

CEAPRED Newsletter

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PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Staff Gain New Insight for Future Implementation from Pause and Reflect Workshop

In September 2020, KISAN II project conducted a virtual pause-and-reflect workshop to allow the team to observe and analyze the context in which the project is operating, including the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to apply an adaptive management approach to improve implementation where and as needed. Staff reviewed project tactics through a relationship, ownership, and intensity lens and analyzed partners' market responses. The workshop helped to enhance the project's capacity to revise or change the strategies and understand private sector priorities and incentives during the life of the project and beyond. These new tactics informed KISAN II staff whether to amplify, adapt, or drop respective interventions. Further, while project's partner mills adapted their approach to produce more fine rice, other non-partner mills had not, indicating that widespread replication had not yet taken place. These insights informed the team's near-term approach on how to best support rice mills to promote sticky aspects of the rice mill model for wider adoption.

As a result of these discussions and exercises, the team agreed on the following successful activities that could potentially be amplified:

- Rice- Farmers' linkages with rice mills for improved sales; linkages to agrovets/cooperatives for improved inputs; infrastructure development for enhanced milling capacity; and GON collaboration with rice mills to scale production of fine rice.
- Vegetables- Access to improved inputs through agrovets; improved sales linkage with traders.
- Lentils- Farmers' linkages with millers for improved market access, and with agrovets for improved access to inputs.
- Maize- Farmers' linkages with agrovets for improved agri-input access and with feed processors.
- Goat -Breed improvement through goat farms' use of AI and disease management through agrovets, cooperatives, and in collaboration with GON.

By applying tools learned in the workshop, the team is helping GON replicate and scale the KISAN II rice mill model outside of the Feed the Future ZOIs through "light touch" support. The team is also helping agribusinesses, improve client recordkeeping of target customers from marginalized groups through GESI-focused customer profiling, thus improving the business case to serve women and disadvantaged farmers. After recognizing the stickiness of the private sector extension model, KISAN II is helping partners integrate technical services into their core business models for the long term. Lastly, project's BLP, which was forced to adapt its modalities in response to COVID-19, has observed a rapid uptake of virtual implementation at the community level. Heightened local ownership of this program has resulted in two provincial governments expressing interest in replicating the program on their own, with initial mentoring from the project.



Mr. Bharat Neupane describing about the climate resilient technologies demonstrated at learning center in the visit

Monitoring of the RMS pilot site from President Office, National Planning Commission and MoFE

On 24 November 2020, field monitoring of the RMS pilot site was carried out by a team of Advisor of President Office Mr. Lalbabu Yadav, Mrs. Laxmi Karki,- Member of National Planning Commission, Dr. Krishna Prasad Oli,- Secretary of Ministry of Forests and Environment, Mr. Bishwonath Oli- Personal Secretary of President Mr. Som Rai- Project coordinator of ICIMOD, Mr. Nand Kishor Agarwal and Program Director of CEAPRED, Mr. Keshab Datta Joshi. The team visited the RMS pilot site at Chaurangefedi- 6, Namobuddha Municipality. During the visit, they observed the project promoted Jholmal trails, demonstration plots, tunnel farming, soil cement tank, water harvesting technology, cowshed management, IPM tools and learning center with several climate resilient technologies.

While interacting with the farmers regarding the preparation of different bio- fertilizers, bio-pesticides and its effective application, they explained how they have been benefited with the simple and affordable technologies that were designed to collect waste-water from various household chores; using home-made bio-pesticides and bio-fertilizers in insect- pest management and increasing crop production adopting low cost poly-house tunnels for off-season vegetables production and using ICT in agriculture. The visitors from the president office, planning commission and MOFE appreciated the work carried out by CEAPRED in the field of agriculture and climate change and also suggested to initiate alternate energy promotion work in the RMS pilot sites.

Honorable Ministers Visit in Kapilbastu

On October 14, 2020, Kisan II organized a field visit program including Lumbini Province MoLMAC minister Arati Poudel and Secretary, Dr. Rewati Raman Poudel along with PMAMP Rice Super Zone chief, AKC Kapilbastu chief at Kapilbastu district. During the visit visitors took firsthand information from flex board installed at fine rice block. The Minister and secretary then interacted with the farmers and further cleared their queries with extension worker and K2 teams.



Honorable Minister Ms. Arati Poudel and Secretary Mr. Rewati Raman Poudel of MOLMAC in Kapilbastu

Interaction meeting with value chain actors

Two events of value chain actor's meetings was conducted in Dailekh and Surkhet district in KISAN II project. The major objective of the meeting was to assess and pass the information on vegetable market status to all actors such as lead farmers, retailers, traders, agrovets and other related actors. During the interaction discussion on demand and supply relation of market was conducted and thereby understand the buyers' demand/ requirements & establish stronger linkages between buyers and producers even in the current scenario of COVID 19 or if further worse in future.

Participants in the event were from commercial vegetable producers, local vegetable collectors, Agrovets, local vegetable traders and ward chairperson. During the meeting, traders briefed about their storing and distribution challenges and urged farmers to ensure the quality of produce adopting appropriate

packaging while sending the vegetables outside the district.. Prabal Shahi, the proprietor of Babu & Shahi cold storage reported the farmers that he has a total of 200 Mt capacity cold storage, that was constructed with the support of Karnali Province MOLMAC and came into functional from last month. Further, he offered the farmers to store their products in the store during surplus production and minimize the spoilage of their products. This interaction meeting helped informed various stakeholders on different crop varieties, availability of seeds, improved technologies etc. The key participants such as lead farmers assured and committed to grow the vegetable in full capacity; the chairperson of Surkhet agro-vet's association assured farmers to avail the required inputs; Municipality Officials committed to support on policy/transportation matter, traders/collection center committed to purchase vegetable, which is produced as per demand of market by farmers.

Registration and release process of Cauliflower pipelines varieties

With an objective to test and demonstrate the best management practices (BMP) in targeted district and the pockets, varietal demonstrations of cauliflower were conducted in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 using two pipeline varieties- HRDCAU002, HRDCAU003 and one registered variety- Khumal Jyapu and one farmers' preferred variety as local check in NSAFP project. While analyzing their performance based on their yield period of cultivation, taste and flavor content, two pipeline varieties- HRDCAU002, HRDCAU003 found most promising. and recommended to initiate their registration and or release process.



Cauliflower varietal demonstration plot during harvesting at Ghorai Sub Metro Guruwa Gaun

Joint monitoring of the RMS pilot site from local governing bodies, municipal staffs and agriculture branch

Joint monitoring of the RMS pilot site from local governing bodies including staff from municipal and agriculture unit was carried out in Kavre, Rasuwa and Dadeldhura districts. The main objective behind the visit was to monitor the ongoing activities in the area and to

coordinate the farmers groups with the municipality for the sustainable services in long run. Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Ward Chairpersons, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chief of Agriculture Branch along with technical staff monitored the project sites in all three districts. During

the visit, the team has observed the Jholmal trails, demonstration plots, tunnel farming, soil cement tank, water harvesting technology, cowshed management, IPM tools and learning center with several climate resilient technologies. At the end of visit the Deputy Mayor of Dhulikhel municipality expressed his gratitude to CEAPRED for promoting the safe food production in Dhulikhel area. The Chairperson of Amachhodingmo RM acknowledged CEAPRED and the project for driving the farmers mass towards safe vegetable production in the area. Similarly the Chairperson of Bhageshwar RM committed to establish learning center on each wards of the rural municipality.



Deputy Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer understanding the pheromones trap and its principle of controlling the insect at Kalchebeshi

MAJOR TRAININGS/ WORKSHOPS

Good Agriculture Practices and Food Safety on Vegetables Training



Nabakiran Collection Center, Shuklaphat, Khanchanpur

Under Local context, few grantees have organized training on Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) and Food Safety on Vegetable in Kanchanpur district under KISAN II. The major objective was to raise the awareness about GAP including post-harvest management practices, its importance and to indicate the quality difference between products produced through GAP/ IPM and inorganic method . Farmers were taught about GAP and food safety at local context and demonstrated sorting, grading, use of bleaching powder and personal hygiene practices during harvesting time. Eight events were conducted where 184 farmers participated in the training.

Fall Armyworm (FAW) identification and management training

Under KISAN II in Rolpa district, Jaljala Seed Company grantee has conducted four events of FAW identification and management training in consultation with PMAMP maize zone. During the event facilitators focused on how to identify FAW larvae, adult and damage symptoms. Different pictorial materials were used to facilitate the session. Similarly, scouting the pest and when to apply pesticide was taught and discussed. Importance of chemical control measure was also discussed together with IPM practices. Farmers were mobilized not to spray any pesticide other than the one now easily available in the district. A total 70 participants were actively participated in the training.

PHOTO GALLERY

Activities in our ongoing projects



CRP and AT demonstrating the use of pheromone trap and safe use of pesticide in Dhulikhel – Speed for Life



Farmer in Sunsari district spreads the maize grains for drying – Sahaj (NAMDP)



Participants of ToT in Kanchanpur- Skill up



Cauliflower Varietal demonstration in Ghorai - NSAFP



IPM Training in Sindhupalchowk – KISAN II



Farmers field activities in Kailali – KISAN II



Farmer field day at Bersana Farmer Group, Rapti RM-4, Dang, Chaudhary Rice Mill - KISAN II



High yielding rice variety Super China variety demonstration plot at Dang - KISAN II



Group formation by new grantee in Nuwakot - KISAN II



Farmers practicing the preparation of Jhol mal in Dhulikhel - KISAN II



Seed production training in Helambu - Speed for life

SUCCESS STORIES

Lift Irrigation Scheme Brings New Hope to Farmers

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 years, members of the Shiva Shakti Mahila Farmers' Group of Mangalsen Municipality in Achham watched their water sources drying up, leading to acute water shortages. KISAN II's support to the Thulla Dhara Irrigation Project changed this by bringing irrigation to four hectares of land. In a cost-shared arrangement, the project contributed NRs. 33,500 (USD 281) and the local municipality NRs. 60,000 (USD 503), while community provided labor. When the mayor of Mangalsen Municipality visited the area and witnessed how the farmers are benefitting from the new irrigation system, he vowed to provide further contributions towards agriculture in his community.

New business literacy skills encourage female farmer to invest more in agriculture

Ms. Sanu Maya Tamang, a Business Literacy Program (BLP) participant from Kavrepalanchowk, has changed her way of living. Before BLP training, her farm outputs were limited, so she occasionally worked for daily wages, earning NRs. 4,000-5,000 (USD 34-42) at most. Her husband's income was also nominal.

After taking part in the BLP, Sanu noted, "I can now weigh and calculate the value of vegetables and explore market prices all by myself." She added, "During the lockdown, I sold vegetables worth NRs. 15,000 (USD 126) with a good margin. Encouraged by that, I have invested NRs. 30,000 (USD 252) towards cultivating high-value vegetables, like tomato, cauliflower, and potato." Sanu said she will increase investment in coming seasons. The BLP long course training, along with KISAN II private sector partner extension services, helps Sanu meet household expenses through farming.

Dammari Bista, a farmer of Shiva Shakti Mahila Farmers' Group, described how the project supported to improve in her livelihood. . "For the first in six year, my farm produces food to last for eight months, enough to feed my family. " she reported. The irrigation facility helped her grow a range of vegetables, plus maize—enough to feed her family and sell at market. Last season (March-September 2020), she earned NRs. 150,000 (USD 1,264); she plans to re-invest her profits into additional vegetable production.

Transforming the Farm into Organic

The heavy use of chemicals as pesticides and fertilizers is a common practice in commercial farming in Nepal. Increasing awareness on harmful effects of those chemicals is bringing about a shift of change to bio-pesticides and homemade organic manure use. Sunita Dhital, aged 42, is a permanent residence of Namobuddha Municipality-2. She is a member of the Radhakrishna Mahila Farmer Group. Though she had been involved in commercial vegetable production since last

10 years, the income from her farm from few years had been decreasing gradually as the inputs needed (seeds, chemical fertilizers and plant protection materials) getting costly and not available in time. Despite of farming in commercial scale, the net income from the production was low, as higher prices had to be paid for the inputs.

With the intervention of CEAPRED ASIA AID Project in her village, she participated in different trainings

regarding safe food production and climate smart practices. After getting awareness and witnessed the benefit from organic production, Sunita decided to adopt the practices and use Jhol Mal instead of chemical fertilizers in her farm. "The preparation is easy, the materials used are also locally available and the effect on the insects and diseases is so prominent" says Sunita. She has been using mulching in tomato production, pheromones and other traps for insect control, Jhol mal 1, 2 and 3 for the disease pest control. One plastic pond of 18000 liters for rainwater collection and irrigation purpose has been established. She adds, "The cost of the production was so high and the price in the market was low when we were using chemicals and on top of that it was not safe for consumption; but when we received the training and started using these technologies the cost has been reduced, we feel safe and the vegetables taste better"

Sunita earned net income of NRs. 1 Lakh this season from the sales of cauliflower, tomato, onion, cucumber, akbare and local chilly. She has been continuously receiving the SMS of market price of Banepa and Kalimati, technical messages and weather information that has increased her bargaining power and proper planning of cultivation practice of the vegetables and seeds. She plans to continue this practice in future, make her farm completely safe, and produce organic quality vegetables.



Sunita Dhital in her Organic farm



Tripartite Initiative Gave a New Life to Parajuli Duo's Goat Farm

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.

Chhabi Raman Parajuli and his nephew Nabin Parajuli, residents of Dibrung Chuichumma Rural Municipality of Khotang district and owner of Parajuli Krishi Tatha Bakhra Farm started their goat farm two years ago after returning from almost a decade long foreign employment. With an investment of around NPR 1.2 million, Parajuli duo bought 100 does and a 75-percent boer buck, built a shed and registered their farm at Cottage and Small Industries. The duo's plan while starting the enterprise was to grow bigger and upgrade it as a model goat farm in the community. However, the upgradation plan hit a snag due to lack of enough financial resources, limited technical knowledge and lack of access to relevant resource centers.

At the same time, Dibrung Chuichumma municipality had approached Sahaj for goat sector development after learning about Sahaj's working modality at a cluster workshop. After few official meetings with Bhupendra Rai, chairperson of Dibrung Chuichumma Rural Municipality, a public-private partnership model was developed to run

a goat resource center and provide various services to the smallholder goat farmers of the area. Parajuli Krishi Farm was considered the best fit among a list of goat farms in the municipality to test the model. With the support from the rural municipality and Sahaj, Parajuli Krishi built well-ventilated shed with proper feeding stall, managed a 12-ropani fodder and forage field with round-the-year irrigation facilities and increased the herd size by purchasing 15 more does. The partnership also helped the farm to get training on proper goat rearing practices, goat health management and record-keeping in order to avoid inbreeding. Likewise, Parajuli Krishi was able to establish linkage with a network of other goat rearing farmers—small scale and large—for business as well as information sharing.

At present, the farm is providing breeding services from the boer buck to the small-scale farmers of the region and buying back the kids. Similarly, they also offer advisory services, basic medication to the goats as well as saplings and seeds of fodder and forage to other farmers. "While establishing the farm, we never thought that such services could be sources of income," said Nabin Parajuli, one of the owners of the farm. "At present, the breeding service alone is generating around NPR 15,000 in a month. By April 2020, the farm also sold around 10 boer-cross kids within Dibrung Chuichumma and the nearby area generating around NPR 170,000.



Bhuwan monitoring his tomato production

Paicho Pasa Inspires a Youth to Abandon the Idea of Foreign Employment and Earn Substantial Income Through Commercial Vegetable Farming

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Bhuwan Kharal of Hunga, Gulmi, abandoned his idea of foreign employment and started commercial vegetable farming after he received better access to assured market and fair price for his produce. Such access was possible after Paicho Pasal Private Limited, one of the partners of Sahaj, started giving buyback arrangement for the farmers of the region. Kharal after completing his undergraduate in 2015 tried his hands at different income-generating activities like a job in a finance company and vegetable trading. However, he was not satisfied with the returns from those activities. He thought of going abroad for employment as he had seen many people from his neighbourhood doing that and sending back significant amount of money. But once he heard of Paicho Pasal providing technical assistance and buyback guarantee to the farmers, Kharal got curious about this new company and their way of doing business. In the past too, Kharal was involved in cultivating seasonal vegetables and selling the produce to vegetable markets in Palpa and Butwal. But the fluctuating prices, and lack of reliable buyers and assured market dented his confidence forcing him to quit.

After talking to the representatives from Paicho, he learnt that they were even providing inputs on credit, technical assistance for farmers who were interested in going into commercial vegetable farming along with the buyback guarantee for any amount of vegetables produced. This really encouraged Kharal and he decided to give it a try. There has been no looking back after he took the decision to work with Paicho. He has been a regular supplier of vegetables for Paicho Pasal

ever since. This season (January to June 2020) alone, Kharal earned around NPR 2 million by selling just tomatoes planted in 36 ropanies (1.83 Hectares) of land he leased in Argeli of Palpa district. This was possible despite the trade disruption due to Covid 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown in the whole country. Paicho Pasal collected the tomatoes straight from his farm-gate and also paid a fair price for it. "As I was confident that Paicho would purchase all my produce, I planted more than 100,000 saplings and produced around 50 tons of tomatoes this season," said Kharal. Apart from the buyback arrangement, Paicho also helps farmers like him with technical and advisory services. "The well-educated and experienced agri-technicians from Paicho visit us regularly offering different suggestions and guidance," he added. The partnership with Sahaj, according to Dhruba Neupane, managing director of the company, gave Paicho Pasal the intellectual support in terms of generating ideas through mutual discussions and financial support during a crucial time of company's operation. "Kharal is one of the most successful farmers of the region and is increasing his farm production capacity every year," said Neupane. "Our aim is to help many more farmers in the region to become like him."

At present, Kharal is very proud of his decision to drop the foreign employment plan and start commercial vegetable farming. "I am involved in commercial vegetable farming for last five years and I am glad that I chose to stay at my homeland," he said. "Enterprise like Paicho Pasal is creating an environment for youths like us to involve in income-generating activities at our hometown."

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Coordination meeting on Baitadi Local onion: opportunities for its commercialization**

After the official registration of Baitadi Local onion on 3 May 2020 as a national variety by National Seed Board (NSB), joint efforts were deemed necessary to promote its source seed management, packaging and marketing interventions. So, with the initiation of CIMMYT, a coordination meeting on Baitadi Local onion: opportunities for its commercialization was held on 12 Nov. During the meeting Program Coordinator, NSAF presented a paper on "Baitadi Local onion: opportunities for its commercialization" and followed by wider discussion resulting some key recommendations.

- **Thematic Working Group meeting on Agriculture and Food Security held**

First Thematic Working Group meeting on agriculture and food security in Nepal National Adaptation Plan/NAP process was held on 2 September through Zoom in which on behalf of CEAPRED as a focal person, Program Coordinator participated the meeting. The Chair of the meeting was Joint Secretary of MoALD. The panel of discussion included a thematic paper on "Introduction of the GCF NAP Project" and a methodological framework on vulnerability and risk assessment (VRA) and its indicators was discussed successfully

- **Sixth Technical Committee meeting held**

Sixth Technical Committee Meeting of NSAFP was held on 7 December in which on behalf of CEAPRED, Executive Director and Program Coordinator participated the meeting. The chair of the meeting was Director General of Department of Agriculture (DoA). On behalf of CIMMYT, Dr. Dyutiman Choudhary, Dr. AbduRahaman, Dr. Dilli KC and Dr. Shriniwas Gautam participated the meeting.

- **Buyer and Seller Out grower Meeting with vegetable traders, dealer, agent and Municipality personnel**

The Gairitad Vegetable collection center of Kisan II project in Achham conducted one event of out grower meeting with 20 Participants (Female-4 male-16). During the meeting ward chairperson, trader and grantee representatives participated. In this meeting, each stakeholder explained the current situation and the constraints faced in their business and service delivery due to COVID 19. Given the present situation, ward office agreed to provide agri-input support (seed, fertilizer, pesticide, tools) while the grantee partner agreed on providing technical training & guidance to the farmers.

- **Soil testing service by private sector partner**

Nava Jeevan Sana Kisan Agriculture cooperative and Phakhel agriculture Cooperative of KISAN II have provided soil testing service to their member farmers. A total 344 samples were tested, and solution were provided to farmers. The test result shown that most of soil sample tested were acidic in nature and recommended for agriculture lime based on their pH value. The Nava Jeevan Sana Kisan Agriculture Cooperative has coordinated with Helambu rural municipality to supply the agriculture lime to the farmers. Now farmers are much aware about the suitable pH range for the commercial vegetable farming



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