area in agriculture, which supports sustainability of the cooperative.” Kasturi also leveraged funding from the Bheri Municipality of Jajarkot, which has given written commitment of Nrs. 450,000 (USD \$4,000) by establishing a cool chamber at the new collection center. This commitment was secured after the Municipality visited the successful cool chamber facility of Babu & Shahi Vegetable Traders of Surkhet – an earlier site visit organized by KISAN II. These

developments did not go unnoticed in the district. As a result of its improvements and contributions to local agriculture, Kasturi was awarded a Nrs. 50,000 (USD \$450) prize by the province-level Chief Ministry for being the “best cooperative in the district.”

Since linking with KISAN II, the cooperative has realized the importance of jointly strengthening their own capacity alongside that of their member farmers in order to contribute to the success of agriculture in their district.

Shared Family Labor Reaps Farming Success

The Knowledge-Based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture in Nepal (KISAN - II) project is a Feed the Future Initiative funded by the USAID. A consortium of national and international organizations including Winrock International as the lead and CEAPRED as the main national partner has been implementing the project.

For Champa Devi Chaudhary, a 34-year old mother of two in Kanchanpur District in western Nepal, farming is a family affair, with help from her husband and college-age son. In one year, Champa has grown her family’s business and doubled their monthly net income by practicing demand-driven production techniques and by incorporating new

technologies gained by becoming an active member of the Saphal Farmers Group under Shirjansil Saving and Credit Cooperative in Shuklaphata—a KISAN II partner. Prior to joining the group, Champa mostly cultivated cereals (rice, wheat, maize and mustard), or seasonal vegetables using traditional methods on her family’s small piece of land. She and her husband did not know much about growing or marketing seasonally-produced vegetables. They worked hard but with an average monthly income of around Nrs. 15,000 (USD \$135), they struggled to make ends meet.

An opportunity to improve and scale up production staff

from Shirjansil Cooperative welcomed Champa into the farmers group, where she received an orientation on their agricultural extension services and learned about marketled production, crop calendars, and different improved production technologies. Champa learned the concept of cost-benefit analysis and assessing early and late vegetable planting to secure higher market prices. Her first attempt at growing cowpea crop thrived. After just one month, she began harvesting and quickly established linkages with vegetable traders in a nearby market, and with her husband’s help transporting their produce, they sold 2,600 kg of cowpeas earning Nrs. 124,000 (USD \$1,100) over a three-month

period. At the same time, Champa began to expand their vegetable production area by investing part of their cowpea income. They now grow vegetables year-round based on a market demand-driven production plan, which includes quality vegetables, such as cauliflower, cabbage, radish, tomato, and chili.

Market linkages to better market her fresh vegetables, Champa contacted vegetable traders of Mahendranagar market. Her husband supports their business by procuring seeds and fertilizer, and by implementing different cultivation practices, in

addition to transporting their harvested vegetables from the production site to the market. Their son also supports them by collecting market price information through phone calls to the traders. Due to this joint effort, vegetable sales reached nearly Nrs. 500,000 (USD \$4,400) in one year for Champa's family-run business. They have been saving enough to invest around 30% towards inputs and technologies to keep their business growing, and the approach has paid off. They now earn about Nrs. 30,000 (USD \$265) net monthly, which easily covers the basics, such as the children's

education and healthcare. They gladly share the workload equitably. With the help of the cooperative, they have made this a successful commercial vegetable production family business, with plans to gradually expand production and adopt more farming technologies. "Thanks to Shirjansil Saving and Credit Cooperative's staff for providing regular technical support. I learned about new production technologies and post-harvest practices. I can get both money and techniques from Srijanshil," Champa said.

MISCELLANEOUS

Virtual Zoom meeting on Digitally Enabled Seed Information System (DESIS)

Seed Quality Control Center (SQCC) in collaboration with the Nepal Seed and Fertilizer (NSAF-CIMMYT) project took an initiative to explore an automated solution and developed a Digitally Enabled Seed Information System (DESIS). The new system, developed by a Nepalese IT company, Pathway Technology Services Pvt Ltd, and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under NSAF project, enables users to access an online information on seed demand and supply (digital seed balance sheet) in real time and it also contains an electronic seed catalogue for released and registered varieties in Nepal (<https://seed.sqcc.gov.np/en>). The system allows seed stakeholders to have a unique login and place their seed demand and supply data. It is also designed to plan and monitor seed production and distribution over a period, and it is available on a mobile website and Android App.

In the context, to introduce the DESIS, SQCC in collaboration with CIMMYT organized a virtual meeting/workshop to validate and launch the system for wider use in Nepal to meet the objectives such as a) to introduce the newly developed DESIS (seed catalogue and balance sheet) b) to share the technical development process and the salient features of the DESIS and guide users to the key functions of the system, and c) to collect feedback and validate the system.

On behalf of the Executive Director of CEAPRED, Research/Program Coordinator-NSAFP participated the meeting on 21st May. During the meeting he raised queries about missing list of registered varieties of vegetables in the produced catalogue and about the regulation or provision for those who fail to overrule the generated seed balance sheet system.



A farmer installing plastic much in his field to plant capsicum.



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