

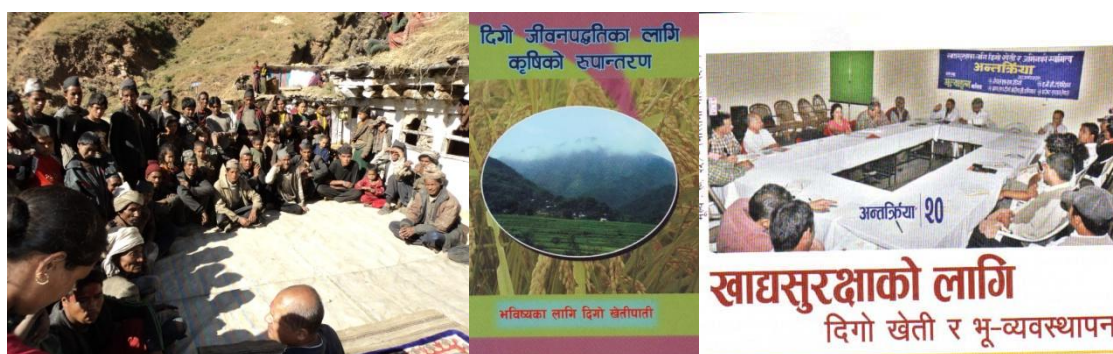
Progress report on Food and sustainable farming initiative

Establishment of Resource Centre and Context Mapping on Food Security and Sustainable Farming

This brief report summarizes the activities, achievements and lessons learned of the initiative during the period of 6 month [July-December, 2010] and the activity plan for year 2011.

Food and agriculture
initiative, ForestAction,
Nepal

Team members: Krishna, Madhav, Sujata, Dharma, Tara, Bhumi and Vijay



Food and sustainable agriculture initiative



"Sustainable Agriculture for Future"

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Establishment of Resource Centre and Context Mapping on Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

1. Background:

With the aim to bring the agenda of food and sustainable farming in front through knowledge based policy advocacy as well as facilitating farming communities for sustainable farming practices, a food and sustainable agriculture initiative was initiated by a team of professionals based at ForestAction in July 2010 with the financial assistance from Action Aid and Helvetas, Nepal. Need for such initiative was envisioned while exploring local food system, livelihoods and its political economy through a study commissioned by Action Aid to a Team of researchers who are now engaged with the initiative. Initially it was discussed to address identified gaps and problematic areas in promoting food security and sustainable farming through coordinated activities of facilitating farming communities as well as continuation of context mapping towards developing a comprehensive proposal to work on food security and sustainable farming practice for future.

2. Program objective and expected outcome

For the first one and half year, the aim of the initiative was to consolidate ideas and prepare for actions to bring the agenda of food security and sustainable farming in front and facilitate community mobilization through building capacities of front liners. The specific sets objectives were as follows:

- ***Bring food security and sustainable agriculture into public debate through policy research and alliances building***
- ***strengthen mechanism of knowledge exchange through creating resources centres equipped with database, research findings and publications on food and agriculture***
- ***Build the capacity of frontline extension worker, social mobilisers and innovative farmers on the social, institutional and technical aspects of food security and sustainable agriculture***
- ***Strengthen networking and regular sharing among small and marginal farmers***

These objectives were set to bring food and sustainable farming in wider public debate through generating critical knowledge on gaps and scopes of the food and sustainable farming issues as well as facilitate local processes of community mobilisation, capacity building and networking activities and their documentation to feed into public policy arena.

Within this inception phase [first 6 months], the expected output of the initiative was envisioned to set up an resource centre team, establishment of database, develop relationships with wider stakeholders including farming communities and foundational work on media mobilisation and publicity, interactive processes of capacity building and wider networking along with continuation of context mapping exercise on food and sustainable farming. In specific, develop milestones to achieve medium and long term goals: a) bring intellectual debate on the food and sustainable agriculture based on knowledge and evidences at macro level and b) facilitate sustainable farm practices at the farmer's field to enrich from the local experiences. For this it was envisioned that by the end of 6 month, we will be a) mapping and documentation on sustainable agriculture b) functional support to 8-10 farming communities c) preparatory works on publicity and public debate and c) networking and alliances building activities along with wider consultation on the agenda.

3. Progress update

In the following section the key achievements of the initiative and activities in progress are highlighted. These tasks are carried out in accordance with the planned activities aiming to meet set objectives of the initiative.

Beginning with office set up and team building to run the coordinated activities of resource centre, the conceptual frame work of the initiative was discussed widely with the likeminded individuals, institutions as well as networks. This programme was designed based on the recommendation of the earlier context mapping exercise, where the potential areas of future works on food security and sustainable agriculture were identified. Initially, several informal meetings and interactions were organised to share the preliminary finding of the context mapping as well as outline of the proposed initiative to get feedback on the initiative.

Identification and recruitment of core team members as well as identification of potential interns/collaborators was the second step of this phase. A small team of the staff coordinated by Krishna P Paudel was recruited to run the resource centre based at ForestAction, Nepal. After recruiting a core team, a series of internal meetings were held to discuss about the proposed programme and working modalities. Once team internalised the conceptual frame of the programme, roles and responsibilities were divided among the team member.

For the first phase of the initiative [6 month], It was envisioned that the programme will kick off with an inception workshop to consult and co-create the institutional, collaborative mechanism and to develop working strategies and approaches with a multidisciplinary professional core team who will be directly involved to carry out

proposed activities of the resource centre with the advisory support from the organic intellectuals, professionals and the leaders who believe, follow and promote the principles of regenerative agriculture. However, after informal consultations with many of the potential professional members, it was recognised that there is no need of formal inception workshop right now rather it is important to put constant efforts to engage them closely through issue based interactions and communications. Therefore at this stage, the proposed formal inception meeting was postponed till the initiative takes its shape organically. The team will keep active communication with these professionals as well as engage them in various activities of the initiative.

3.1 Key Activities in progress...

There are various on-going activities to meet the stated objectives. Some are at very beginning stage and some are in processes. The main activities in processes are as follows:

Wider consultations: There are many initiatives around the issue of food security, sustainable agriculture and land rights-interconnected issues of local livelihoods. However these are scattered and isolated with diverse type of intervention. The initial stepping into these issues means communicating our perspective with the concerned stakeholders and to bring these agenda of food and sustainable farming into public debate. This was done through the regular sharing, interaction and active participation in networks meetings, workshops, and raised the issues of food and agriculture.

There was continuous dialogue and discussions among the partners, and other organisation working in the similar field. During this period, we put lots of efforts in building relations with various institutions, networks and communities as well as preparatory works on mobilising farming communities. We identified potential farming communities to work with and interacted with them to explore the potential areas of further support and networking. Towards this, a consultative meeting is proposed on 12th of October, 2010.

Interaction with 8-10 farming communities: This is an on-going activity of the initiative. So far, we have identified and interacted with 13 different farming communities with whom we will be engage in farming community mobilisation activities and case studies documentation. Among these 6 are ActionAid partners and others are likeminded partners working in the same thematic areas. The interactions with these communities were intensified after consultation meeting with partners in 31st October.



Policy review works: There are two major review works going on a) review of agriculture from alternative perspective b) review of party's manifesto and draft constitution to look their commitment on food and agriculture. We aim to produce these as the discussion papers in Nepali.

Networking: Networking is the major activity of the initiative with the aim to build alliances of farming communities and organic intellectuals working in the field of food and sustainable farming. The networking activities are intensified to bring the food and agriculture in public debate as well as communicate existing problems, prospects of food and agriculture with concerned stakeholders including political parties.

At the same time innovative farmers networking activities are under way in Chitwan valley. In Chitwan district a multi-stakeholder forum of service providers have been created to see how such networks function in providing services to needy farmers. Similarly, formation of a farmer's network at Chitwan valley level is planned which is being started organising a interactive workshop. The aim of this networking is to build a regional/national farmer's network in future.

Media/publication: one of the major activities of the initiative is to bring food and agriculture in front through publicity and media works, apart from an introductory booklet in Neali, a feature article in Mulyankan was published [see mangsir 1, 2067], discussion with Sajha Sabal group, agriculture journalists, and publication of special issue of Ban Sampada [FA journal in Nepali] is taking place. Similarly, discussion with an FM radio broadcaster to air a programme on food and sustainable agriculture in weekly basis, this will be implemented in next year, given the availability of resources.



SA mapping: Development of a web portal with the aim to upload relevant information on food and sustainable agriculture is under construction, which will be a web based resource library for public use. Focus will be the presentation of sustainable agriculture initiatives across the country, including presentation of available documents around these issues.

Apprenticeship course: This is an approach designed to mobilise farming communities through apprenticeship course where 25 participants from 13 districts are participating in the course. They will play key role of community mobilisation with back up support from the FA team. We have completed the first module of the course and planning next module from February 18th.



Context mapping exercise:

Following the context mapping exercise of 6 farming communities, we also engaged in conducting a study on local food system, livelihoods and its political economy in Mugu and Bajura in partnership with CARE Nepal. We are also planning to produce policy brief and journal article from these reports.



Others: discussions on public policies on food and agriculture, food crisis in Karnali and running Thimura farm and courses are some other interrelated activities in progress. We are also continuously interacting with other likeminded institutions/organisations to raise the voices and provide effective inputs to the farming communities.

3.2 Planned activities and key achievements

Here are some highlights of the tasks completed during the first 6 month.

Proposed Activities to be done	Key tasks/ Achievements	Status
<i>Bring food security and sustainable agriculture into public debate through policy research and alliances building</i>	• Published Booklet on Food & Sustainable Agriculture and started wider distribution to the related organizations and individuals.	Completed
	• Interaction with District level Agriculture Stakeholders in Chitwan and formation of a committee for SA extension with involvement of DADO. Conducted two follow up meetings.	Completed
	• Interaction with party's peasant leaders (Central, Chitwan, Makwanpur & Nawalparasi)	ongoing
	• Journal Hamro Ban Sampada Special Issue of Food & Sustainable agriculture.	Completed
	• Discussion with "Sajha sawal" for special episode on food & sustainable agriculture with BBC Nepal.	Collection of articles
	• Article in Kantipur (paper articles)	Proposed for Feb-March. 2011
	• Workshop with Mulyankan.	See Kantipur,5 October
	• Produced feature articles	See Mulyankan Mangsir 1, 2o67

Proposed Activities to be done	Key tasks/ Achievements	Status
<i>strengthen mechanism of knowledge exchange through creating resources centres equipped with database, research findings and publications on food and agriculture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of agriculture related publications, policy documents and research findings is in process. • Published report of the case studies of 6 VDCs [earlier study]. • Formation of SA initiative team within ForestAction, Office set up and team building • Review of national agriculture policy from alternative perspective. • Review on food and agriculture in political party's manifesto and constitution draft. • Development of webpage & content development. • Context mapping of Bajura and Mugu with CARE's partnership. • Finalization of the Report & presentation of context mapping (CARE) 	<p>Continue...</p> <p>See report</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Tabulation completed and analysis on going fainitiative.org</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
<i>Build the capacity of frontline extension worker, social mobilisers and innovative farmers on the social, institutional and technical aspects of food security and sustainable agriculture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct/field visit & interaction with communities (Kaski, Chitwan, Dhanusha, Bajura, Sindhupalchowk, Bardiya, Surkhet, Rasuwa, Jumla, Tehrathum, Mugu, Sarlahi & Siraha.) • Preparatory meeting – apprenticeship course Planning meeting. • Background study of farming communities and preparation of profiles • First module (7 days) of the apprenticeship course, participated by 25 participants. 	<p>Completed</p> <p>31st October, 2010</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Completed</p>
<i>Strengthen networking and regular sharing among small and marginal farmers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper presented by Krishna Prasad paudel in party's meeting. • Paper "Forest Policy Reframing" presented on Forest Policy Seminar Series in Kathmandu. • Participated in interactions meetings (AAN, Karnali food security workshop, COCAP workshop, right to Food Network, Rampur agriculturist and land rights) • Interaction with likeminded institutions, individuals and organizations in KTM. • Meeting with peasants leaders in Chitwan • Formation of Multi stakeholder's forum in Chitwan • Formation of network of peasant's leaders in Chitwan valley level (Chitwan, Makwanpur & Nawalparasi) • Regular visit to farming communities 	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Proposed Activities to be done	Key tasks/ Achievements	Status
<i>Documentation of the context mapping exercise at the end of six months i.e. Dec 2010</i>	Draft reports of field visits, meetings and workshops have been prepared and will be used to develop a comprehensive progress report at the end of December, 2010.	completed

3.3 Six month review and lessons from reflection

Having the progress in achieving activity outputs in place, in 3rd week of December the team organised a review meeting at Thimura aiming to review the progress so far and planning for next year. This reflection meeting reviewed on the context, outcomes and process of the initiative.

The context: It was very timely initiative on the food and sustainable agriculture as major stakeholders are concerned to make food security and agriculture at work. Although the political as well as policy context is not much conducive, we all agreed there is enough space to push food and agriculture agenda bringing insightful observation on the current status of the farming in various parts of the country [context mapping], initiate public debate on the issue through media mobilisation and piloting community mobilisation towards developing understanding as well as practices of sustainable farming at local level. Also, there is a need to further strengthening the networks and alliances of the farmers and service providers building activities around the food security and sustainable agriculture.

The most important issue is that mainstream high input ‘green revolution’ agriculture is damaging health of soil as well as living being including human. There need to have more debate on these issues, at the same time promotion of sustainable farming practices.

We also recognised that there is a need to prioritise activities that makes most sense - the innovative approaches to knowledge generation through community and front line activist mobilisation to update knowledge and information for policy debate.

The process: we approached to bring evidences from local contest mapping, community mobilisation through frontline activists and social mobilisers, media mobilisation for wider public debate and synthesis of research products for wider communication and networking through organising coordinated activities by a team. This is a huge task and needs lots of energy and efforts to make it work. We need to be more focused to build the blocks and spiralling up slowly. For this we need to coordinate and build partnership with similar initiative across the country.

The outcome: Although we were little behind the proposed activity schedule, the team observed overall outcomes so far are satisfying. In specific, we reflected that our contribution in bringing the food and agriculture issues in public debate is moving in right direction- interactive meetings, publications and media mobilisation. At the same time, the community mobilisation and support activities are taking board – modular apprenticeship course for front line activists and social mobiliser ; however, we find our engagement in SA mapping and documentation activities are little slow. We need to strengthen this part of the initiative in coming year.

3.4 List of Outputs

S.N	Key Outputs
1	Booklet on food and sustainable farming
2	Feature article in Mulyankan, Kantipur, coverage in ABC, Nepal FM
3	Presentations and interviews on Food and sustainable farming in various forums
4	Background study reports of 8 farming communities (ActionAid and Care)
5	Completed first modular course of Apprenticeship
6	Discussion paper on food and agriculture in party's manifestos and draft constitution [in progress]
7	Review of agriculture policy [in progress]
8	Video documentary on status and scope of food and agriculture in Nepal [in progress]
9	Special issue on food and agriculture in Hamro Ban Sampada [in progress]
10	Web site: FA initiative.org [mapping SA]

4. Financial statement

ForestAction Nepal

Satdobato, Lalitpur

Final Financial Statement

Food Security and Sustainable Farming Initiative

Period: July to 31 December 2010

S.N.	Details	Rate	Approved Budget	Actual Expenses (July to 31 december 2010)	Balance for remaning period
A	Operational Cost				
	Office set up and equipments (furniture and furnishing, computers, printer and stationeries)		200000	199783	217
	Communication, local travel, team building costs		75000	82416	-7416
	Office space, runner, utilities, and maintenance		100000	100000	0
	Staff cost				0

	Coordinator	60000	360000	360000	0
	Programme officer	15000	90000	90000	0
	Part time finance officer	10000	60000	60000	0
	Sub-total		885000	892199	-7199
B	Programme costs				
	Farm School to support 8-10 farming communities** across the country	750000	750000	750000	0
	Web portal design and update		60000	59284	716
	Advocacy campaign and meeting costs [travel, w/s]	L/S	100000	18330	81670
	Campaigner - 1	25000	150000	112500	37500
	research, study and evidence base [travel, meeting, resource materials]	L/S	100000	90000	10000
	Research officer 1	30000	180000	150000	30000
	Capacity building and network support [travel, workshop, training]	L/S	180000	66941	113059
	Field Facilitator - 1	30000	180000	105000	75000
	SA initiative mapping exercise-travel, communication and meeting costs	L/S	300000	272000	28000
	Vedio documentary (initiative mapping)			275000	-275000
	Provision for Nepali journal (Special issue on food security)			85000	-85000
	Sub-total		2000000	1984055	15945
	Total (A+B)		2885000	2876254	8746



Checked By
Head- Admin. Finance



Approved By
Project Coordinator

Forest Resources Studies and Action Team (ForestAction) Nepal			
Fund Accountability Statement			
Dec-10			
	Particulars	Amount Rs.	Total Amount Rs.
A	Total Funds During the Period		2,103,750.00
	Opening Balance		
	Grant Received From ActionAid	2,103,750.00	
B	Expenditure		2,876,254.00
	Expenses made as per financial statement from July to december 2010	2,876,254.00	

C	Balance of Funds			(772,504.00)
	Balance & Payable		(772,504.00)	
E	Expenditue and Balance total			2,103,750.00

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