Promotion of vegetable cultivations in hills of Rasuwa

Rasuwa is a district under limelight located at Bagmati Province with great potentiality of animal husbandry and crop production. Ammachhodingmo Rural Municipality is located in northern part of Rasuwa where most of the farmers are engaged in chauri and sheep farming along with traditional crop cultivation. The farmers' income was insufficient to support their livelihood, and they were obliged to seek alternate jobs. The land held potential, but farmers continued to produce in conventional ways due to a lack of proper guidance and access to modern technologies. To address these issues, ten farmers' groups and one cooperative were formed in 2020 with the support of CEAPRED under the RMS project in Wards 3, 4, and 5, namely Gatlang, Goljung, and Chilime. This program provided farmers with simple and affordable technologies, the majority of which were prepared locally and are beneficial to human health and the environment.

Figure 1 Farmers monitoring the pest of cabbage in the lower parts of leaves in close supervision of CEAPRED team at Rasuwa

The lack of easy access to agri-inputs supply, technical support for modern agriculture practices, and market connections were the most pressing challenges in the area. Locals must travel to distant markets, such as Dhunche or Nuwakot, to purchase a packet of each essential input. To address this issue, the Chamgang Tarkari Utpadak Krishi Sahakari Sanstha Ltd was founded in the heart of Ammachodingmo RM, namely Goljung, to facilitate the provision of agricultural inputs. Following ease access to agri-inputs in the area, knowledge parks were developed to demonstrate a variety of climate-resilient technologies

such as jholmals, vermicompost, tricho-compost, soil cement tank, IPM tools, mulching techniques, drip irrigation, tunnel farming etc.

Figure 2 Farmers collecting agri-inputs from agrovet under Chamgang Tarkari Utpadak Krishi Sahakari Sanstha Ltd at Goljung, Rasuwa

Following the establishment of the knowledge park, farmer groups were trained on climate resilient technology, including how to prepare, set up, and use them in the field. The farmers in the groups were easily persuaded by the innovations since they could see all of them displayed at the knowledge park set up in each of the three working wards. Several climate resilient technologies covered over 30 ropani of space in the first year as a display of varied summer and winter vegetables, producing nearly 80 tons of fresh veggies. After the commodities were successfully produced, the RMS team connected the cooperative with traders from Nuwakot to market the goods. Mr. Suman Ghale, the cooperative's Chairperson, stated that in previous years, we were only able to sell potatoes, beans, and legumes, but this year we are able to sell fresh vegetables in ten vehicles that were completely full of veggies. He also congratulated the CEAPRED team for making it possible and for reversing the usual cropping pattern in favor of higher-income vegetable cultivation.

Figure 3 RMS knowledge park demonstrating mulched chili and non mulched chili production along with tunnel farming and different IPM tools at Goljung, Rasuwa

The coverage of the vegetable agricultural area had substantially changed on the following year. Farmers in the area reduced their traditional farming area and increased their area of vegetable farming to about 120 ropani generating 400 tons of fresh vegetables as a result of successful input supply, production technologies, market linkage, and cash income. Collectors are selected from each group to weigh, collect, pack, and load to the truck in order to manage the selling of the increasing vegetable produce in the area. The trader's incentivize the collectors with Rs. 2 every kg of product loaded to the vehicle, while the cooperative is rewarded with Rs. 1 per kg of product loaded for proper operation and long-term management. The minimum price for vegetables produced in the area is set at Rs. 25 all year, with greater prices received based on market prices.

Figure 4 Mr. Motiman Limbu, Senior Agriculture Technician brefing about the intercultural operations to be carried out on the field at Parbatikunda, Gatlang, Rasuwa

Under joint supervision of the RMS working sites, the local governing bodies and government staffs of Aamachhodingmo RM were astounded by the work done by the RMS project in the area. Mr. Buchung Tamang, Chairperson of the Aamachhodingmo RM, stated, "I was in a dilemma when CEAPRED came here for the first time for the endorsement of the project; I was going to refuse the proposal of implementation, but if I had done so, it would have been a great sin from me; this organization is completely different and has proven themselves as one of the oldest organizations in the agriculture sector." "Farmers are pleased with CEAPRED's work, and we will recommend that the agriculture unit incorporate it during the 2nd quarter planning this year," he added.

Figure 5 Group photo shoot during the joint monitoring of the RMS site from Chairperson, Chief Administrative Officer and other staffs of Ammachhodingmo RM, Rasuwa

Mr. Tenphi Nhima Shyangbo, a farmer from Gatlang Rasuwa, shared a post about the production with his blessing and thanks to the organization and crew. “We wholeheartedly owes our big thanks to CEAPRED organization and Sir Moti Limbu (Senior Agriculture Technician, CEAPRED) for giving us with Knapsack Sprayer, Insecticide medication (Bio-pesticide), and many other things,” the remark continues. “We heartily owe our grand thanks to CEAPRED organization and Sir Moti Limbu (Senior Agriculture Technician, CEAPRED) for providing us with Knapsack Sprayer, insecticide medicine (Bio-pesticide) and many more. He is a source of inspiration and pillar stone support to us” the remark continues. These statements from various stakeholders indicate a success, motivating the employees and organization to do even more to help needy farmers in other parts of the country.

Figure 6 Sweet message by a farmer to the CEAPRED team in social media