



FINAL EVALUATION REPORT OF FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE (FSI) PROJECT



Submitted to:

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ACRONYMNS

CDO	Chief District Officer
CEAPRED	Centre For Environmental And Agricultural Policy, Extension And Development
CM	Community Motivator
DADO	District Agricultural Development Office
DECOS	Development Concern Society
DDC	District Development Committee
DRADO	Directorate of Regional Agriculture Development Office
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAO	UN Food And Agriculture Organization
FGs	Farmers Groups
FSI	Food Security Initiative
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principle
HHs	Households
IDE	International Development Enterprise
KIRDARC	Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre
LDCs	Least Developing Countries
LDO	Local Development Office
LRP	Local Resource Person
MAPs	Medicinal And Aromatic Plant Products
MDG	Millenium Development Goal
ME	Micro Enterprise
ME	Mission East
MOAC	Ministry Of Agriculture And Cooperatives
MPC	Market Planning Committee
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUS	Multiple Water Use Scheme
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PNGO	Partner Non-Government Organization
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RMA	Rapid Market Assessment
RSDC	Rukumeli Social Development Centre
SC	Save the Children
SIMI	Smallholder Irrigation Market Initiative
T & E	Training and Employment
TGM	Target Group Meeting
ToR	Terms of Reference
VCD	Value Chain Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
UG	User Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nepal's population of 29 million¹ includes Brahmin, Chhetri, ethnic, dalits and other caste groups with distinct cultures and languages, giving this small land locked country a cultural and linguistic diversity that is remarkably complex. Nepal is one of the world's poorest countries with a per capita GDP of \$427, ranking 163 out of the world's 179 countries. Most of Nepal's population, over 80%, is rural and involved in agriculture, mostly subsistence, with limited educational and economic opportunities. In the national level, only 60% men and 45% women are literate. Among farming households (HHs), over 60% of the poor smallholding women and men are illiterate and are struggling for enough food to eat².

Save the Children acknowledge and supports that all the people, especially children, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. Realizing the food insecurity situation and vulnerability of the people, Save the Children Nepal, with grant assistance from EU in partnership with Mission East (ME), Nepal and International Development Enterprises (IDE), Nepal, and five other partners namely- CEAPRED, SDF, RSDC, DECOS and KIRDARC implemented the project in five districts namely Banke, Rukum, Rolpa, Mugu and Humla of Mid-Western Nepal (Annex 3). This report presents the evaluation of overall action during the project period based on the agreement, agreed policy, work plan and targeted outputs of the project.

The study approach encompassed a mix of techniques. All the documents related to the project were reviewed. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used. Qualitative methods predominated as the study focused more on the solid impacts including to changes in perceptions and behavior of the beneficiary communities. This study collected data/information, analyzed the processes of interventions, impact of the program, documented the lessons learnt and sustainability of the programs.

By all counts, the Food Security Initiative (FSI) project has successfully achieved its main purpose, for reducing vulnerability of 6817 families and their children, 3180 (47%) from others group mainly Brahmin, Chhetri and Madhesi, 2212 (32%) Janajati/Madhesi, and 1425 (21%) Dalits and Madhesi to soaring food prices and food insecurity through the opportunity of increased food production, improved food nutrition practices, and increased household income. Among the total, there were 1494 (22%) Madhesi HHs and 3224 women headed HHs. In addition to these, other 15133 neighboring HHs of the direct beneficiary HHs in the selected VDCs were also benefited indirectly from the project. The project contributed to Nepal Government's goal to achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs) set for 2015, MDG- 1 (eradication of extreme hunger), MDG-3 (promotion of gender equality) and MDG-7 (ensure environmental sustainability).

The beauty of the project was that it developed and demonstrated a high level collaborative approach of 3 different capacities at the centre being SC the lead organization, together with local NGO partners,

¹ July 2011 est., <http://www.indexmundi.com/nepal/population.html>

² World Bank Report, 2010

government offices and private sectors in bringing strength, speed and clarity in action processes. Also that, the project covered a wide range of geographical, cultural and environmental diversity.

The project had been instrumental for bringing changes to improve the food security and livelihood of the people. The food sufficiency level (number of months with adequate food) of the selected beneficiary HHs increased by at least 60%. A total of 2920 HHs had an average income of NRs 2514 (€26) from high value agriculture product and the average annual income from all other sources was equivalent to Rs. 6436 (€76). A total of 330 farmers group covering 6817 HHs in 36 VDCs were formed, developed, conducted monthly meeting, and 83% (273 FGs) were registered in DADO, and more than 60% of them were receiving technical support either from DADO or Agrovets. More than 90% targeted households were aware on government social safety net programs such as dalit scholarship, old age allowance, single women allowance, post delivery allowance, family planning allowance and differently able allowance. A total of 2245 vulnerable HHs benefited of amount Rs. 14700000 (each HH with Rs. 6548) for more than 42000 man days from different cash for work activities eg canal improvement/renovation, canal and culvert construction, terrace improvements work etc. A total of 12% (845) households benefited from leasehold land programme, and 5% (348 HHs) with 16 multiple use water system (MUS schemes), 48% (3279) households with small scale surface water irrigation and MIT by means of renovating and constructing canal, drip and sprinkler irrigation, electric motor pumps, treadle pumps and low cost diesel pumps etc were benefited from the program.

Similarly, 62% (4224) HHs adopted improved crop production practices like seed multiplication and participatory variety selection, plastic house technology, micro-irrigation technologies, leasehold farming and technologies of commercial vegetable production etc; 82% of the indirect beneficiaries HHs adopted one or more agricultural or marketing technologies promoted by FSI; more than 90% HHs reported in receiving of technical services from local resource persons and input suppliers; more than 40% HHs were members of group marketing initiatives; more than 30% households reported utilizing project-established collection centers; 168 people (89 male & 79 female) actively participated the Vocational Education training; and 95 of them received investment and technical support to establish different microenterprises after successful completion of the training.

One of the very important actions performed by the project was creation of the matching fund around Rs. 68,77,467 collectively for the purpose of infrastructure development such as cash for work for the construction of low cost small irrigation, input supplies for such programme, and small scale water resource development. Out of the total matching fund, FSI project contributed directly Rs 27,14,652 (39%), community/NGO Rs. 25,44,293 (37%) and GOs Rs. 11,66,643 (24%).

The total allocated budget for the FSI project was € 1,623,687. Out of this total budget, the project received sum of € 1,461,319 (90%) and the rest € 162,369 (10%) was contributed by SC, IDE and ME. The administrative cost allocated for the SC was € 106,223 (7%) and for the local office was € 80,047 (5%), but for the human resources the allocated budget was € 582,970 (36%). Similarly, total travel cost was €64,414 (4%), equipment and supplies € 270,385 (17%), other cost services € 24,001 and other program costs was € 451,450 (28%). A budget of € 44,198 (3%) was allocated for contingency provisions, but this portion of the budget was not spent as it had complications in releasing process. The ratio of Administrative and Program cost were broadly within the limits agreed in the project documents. Project activities were conducted

according to the scheduled plan and no activities were found to be curtailed or postponed due to lack of financial resources.

The lessons learnt from the project have been reflected from the perspective of successes to increasing agriculture production, improving nutritional practices to the people of vulnerable families, especially children and mothers who were suffering from increased food prices and malnutrition, and from the perspectives of increasing household income thereby improving financial capacity of the direct and indirect project beneficiaries.

The feedback from the beneficiaries and other community people, the partner organizations, the line agencies, private sectors and other allies was that the scope of the project was appropriate and comprehensive to upgrade the local methods and strategies with innovative practices related to sustainable agriculture linking directly with the requirements of their daily life, and thus, it had attributed to the aspirations of needy communities. The project made them to come closer and strengthened for planning, sharing, learning, and demonstrating activities together by forming groups and developing their capacity to move the way forward. It has improved lives and markets, more importantly added value for comforting the daily life of the people.

The context of food security and livelihood of the beneficiary farmers continue to be challenging, and both technical and resource support on the ongoing activities of the groups continue to be significant. The project implemented the activities with public private partnership (PPP) by adopting inclusive farmers' group approach, especially by taking onboard to Madhesi, ethnic and dalit people, and women who were badly affected from soaring food prices and food insecurity problems. A strong networking and coordinated efforts of the line agencies and service providers in the leadership of DADO is vital in order to maximize effectiveness and harnessing of ongoing activities for both competitive and comparative advantages, and to provide access to resources (technical and other services). Given the success of the FSI project, it is recommended to continue, upscale and replicate the approach on a more widespread scale, building on the expertise that has been gained at the community and district level, and using the capacity that was build at national level.

The study revealed that the FSI project was designed with a vision for Iconic Achievements to acknowledge, thank and reward those individuals who have distinguished themselves within their respective fields and added values to the innovations, wealth of human learning, human happiness and the subsequent advancement of the society. This journey has become the centre of attraction, an heirloom for the beneficiaries, their families and their communities to cherish. This is a model programme, upscaling and replicating will not only prove the certificate of merit, but also a worthy advertisement of its attributes.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nepal is one of 31 least-developed countries of the world (LDCs) with a low Human Development Index ranking 138th position and with an annual per capita income of approximately US \$ 470 in 2008. It has the highest level of poverty incidence in the South Asia region with 50% of the population as per the international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day³. As per the national poverty line, however, the poverty head count in 2003/04 was only 31%. About 95% of the poor in Nepal live in rural areas. Poverty incidence is higher in the hills and mountains, and in the mid-western and far-western regions⁴. Two-thirds of the poor and vulnerable people are self-employed in agriculture and another 11% of the poor are agriculture wage earners. Poverty is particularly highest amongst small land holders (less than 1 hectare). In the rural communities, large numbers of men are leaving home to urban areas of Nepal, India and overseas for searching employment opportunity. This has generated a rising trend in woman-headed households and the feminization of agricultural labor. The poorest rural families spend 70 to 80% of their total expenditure on food during the 'hungry months' that traditionally extend from April to July but in bad years can extend much longer, and thus, forcing them to take loan at high interest rate from the landlords to cover other household expenses.

Food Security. USAID defines food security as, "when all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life." Three distinct variables are essential to the attainment of food security: 1) Food Availability: sufficient quantities of appropriate, necessary types of food from domestic production, commercial imports or donors other than USAID are consistently available to the individuals or are within reasonable proximity to them or are within their reach; 2) Food Access: individuals have adequate incomes or other resources to purchase or barter to obtain levels of appropriate food needed to maintain consumption of an adequate diet/nutrition level; 3) Food Utilization: food is properly used, proper food processing and storage techniques are employed, adequate knowledge of nutrition and child care techniques exist and is applied, and adequate health and sanitation services exist (USAID Policy Determination, Definition of Food Security, April 13, 1992).

Small, fragmented subsistence farming is a key feature of Nepalese agriculture. The average land holding of all farmers is only 0.8 hectares⁵. Over the past four decades, agricultural land expanded from 1.68 million to 2.65 million hectares, despite a trend towards urbanization of productive land. However, population rose faster, resulting in an increase in the number, and a decline in the size of holdings from 1.1 hectares to 0.8 hectares⁶. Food grain production has fallen short of population growth, resulting in reduced per capita food availability, which is particularly acute in remote hill and mountain districts. A recent estimate shows that

3 World Bank, 2010

4 Nepal Living Standards Survey 2003/04, Statistics Report

5 CBS Nepal, 2008

6 WFP (2009), A Sub-regional Hunger Index for Nepal

nearly 7 million out of about 27 million people in Nepal go to bed hungry every day⁷. Almost 40 percent of children below the age of five suffer from malnourishment⁸, and an estimated 40 per cent of the population suffers from inadequate access to food⁹. The World Food Programme estimates that 39 of the 75 districts are food-deficient¹⁰. Overall, more than half the children under five are underweight or undersized, with much higher proportions of such incidences occurring in the hills and mountains. Nepal imports cereal grains, fruits and vegetables using both formal and informal trade across the open border with India. The food import trend has increased steeply in recent years.

Food security agenda in the National Plans. In the running three year interim plan (hereafter interim plan) from FY 2007/2010, the issue of food deficit is mentioned, mainly due to lack of access to means and resources, inequality within the family, lack of emergency assistance; increase in the habit of eating easily available but unhealthy food. Likewise, the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002 – 2007) has envisaged to reduce the poverty, unemployment, population growth as well as to improve the basic need facilities of the people such as the supply of safe drinking water, electricity, food, health, housing facilities, extension of irrigation facilities, expanding communication facilities to the rural areas are also on the priority agenda of the state. Furthermore, the current draft of National Three Year Plan (2010 -2013) has prioritized to meet the Millennium Development Goals to alleviate poverty, reduce hunger by half as its first goal also targets to halve the population without sustainable access to drinking water by 2015. Apart from this, there are no comprehensive policies and concrete action plan for hunger reduction or national food security in Nepal. Therefore, a separate national policy on food security or hunger reduction needs to be prepared after consulting vigorously with the concerned stakeholders

Food insecurity can be attributed to farmers' capacity to adapt with changing climate, poor agriculture infrastructure; inadequate irrigation facility and inputs such as availability of extension services, improved seeds, and access and links with reliable markets; income level; land rights; and physical access to affordable and available food commodities. Skewed land distribution among the farming communities is a major factor where 45 per cent of farmers are operating in less than 0.5 ha of land and 8 per cent of farmers are occupying 31 per cent of total agricultural land with more than 2 ha of land holdings. Acknowledging these facts, Food Security Initiative (FSI) project was started in Jan 2010 and lasted up to the end of October 2011. This project was supported by European Commission, and led by Save the Children (SC), Nepal. It was implemented jointly with International Development Enterprise (IDE) and Mission East (ME) in the centre, and with NGO partners (CEAPRED, KIRDARC, RSDC, DECOS and SDF) in five districts of mid-western region of Nepal. DECOS and KIRDARC were working under the stewardship of IDE and ME respectively and the rest were working under SC.

The project team in collaboration with District Agriculture Development Office, private sectors and other actors concerned with sustainable agriculture in the district implemented the project to reduce the vulnerability of targeted families and their children to soaring food prices and food insecurity through to increased agriculture production and household income. The main aim of the project was to increase agriculture production of the targeted families to make them capable to have required food by their own

5 WFP Annual Report 2010

6 Nepal Demographic & Health Survey Fact Sheet (NDHS) (2006). Family Health Division, Department of Health Services, MOH, HMG,GON,Nepal

7 WFP Annual Report 2010

8 Three year interim plan

9 CBS Nepal, 2004

10 Three Year Interim Plan, National Planning Commission

production. The targeted beneficiaries were rural vulnerable families, and they were badly affected from the increased food prices, low income and with no access to resources.

The overall objective of the FSI project was to reduce the vulnerability of families and their children to soaring food prices and food insecurity. The specific objectives were to increase food production and incomes, and improve nutrition for most affected children and families by increasing food prices and food insecurity in five districts, both in the short term and longer term.

As stated in the proposal, the project activities were successfully implemented initially by selecting 6,600 beneficiary HHs., of which 1,200 in 6 very remote mountain VDCs of South Humla and North Mugu, 3,000 in 20 very poor medium-remote mid-hill VDCs of West Rukum and North-West Rolpa, and 2,400 of 10 flood-prone VDCs in South-East Banke.

This study reviewed all the documents related to the project and analyzed the processes of interventions, quality of the progress and sustainability of the programs, analyzed the data/information and documented the lessons learnt.

1.2 Institutional Capacity of the Implementing Partners

This project was unique and designed in an especial way with combined efforts of three different capacities to produce Synergy both at coordinated action and sustainability level by learning together and sharing each other's demonstrated experience and expertise. The institutional capacity of all partners was focused more on participatory, integrated, and sustainable approach that takes a community's strength and speed in increased agriculture production and family income as the starting point for providing services.

Save the Children (SC)

Save the Children (SC) is the largest child-focused organization in Nepal, working with over 90 partners in 56 districts and reaching over 1.5 million children annually. SC in Nepal focuses its effort on education, especially early childhood development and primary education, as well as basic health, including maternal child health and HIV/AIDS prevention and care. SC Nepal took the initiative and responsibility of lead role to design, implement and overall management of the Food Security Initiative (FSI) Project. In this project, SC Nepal focused attention more on improving family food nutrition including mother and child health.

International Development Enterprise (IDE)

IDE creates income opportunities for poor rural households. In Nepal, IDE is promoting Food Security Initiative by stimulating smallholder farmer-centered agricultural growth, which increases incomes and food production, promotes prosperity, and brings down food prices in local markets for the urban poor. Over the past 28 years, IDE has helped more than 19 million of the rural poor of world population, especially of developing countries. Winrock and its partner, International Development Enterprises (IDE), along with regional, national, and local partners have identified the high potential of micro irrigation to improve smallholder productivity and income in Nepal as part of developing a Smallholder Irrigation Market Initiative (SIMI) Business Plan. IDE brought the demonstrated experience of SIMI in 22 districts and also the multiple use water service implementation plans in this project.

Mission East (ME)

Mission East is a Danish international relief and development organisation, which works to help the vulnerable people through humanitarian relief aid, development assistance and support to increasing capacity of communities to organise and assist themselves. Mission East works in response to community needs, primarily in the areas of public health, livelihoods improvement, food security and disaster risk reduction. In its work with the people of Karnali, KIRDARC and Mission East with funds from the international community uses participatory approaches, and promotes rural communities' ability to take responsibility for their own development. In this project, Mission East, with its local partner KIRDARC was responsible for the work of two high mountain districts Humla and Mugu.

Save the Children (SC) Nepal, IDE and Mission East (ME) had teamed up with local NGO partners (CEAPRED, KIRDARC, RSDC, DECOS and SDF), and developed activities in response to the EC Food Security call and implemented FSI Project to address increases in food prices and food insecurity of the vulnerable and disadvantaged households in five districts of Mid-western and Karnali region of Nepal.

1.3 Study Objectives

The main objective of this evaluation was to document the result outcomes, and impacts of the project and share learning and challenges among project partners and stake holders in the following areas (Annex 5):

- Assess the quantitative, qualitative achievements and sustainability of the actions in relation to goal, objectives, results, outcomes and impacts.
- Partnership mechanism with local bodies and other line agencies
- Level of public/community participation
- The extent of social inclusion in the project implementation.
- Impact of the project in the community.
- Partnership modality/strategy with counterpart/partner and its contribution.
- Extent to the level of up-to-date completion of the project activities.
- Inventory/assets management system of the project/program and level of accounting transparency.
- Income and expenditure pattern of project/program and level of accounting transparency.
- Internal financial control system of the project.
- Sustainability component of the FSI Project.
- Project's target and achievements as per the log frame stipulated under project proposal.
- Successful cases/stories of the project, which can be replicated in other areas/programs, and failure cases and the lesson to be learnt.
- Compliance with the general agreement signed between FSI partners, SWC and INGOs.
- Review of findings and suggestions mid term review, previous monitoring and evaluation reports.
- Selection of Partners/counterparts and its performance in implementing projects; institutional capacity, planning implementation and monitoring /evaluation modality.

1.4 Rationale of the study

This study was carried out according to the agreement made between SWC and the Save the Children, and also, according to the agreement made between the donor and the project team.

1.5 Evaluation Methodology

The methodological approach for this study encompasses a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Both of these methods were used for data collection. Qualitative methods focused more on improved performance and increased production of cereal crops, fresh and off-season vegetables, consumption of cereals and the fresh vegetables in each beneficiary household. Qualitative methods focused more on benefits on the social impact including changes in behavior and perception of the beneficiary people. In this process, both structured and semi-structured questionnaire for interviews, focus group discussion, review and analysis of documents were major methods used for the data collection. Some case studies were documented during the evaluation (Annex 6).

Table. 1 Sampling and Data Collection Techniques

Categories of interviews	Sampling Techniques	Data Collection Techniques
Beneficiary	Random Sampling	Focus Group Discussion
Local key informants	Purposive Sampling	Focus Group Discussion
Partner organization	Purposive Sampling	Interview
Government organization	Purposive Sampling	Interview
Key informants	Snowball Sampling	Interview

1.5.1 Selection of Programs

Except Humla, all other four districts Banke, Rukum, Rolpa and Mugu were selected for the study. Mugu represented for both Mugu and Humla as they both are on the same geographical coverage. Within the district, the selection of sites for the study and sampling of programs were done by considering various criteria to make the sampled program as representative as possible (a) geographical representation (b) Differentiate program (c) magnitude of program (d) managerial capacity and (e) local participation (beneficiary type-homogenous/heterogeneous by sex, caste etc) of the program.

Table. 2 Districts and Area selected for the study

Districts	Area
Banke	Khaskusum, Baijapur, Binauna, Fattepur
Rolpa	Kotgaun, Whama, Jankot, Mijing, Bhawang
Rukum	Dandagaun, Ghatma, Sankha, Chunwang, Duli, Rangha
Mugu	Rara VDC

1.5.2 Methods and Tools for Data Collection

The main methods applied for data collection were household interview, focus group discussion, key informants interviews, observation, discussion and document study. The focus for data collection was the services, performance and its impact in the community. The partner agencies and beneficiary were asked about agriculture (cereal crop and vegetable) production, the services, infrastructures, impacts and sustainability of the programs. The key informants were the officials and staff of project and partner organizations, DADO, LDO, Agro-vets, cooperatives, and other line agencies and organizations who were involved in the implementation of the program and providing services to the beneficiaries. A set of questionnaire was prepared for the sampled HH survey to receive the quantitative data required for estimating dietary score and for analyzing against the set indicators in the project proposals. The enumerators were selected in each district to carry out this household survey work. Another category of the interviews were the management personnel at the centre, regional and field operation about the policy, implementation modalities and sustainability of the program.

For the field study, the team undertaken the following activities

- Prepared a suitable strategy to work in the team.
- Shared the experience of project related communities, beneficiaries, and officials of the INGO, counterpart NGO and line agencies.
- Reviewed all the relevant FSI project documents, planning framework, progress reports, need assessment reports, baseline study reports, mid-term review reports and financial reports available in the project.
- Visited the project sites and conducted focused group discussions, interview with the beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- Write and Submit the Final Report

1.5.3 Methodology of the Review

The framework for analysis was to access the status and situation of each of the key areas, program for review applying its concept of **relevance**, **efficiency**, **effectiveness**, and **impact** and **sustainability**. The steps and activities of the review included study of the available documents, instrument design, participatory planning of the review question and method, data collection participatory validation of the data and analysis and reporting. The tools for the study were identified by the ToR that included the focus group discussion (Annex 4, main respondent's list), key informant's interviews, participations observation briefing and debriefing sessions.

Instrument Design. The team prepared checklist of guided questions (Annex 1) for the focus group discussion and key informant interviews which was finalized in consultation with the senior staff of SWC and Save the Children. The team also prepared a modality to organize interaction sessions.

The team took the decision to take the set of questionnaire which was prepared during baseline survey and do the sampling household survey to check whether the project set results achieved or not. The team found very important to do this, as the project focus was so much on the precision results. The project supported to recruit the short-term enumerators to carry out this work. A total of 243 households were interviewed

in four districts namely Mugu, Rukum, Rolpa and Banke. The set questionnaire prepared for household survey sampling was Banke -66 (highest), Rukum-65, Mugu-60 and Rolpa-52 (Rolpa).

To measure the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), the number of different food groups consumed over a given reference period was used as an attractive proxy measure (indicator) of the socio-economic level ('quality diet') of the household. To better reflect a quality diet, the number of different food groups given below consumed was calculated, rather than the number of different foods consumed (Swindale and Paula, 2006).

Food Group

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Cereals | G. Fish and seafood |
| B. Roots and tubers | H. Pulses/ legumes/ nuts |
| C. Vegetables | I. Milk and milk products |
| D. Fruits | J. Oil/ fats |
| E. Meat/Poultry/Offal | K. Sugar/ honey |
| F. Eggs | L. Miscellaneous |

For measuring the success of a program benchmarks are necessary. In general, the baseline survey was conducted at the start of the project and the indicators for successful measurements were identified. The baseline of each indicator was estimated and time bound targets were set. In addition, the methodologies for measuring each indicator were also set in the baseline survey. The present study has compared the achievement with the baseline data. The only limited scope is related with the sample size of 243 HH as compared with the 749 HH in the baseline study. To cope with the limitation of the HH survey the farmers group discussion has given the information of cause and effect relationships to measure the impacts relating different indicators to the outputs. The evaluation of the project was urged to measure the overall performance of the project and for improving the future course of actions.

Interaction and Briefing Session. The team conducted a briefing and interactive session on with the senior staff of SWC and Save the Children before departing to the field. The interactive session finalized the sampled program areas and location, key questions for focus group discussion and key informants location of field group discussion and worked out the field plan of the study, the session also discussed the expected outcome from the field and organization and presentation of impacts, perspectives and way forward of the draft report.

1.6 Key Areas under review –

1.6.1 Innovations in Food Security brought by the project

This study reviewed the whole processes and outcomes of the project to measure the innovations brought by the project for substantive consideration of poverty, malnutrition and climate change risks into development and resource management planning, and in efforts to improve food and nutrition security, develop capacities, increase income and enhance livelihoods.

1.6.2 Impact/Performance of the Program

FSI Project was aimed to reduce the vulnerability of targeted families and their children to soaring food prices and food insecurity by increasing food production and incomes, and improving nutrition for the targeted HHs. Especially, the project activities was designed to provide immediate support, develop

capacity, deliver input supply, develop micro-irrigation facility and market network to promote sustainable agriculture that enhances the food and nutrition required by poor and marginal households and children needed to reach their cognitive and development potential (Annex 2). The result shows that the project activities were implemented with public private partnership (PPP) approach in reaching the targeted people by adopting inclusive farmers' group approach, especially to Madhesi, ethnic, dalits and women who were badly affected from soaring food prices and food insecurity problems. In the targeted area, the problems such as food shortages, skipping meals, consumption of seed stocks, taking children out of school to work, and an increased level of out migration of male household members to find food and income, leaving at home families stressed and undernourished were common.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

As usual, time factor remained to be a limitation for the study team. Otherwise the study team did not face any such limitations during the study period. Because of the remoteness and unavailability of the airplane service during the study time, one of the project district Humla could not be covered, but the Mugu district which represents similar geographical setting, culture and socioeconomic condition of Humla was covered.

2. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

2.1 Relevancy and project design

The program targets selected Village Development Committees (VDCs) in five most affected districts covering mountain, mid-hills, and Terai (plains) respond to a range of climatic and socio-economic conditions under which food insecure households (HH) live. In the program districts, the poor and disadvantaged families were moderately to highly food insecure. It was mainly the men of the household who migrate during times of distress, leaving the women and children at home to cope with limited access to food and resources. It was realized that, the failure of children to reach their potential has long-term consequences for society increasing conflict and making development efforts less effective. Similarly, the majority of lower castes have very small land size or almost no access to land, and this situation made them vulnerable to high food prices. They used to spend up to 80% of their earnings on food, borrow money, and then sell assets to pay-back the loans. The families of food insecure households were under stress due to soaring food prices, and often the women and children were undernourished.

Realizing the food insecurity situation and vulnerability of the families in the Mid-Western region of Nepal, Save the Children, Nepal and International Development Enterprises (IDE), Nepal designed the project to receive grant assistance from EU in partnership with Mission East (ME) and five implementing partners namely- CEAPRED, SDF, RSDC, DECOS and KIRDARC, was launching the 22-month long “Food Security Initiatives (FSI) Project” in the 5 districts (36 VDCs) of the Region. The project was designed as a model project with the combined potential of strong and capable project team with enriched experiences in introducing and facilitating micro-irrigation, capacity building, providing technical assistance, working with poor women, ethnic and dalits (Annex 7, followed empowerment framework) and with the complement of EU funding provision. There was huge opportunity to focus beneficiaries and the project team on food production and the creation of income opportunities.

The Key Action Strategies applied were

Programmes – Core activities-Agriculture development to improve food sufficiency level, nutrition & Income

Knowledge sharing- information sharing, extension, education and awareness raising

Communication –Action processes, Alliance building, Coordination/collaboration, clarity, reporting etc.

Key Principles followed were

- Reaching to Unreached People “Vulnerable HHs”
- GESI and Women empowerment
- Social Mobilization & Capacity Building
- Community Led (FGs, collection centers)
- Alliance Building & Pooling of Resources
- Filling Gaps
- Matching efforts: Governance and Allocation
- Finding the Right Framework- Trust Building with yes, we can do attitude.

2.1.1 Problems under address

- The process involved in the selection of Vulnerable Households in the community, and motivating them to make farmers groups in the community took longer and was not an easy task. Motivation, awareness of the program and capacity development, especially at the beginning phase in introducing program to Dalit households found complicated and time consuming.
- **Remoteness of the selected communities**, most of the selected communities were in remote rural areas. It was hard to reach them. Transportation and delivery of the inputs such as improved seeds, materials for plastic pond construction, seed bins and supply of other related material was really a big challenge. It was hard to coordinate them because of the communication problem, illiteracy and hard pressed condition both socially and economically.

2.1.2 Approach taken to address the problems

- After long discussion/interaction with the political and development leaders at the district and local level and a special selection process was developed to identify the right beneficiary households.
- Recruitment of local staff as a Social Mobiliser and Group Facilitator, leadership development of local staff with champion ideas by providing intensive training , mobilizing these local staff for regular awareness, follow up in discussion and motivation process, and developing special approach and processes in making coordination with local and district level political leaders and other concerned organizations and personnel. Receiving cooperation from all side was not an easy task.
- Strength, Speed and Clarity of all team members on the action strategies, and strong networking and communication between all service providers helped to smooth the action process.

2.1.3 Appropriateness of the program approach and objectives

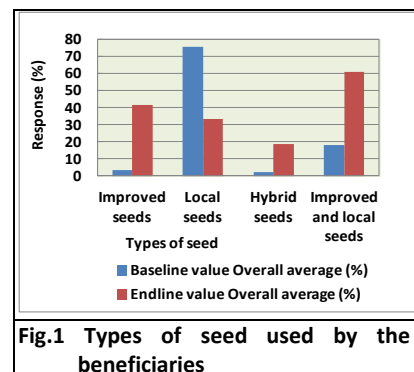
The program was well designed to fit the local geo-climatic conditions and beneficiary people's interest. The set objectives, strategies and approaches, guidelines and indicators were clearly stated in the project documents, which was clearly understandable to everyone.

2.1.4 Other strategies developed and taken

- Alliance building with other development partners at national, district and local level
- Support on getting access to community safety nets and government social Safety nets for beneficiary households
- Off-farm vocational education training focusing youth employment and entrepreneurship development
- Awareness and promotion campaign on the use of local food and fresh vegetables grown in the kitchen garden

2.1.5 Efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation

The record shows that the project team demonstrated a commitment to and understanding the needs of targeted vulnerable people by following project developed policy, guidelines and action strategies, and adopting and implementing best practices/principles to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the project implementation. The project team made regular field visit, conducted meetings/discussions in scheduled basis with the individual HHs or farmers' groups, conducted awareness, capacity development and effective communication to investigate and collect the issues and challenges appeared at the ground level, reporting to the higher authority to solve the problem and applied a faster service delivery mechanism. The project used right tools and methodology to identify the problems and the gaps, and investigated the solution. For example, during the baseline survey time (May 2010), over 75% beneficiaries were using local seeds and the rest were using improved seeds, after 15 months, in Sept., over 60 percent beneficiary HHs were using both improved and local seeds (Fig.1). It looks that beneficiary farmers were using both improved and local seeds to see the performance of the newly introduced species.



Formation of project alliance groups both at community and district level and acting together added value and complimented to accomplish the tasks more effectively and efficiently. Similarly, data keeping and database preparation of all the beneficiary household, data entry and maintenance of produce register, sales register, register of input supply (seed and irrigation material supply), preparedness, group formation, record and feedback from baseline survey, mid-term evaluation, visual inspection by community mobilizes, workshops and meetings at central, regional and district level, and feedback from monitoring reports of donor, expert and partner organizations helped to achieve the success.

2.1.6 Achievement of planned project outputs and outcomes

The project benefited to 6817 direct beneficiary HHs, in which 3224 (47%) were women headed HHs. In addition to these direct beneficiaries, 15133 neighboring HHs of the direct beneficiaries were benefited indirectly. For key project achievements, please see in the Box 1 given below.

Box. 1 Key Achievement

- **330 farmers groups from 36 target VDCs**
- **83% (273 out of 330) FGs were registered in DADO & they were receiving service –DADO/Agrovet).**
- **90% HHs of 6839 HHs were aware of 6 Govt. Safety net program: Old age allowance, dalit scholarship, single women allowance, post delivery allowance, family planning allowance and differently able allowance.**
- **2245 vulnerable HHs with more than 42000 man days work benefited from different cash for work activities (Total amount Rs. 14700000).**
- **48% (3279) households with small scale surface water irrigation and MIT by means of renovating & constructing canal, drip & sprinkler irrigation, electric motor pumps, treadle pumps and low cost diesel pumps etc.**
- **5% (348 HHs) benefited with 16 multiple use water services system (MUS schemes)**
- **64% (4224) HHs adopted improved crop production practices such as seed multiplication and participatory variety selection, plastic house technology, micro-irrigation technologies, leasehold farming and technologies of commercial vegetable production.**
- **1600 HHs involved in improved seed production**
- **More than 90% HHs reported receiving of technical services from LRP & input suppliers**
- **40% HHs were members of group marketing initiatives**
- **30% households reported utilizing project-established collection centers**
- **80 % (168) of vocational education participants - Vo-Ed training (53% Women)**
- **57% (95 out of 168) received investment support**
- **Saving: 6306 HHs of 277 FGs out of 330 actively involved in the regular group saving**

Immediate Relief Program

2245 vulnerable HHs with more than 42000 man days were benefited from different cash for work activities (amount Rs.14700000). Each household benefited with Rs. 6550, and each man day received approximately Rs. 350. The beneficiary household used the money to buy food items (rice, wheat and maize) in the local market shops to feed their families. In the mean time while working, they learnt the importance of the project activities. Each of these families later started using improved seeds and established kitchen garden.

Food Sufficiency

Result showed that the increase in food sufficiency level was incredible, reaching 6-9 months at the endline study for those HHs who had only for 0-3 months at the baseline survey, and similarly reaching 9-12 months at the endline study for those HHs who had for 3-6 months during baseline survey. The beneficiary families were consuming increased crop production at home and selling extra produce (especially off season and fresh vegetables), which has improved household food and nutrition security, and increased household income.

Diversity in livelihood Opportunities

The major changes brought by the project to the targeted HHs are the relief program (cash for work) for the vulnerable families who were facing severe food insecurity problem, low-cost small irrigation (Treadle pump, plastic pond for rainwater harvesting, sprinkler irrigation, use of improved seeds (cereal crops Maize and wheat), and off-season and high value vegetables), increase in the crop production (at least 50% and above) and adoption of vegetable production and other new technology related to improved farming, increase in the consumption of local food and green vegetables, increase in household income, improved farming practices, promotion of medicinal and aromatic plants, promotion of marketing (collection centre) and planning, group saving and value chain promotion. The green vegetables are produced by almost all targeted HHs, and also neighboring HHs learned the practices and started growing vegetables in the kitchen garden. The average annual expenditure of the beneficiary household was increased by 26% during the Baseline to Endline study. This was mainly due to the increased income of NRs 8083157 only from the sale of project supported fresh and off-season vegetables (3914 HHs from 200 farmers Groups) such as Tomatoes, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Cucumber, Zucchini, Bitter guard, Chilly etc. and from other project supported programs.

Family farmers were able to increase the amount and types of foods they produced by:

- improving farming methods (e.g. mulching, composting, intercropping, fertilizing, including use of green manure/farm yard manure);
- joining groups to get access to agricultural resources or technology;
- harvesting water for small-scale irrigation;
- producing and using higher yielding improved seeds or growing crops that mature early;
- increasing the variety of foods grown, especially vegetables

Even people of vulnerable households with small landholdings were able to establish and promote kitchen gardens or grow vegetables in containers, and to refer neighboring families or relatives/friends that need help to the relevant extension services or to successful local farmers.

Increase in Household Income

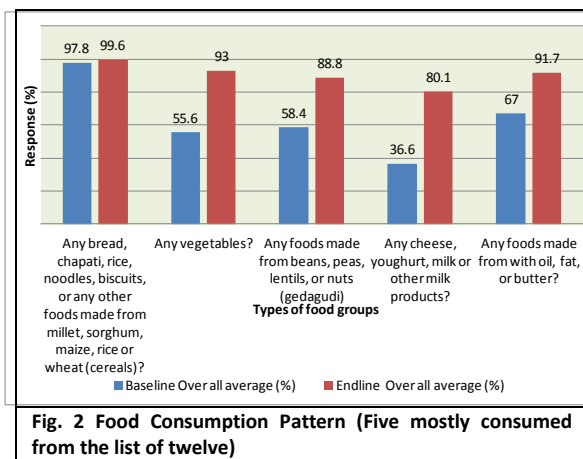
Beneficiary farmers learnt from the project on how to prioritize the staple and other foods to grow or produce to eat locally, and to sell for better price. They also learnt on how to budget better for food and which local or improved foods are best values for money and health. The analyzing capacity they developed from the trainings empowered them on to make the decision of crops to produce by looking at market demand and value of that particular crop.

Family Nutrition

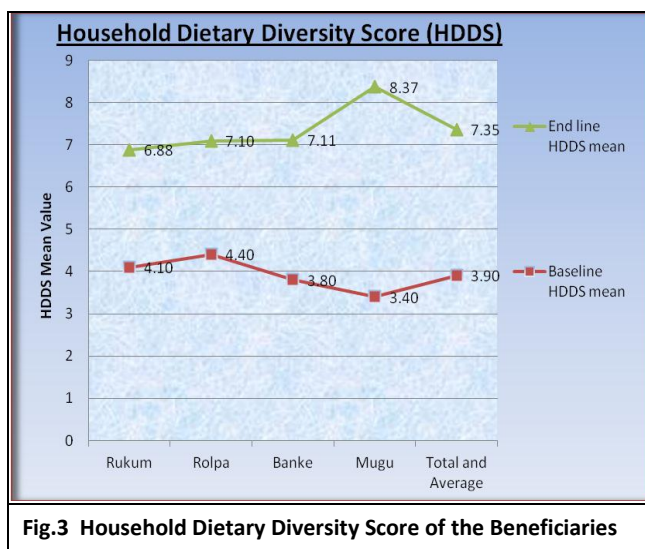
The beneficiary families learnt the value of consuming local foods, food biodiversity and food consumption patterns. During the 18 months'of effective project time period, the food consumption pattern (five mostly consumed from the list of twelve) improved greatly. The agriculture production was increased by 60% of the targeted HHs which improved food security of the family required for sufficient safe and nutritious food so that all members can meet their nutrient needs with foods they like/*prefer* for an active and healthy life.

Rice, Wheat and Maize production, and fresh and off-season vegetable production, and other support program for increasing income of the family was very effective to improve the food nutrition of the beneficiary families. This was noble outcome of the project.

The project offered a scope of the basic learning of innovative technologies and practices to all the beneficiary farmers from a broad overview of food security and livelihood improvement through to increased agriculture production and income generation to a more narrowed focus on women and children specific nutrition, local food consumption, and seed, water and land management practices. The project also responded on how to incorporate gender, ethnic minorities (Janajatis and dalits) into projects, compiling good practices and innovative activities during action process. The beneficiary families learnt the value of consuming local foods, food diversity and consumption patterns. During the 15 months' time period from the baseline to the endline survey, the trend of food consumption pattern (five mostly consumed from the list of twelve) improved greatly (Fig.2). This was remarkable outcome of the project. The beneficiary families demonstrated their potentiality of learning and practicing the diversity in livelihood opportunities.



Household food access is defined as the ability to acquire sufficient quality and quantity of food to meet all household members' nutritional requirements for productive lives. Given the variety of activities implemented and the consensus built on appropriate household food access impact indicators developed by FSI Project using Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) for measurement of household food access¹¹, the HDDS mean value increased from minimum 3.40 of Mugu and maximum 4.40 of Rolpa during baseline survey, 2010 to 8.37 of Mugu and 7.10 of Rolpa respectively during endline survey (Fig. 3). The result shows a surprising shift of Mugu from minimum to Maximum HDDS mean value, indicating high improvement in comparison to other districts.



In an average, each household made an annual income of equivalent to Rs. 6436 (equivalent to US\$ 80). The result shows that the level of food sufficiency of the beneficiary household was in a range of 65 to 81 percent being lowest in Banke and highest in Rukum.

¹¹ HDDS for Measurement of household food access: Indicator Guide – 2, Annie Swindale & Paula Bilinsky, FANTA, USAID, Sept., 2006

Increased Health and Hygiene Status

The FSI Project designed and accomplished activities with appropriate communication, awareness programme, training and support on maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH), and food nutrition of the beneficiary families. The project team worked with beneficiary farmers groups, government and community based organizations to provide them and their families with access to information on health education, especially primary health care (hygiene and health) practices. The project disseminated information on water treatment, hand washing with soap, emergency response, households and community hygiene, and sanitation.

Community Empowerment

The project implemented a broad range of activities related to sustainable agriculture and created enabling environment for poor and vulnerable people to develop and demonstrate their huge potential to increase food production, improving their lives and contributing to greater food security for all. The beneficiary families and their neighborhood HHs benefited from a sustainable improvement in the food sufficiency level and livelihood opportunities. The activities such as communication on action processes, awareness raising and capacity development training, information sharing on innovation and best practices, learning from each other's experiences, and practical learning from demonstration activities were very critical to empowering beneficiary families of the programme community. It also worked with greater vision to ensure gender and caste equity, with lasting impact. Hence the project added values in increasing community strength and harmony.

Promotion of New Technology

The beneficiary families explored their potentiality of learning and practicing the diversity in livelihood opportunities and remarkable improvement in the food security of the HHs. In the development field, this project is notable for its substantive consideration of poverty, malnutrition and climate change risks into development and resource management planning, and in efforts to improve food and nutrition security, develop capacities, increase income and enhance livelihoods. This project represents an excellent example for integrating these issues. This also remained distinctive in the field of boosting morale of the vulnerable people suffering from hunger, using low external input, women empowerment and inclusion of minorities, particularly in its:

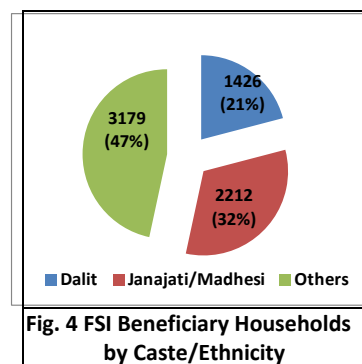
- focus on community-based (and hence community-relevant) vulnerability assessment and community-led ("bottom-up") sustainable agriculture options;
- recognition of a wide range of risks associated with reaching vulnerable people who were badly affected by food insecurity, and increasing their strength by forming groups, providing opportunity of learning new skills and sharing their own experiences, and more importantly providing cash for work opportunity which had not only comforted them for food safety but also boosted their morale;

- community engagement in the processes of improving capacities to deal with improving agriculture performance and increasing income;
- incorporate innovative agriculture production techniques/practices into existing institutional and decision-making processes ("mainstreaming"), at both the community level and the district planning level;
- more importantly, contributed to increase awareness, capacity development, access to resources and technology, increase agriculture production, establish kitchen garden each household, promotion of local nutritious food use for the children and their mothers who were suffering from malnutrition, and increase household income. The project had an opportunity of creating conditions for collective action, strong determination and management. The Action applied relational practices and other creative ways to increase the effectiveness of the resources used and maximize limited power. The Action successfully applied time and financially intensive efforts not only for increased agriculture production but also for increasing market access and opportunities and increasing employment opportunities.

2.2 Major Activities and Result wise Achievements

2.2.1 Identification of vulnerable groups, mobilization and governance to access on farm and off farm support

In five districts, in total, 6,817 beneficiary households were identified, and 330 Farmers Groups are formed covering all the households and registered in the District Agriculture Development Office. There was a variation in the number of households involved in each group, mostly at a range of 15 to 25 households. Among the total households, there were 3179 (47%) from others group mainly Brahmin, Chhetri and Madhesi, 2212 (32%) Janajati/Madhesi, and 1426 (21%) Dalits including Madhesi (Fig.4). In this project, strategic initiative or action was taken for the inclusion of Madhesi. Out of the total 6817 beneficiary HHs, 1494 (22%) were Madhesi alone, but they were mixed in the proportion of Others, Janajati and Dalits (Fig. 4). The inclusion and active participation of Madhesi, Dalits and Janajati in the project was overwhelming and was above than the targeted result of 15% Dalits and 30% Janajati/Madhesi. All the groups used to meet monthly, put forward the agenda of the meeting, discuss the issues, make decisions, share their learning and experiences. They were maintaining the register, collecting monthly share fee from each member, depositing the money in the group saving account, and providing loan to the members, especially for the purpose of agriculture enterprise development.



Capacity Building was the key activity to empower beneficiaries by enhancing the level of creative thinking, and to develop their leadership, confidence and competency. Practical teaching, demonstration of activities, learning by doing practices were applied during capacity building sessions mainly in the areas of land preparation, sowing improved seeds, water use (micro irrigation), weeding, preparation and use of FYM/compost fertilizer, harvesting and storing seeds, growing fresh and off-season vegetables, and

consumption of local nutritious food and fresh vegetables grown in their kitchen garden. Mostly the beneficiaries were powered by the development of knowledge and skills, and by learning during the following sessions.

- Group meeting and group savings
- Improve agriculture and nutrition practices
- Leadership training for local level farmers' group
- Use of improved agriculture practices/technology

The endline result (conducted in Sept. 2011) shows that on an average 32% respondents were receiving technical support from different private or government source (DADO, Agrovet, NGOs, Local traders etc) which was improved by 128% to that of 14% respondents of baseline survey (conducted in June/July 2010). The regular report and records shows that 65% (215 FGs) farmers groups were accessing at least two sources (DADO and local agrovet), which is above than the targeted 60% of total 330 farmer groups formed in 36 target VDCs.

2.2.2 Access to community safety nets and government social safety nets, and immediate support to mitigate effects of food prices for vulnerable groups

Project achieved the success in reaching and providing services to the targeted vulnerable families. Cash for work activity provided immediate relief for the vulnerable families who were suffering from soaring food prices and starvation and remained very effective to motivate them to participate in the project activities. The program came at a time when many of such beneficiary HH members especially in the hill and mountain districts had no work and had to live without wages. This program was highly effective in Rukum and Mugu districts, where more than 80% respondents replied that they were benefited from the cash for work activity (Fig. 5), which eased them from the suffering of food insecurity caused from soaring food prices. But it was not effective in Banke, and this is mainly because of the availability of temporary labor jobs and getting wage opportunity. Project provided awareness and capacity development training program to get access to both on farm and off farm services.

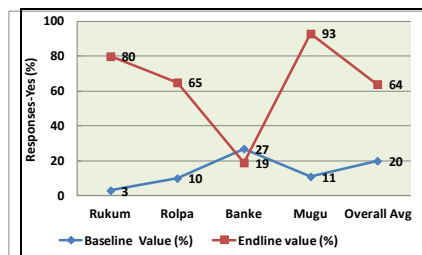


Fig. 5 Cash for work activities with yes response

The level of awareness to the beneficiary farmers increased by more than 90% through to functioning of five source areas namely free medical support, old age allowance, dalit scholarship, girls' scholarship and single women allowance (Fig. 6). The project beneficiaries did not know about the information if they are potential to receive such benefits, and also the way to get access to such government provided facilities. Within the six months period, from January, 2010 to June, 2011 (baseline survey), the awareness level of the beneficiaries in the selected five areas was increased by more than 70%. It continued to increase attaining a level of more than 90% towards the end of September, 2011 (Endline Survey).

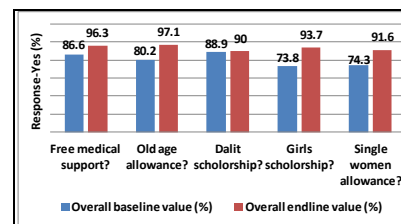


Fig. 6 Level of Awareness on Social Safety Net through to five source areas

2.2.3 Access to land and water resources for vulnerable groups

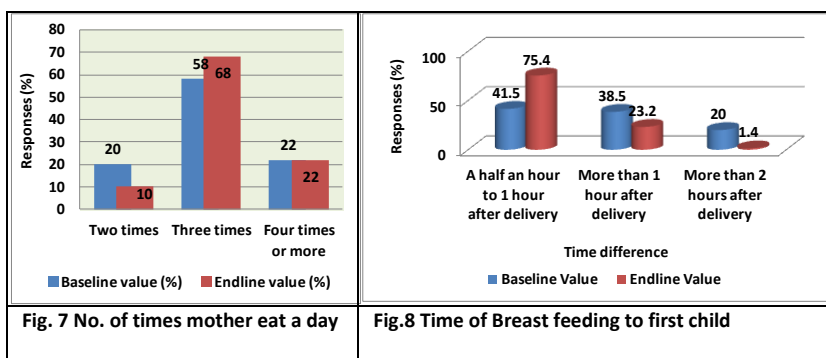
The total 12.5% (845) households benefited from leasehold land and forest, which was above than the targeted 9% (600 HHs). The total 5.2% (348 HHs) with 16 MUS schemes, have now got access to multiple use water system, and this too was more than the targeted result of 4.5% (300) HHs. The beneficiary's households who received access to small scale surface water irrigation and MIT by means of renovating and constructing canal, drip and sprinkler irrigation, electric motor pumps, treadle pumps and low cost diesel pumps etc by the end of project were 48.4% (3279 out of 6768), which was greater than the targeted HH percent (45%).

2.2.4 Improve agricultural and nutrition practices applied by vulnerable groups

The baseline study shows that 31% respondents adopted five improved cultivation practices, but only one practice (intercropping system) out of 5 listed (ideal spacing, crop rotation, crop planted in row/lines, crop density practice, intercropping) systems was adopted by 67% respondents. The endline study shows that the percentage of respondents who adopted all five listed improved cultivation practices was 78%, which is more than the targeted results of 75% respondents, adopted 3 or more improved crop production technologies/practices.

In addition to low cost innovative agricultural practices/technologies, the project provided opportunity of learning and sharing experiences on food and nutrition to both men and women beneficiaries by providing knowledge and skills through to the awareness and capacity development training programme they participated. The programme on nutrition practices was especially beneficial for the mothers, pregnant women and young babies as they were suffering from malnutrition and poor health. This was not only because of food insecurity or poor diets, but also because they were not aware of the value of local foods, food biodiversity and the right time they were eating.

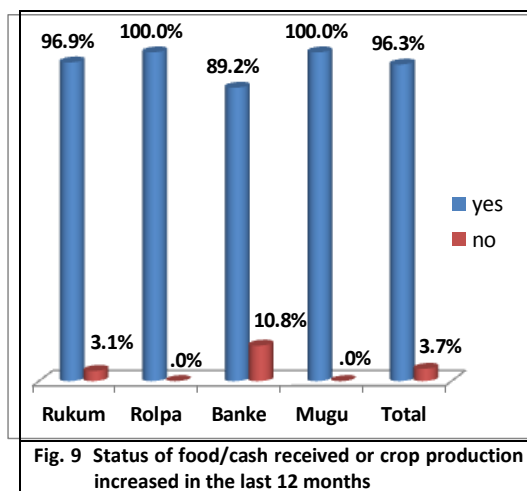
The mothers of new babies were not aware of the relationship between the dietary deficiency of their own health and the newly born babies. Before to start the project, mostly the mothers were used to eat meal two times, but after the project intervention of nutrition practices program, about 70% mothers started eating meal three times and some 20% four times and only a very few (less than 10%) were eating two times (Fig.7). They shared their experiences that not only new mothers, but all the family members



are consuming green vegetables grown in their project initiated own kitchen garden together with main meal and finding themselves changed with more powered with added energy and healthy.

The result shows that the health of new mothers and their newly born babies are better now (endline study) than before to start the project. Also it was reported that the lead beneficiary women are educating to other women about the value of eating local nutritional food and eating time. The endline study shows that more than 75% new mothers do breast feeding to their first child within half an hour to one hour after delivery of their child, and about 20% do after an hour of delivery (Fig.8).

Mothers, pregnant women and young babies are eating local nutritious food, and maternal child health is improved of the beneficiary households. The endline and the final evaluation studies show that the production of cereal crops (Rice in Banke, Maize and Wheat in all districts) increased by at least 60 to 100 percent depending, on with the use of improved seed only or with the use of both improved seeds and irrigation water (Fig.9). The beneficiaries, who never used growing wheat crop in their land, also started growing wheat crop after receiving training and improved seeds. Similarly, more than two third of the beneficiaries did not know the nutritive value of green vegetables, they did not used to grow vegetables in their kitchen garden, and only used to consume occasionally during the rainy season from harvest of the vegetables inter-cropped with cereals. After the project intervention, farmers learnt how to grow fresh and off season vegetables in their newly established kitchen garden or commercially in bigger areas where market facility exists.



2.2.5 Develop and strengthen agricultural service providers and market outlets, and link with government agencies and the private sector

The endline study shows that over 90% respondents were receiving technical services from project itself and other different institution such as DADO, Agro-vet and other government and private sectors where as during baseline study only 8% respondents were receiving technical services. The differences between the baseline and endline data shows that the project played a very important role in developing the technical capacity of the people that made or empowered them to seek services or get access to services or demonstrate the learned technical skills practically in their daily life.

The endline study shows that 37% of them are associated with group marketing and use marketing centers for selling agricultural products, where baseline study showed that only 1% respondents were associated with and using group marketing initiatives. People who were not used to grow wheat and maize crop, learnt to grow. The families who were not used to consume fresh farm grown maize and wheat grains, and green vegetables, started consuming. This was possible by collective and collaborative efforts of all organizations of alliance who were actively involved in the action.

Collection centre developed in support of the project became “a platform or a one-stop shop” for the farmers, service providers, agriculture specialists, practitioners, and other leaders and personnel to

exchange creative ideas and improve upon lessons learned in efforts to improving food security and livelihood by increasing agriculture production and household income.

2.2.6 Off farm vocations and micro-enterprises established by vulnerable groups

Endline study shows that 80 % (168) respondents participated the vocational education training actively, 53% (79) were female among total participants. The targeted result was successfully achieved. The data shows that after completion of the project conducted entrepreneurship training, out of the total participants, 89% (149 persons) are employed and self-employed, and this result was more than two folds of the targeted result 40% (67). Similarly, 57% (95 out of 168) of vocational training participants received investment and technical support and established different microenterprise, and this figure was below the targeted result of 82% (137 out of 168). Project provided seed money (cash facility 7000 to 19000) to start micro-enterprise programme.

To accomplish the training successfully and effectively, the project team made an agreement with Alliance for Social Mobilization (P) LTD for collaborative work to provide Training and Employment (T&E) services to economically poor and socially discriminated youth aged 16-24 of the beneficiary households. The trades selected after conducting RMA in those districts were Hotel Sahayek, Khaja Nasta Maker, Building Electrician, Construction Brick Layer/Mason, Driving, and Tailoring. The training was started from the third week of December 2010. The number of trainees participated in the training were 15, 15, 50, 50, and 80 in Humla, Mugu, Rukum, Rolpa, and Banke districts respectively. After completion of the training, they have started enterprise to generate income in the respective fields. The linkages were developed with concerned district stakeholders including government line agencies for coordination, cooperation, affiliation and attachment for possible opportunities.

2.3 Perceived/seen, higher level changes on beneficiaries and their families

Almost all targeted beneficiaries received improved seeds of maize and wheat crop, grown in their field and the production increased by at least 60%. Similarly they received improved vegetable seeds, established kitchen garden, grown fresh and off-season vegetables mainly cauliflower, cabbage, reddish, green leafy vegetables, cucurbits, lady’s finger, egg plant, onion, beans, hot chillies and other spices such as garlic, ginger and turmeric. Both food and nutrition security and economic capacity of the beneficiary farmers has been increased. Endline study shows that almost all the respondents (except two out of 47 in Rolpa) replied that after the initiation of the project, the food security in their household has been improved (Fig. 10). The data shows that the food sufficiency level in each household increased from about 40% HHs for 0-3 months, another 40% for 3-6 months and about less than 20% for 6-9 months during baseline study (June, 2010) to more than 40% for 6-9 months, and about 50% 9-12 months during endline

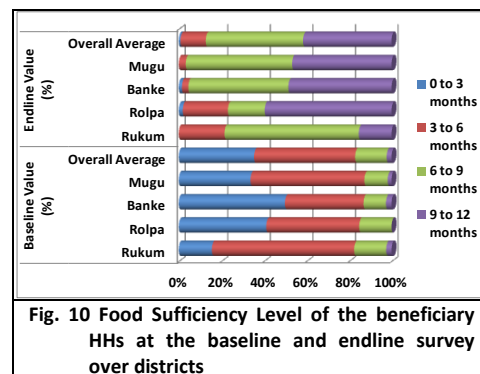


Fig. 10 Food Sufficiency Level of the beneficiary HHs at the baseline and endline survey over districts

study (Sept., 2011). The result shows that all the beneficiaries were benefited from the project, and there was remarkable improvement in the level of food security of the beneficiary HHs. During interaction/discussion meeting the beneficiaries expressed and put forward their own opinion that low cost technology they learnt and demonstrated within the project period will be continued and adopted in their daily life.

The achievement related to improvement in agriculture performance and increased production suggests that this modality is suitable to upscale and replicate in other VDCs of these five districts, and other districts of the country. Data shows that the project has not only achieved successes in increasing agriculture production of vulnerable communities through implementation of significant change techniques and good agriculture practices in growing cereal crops and fresh vegetables, more importantly it has developed their capacity by changing their behavior and attitude to new initiative on improved cultivation practices, eating nutritious and healthy food including farm grown grains and vegetables, and on selling vegetables to increase their income.

The beneficiaries also shared their feeling that the project increased their capacity and confidence level in farming by using local resources supplemented by the new technologies and innovations for effective and efficient management that have eased their daily life. The annual average household income of the beneficiary HHs from the sale of crop produced increased by 10-50% being lowest in Mugu and Highest in Rolpa (Fig.11). In addition to increased agriculture production which has enhanced food and nutrition security and improved economic condition, the project has promoted family and community harmony by bringing family and community member together in groups and developing, sharing and learning best practices they have adopted.

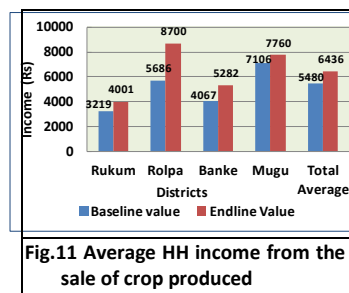


Fig.11 Average HH income from the sale of crop produced

The project not only helped to improve the agriculture food production but also performance of food biodiversity and eating local nutritious food after inclusion of vegetable garden. Also that the average annual expenditure of the beneficiary household increased by 26%, being lowest in Rolpa 14% and the highest in Banke 55% (Fig.12), and this is mainly due to the increased income from project supported activities including the sale of increased agriculture crop produce. Increased water use efficiency through small irrigation and water spreading techniques and seed distribution of both cereal crops and vegetables helped to increase agricultural growth. Also that the adopted techniques might have enabled the soil to retain more moisture, making available for second crop of rotation cycle.

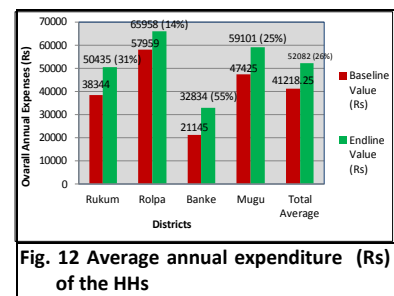


Fig. 12 Average annual expenditure (Rs) of the HHs

2.4 Effects of the project on other stakeholders

Along with multiple-use water systems, the project facilitated the promotion of manufacturer and dealer networks, for manufacturing/trading variety of irrigation products (drip, micro-sprinklers and larger sprinklers, treadle pumps, water collection ponds and other items) designed to be affordable and suitable for smallholder farmers. Similarly, other private sector traders and input suppliers are benefited from the

project network. Neighboring farmers of the beneficiaries or other community people are benefited either by observing the demonstrated technology and developments or by consuming produced cereal grains or vegetables.

2.5 Replication of the project interventions/learning

The project followed empowerment frame by focusing on participation, access, material change, welfare, perceptual change and conscientisation. Beneficiary farmers were very impressed with this program and they voiced together that it would be vital to upscale and replicate such an innovative program to other communities.

2.6 Unintended outcomes of the project (if any)

Project remained successful in bringing people together and uniting them in groups who were badly affected from the political thoughts and group politics during 10 years' conflict time. This process helped in creating community strength and/or social harmony, which is the key for sustainable development and human happiness.

3. Financial Analysis

3.1 Scope of Work

The focus of financial analysis was on the financial discipline maintained by lead organization Save the Children, Nepal and other two central level implementing INGO partners IDE and ME, national and local NGO partners. More concentration was given, during the field visit and working in Head office, in recording the transactions as per Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), mechanism to approve the fund, documentation for payment, approval of transaction by authorized person, deduction of TDS in certain payment while disbursing the fund as per Income Tax Act 2002 and deposit of the same to the government office in stipulated time, system of internal audit and internal check and other areas as stipulated on the TOR.

3.2 Working Methodology

Due to concentration of all the transaction in head office, we did focus on the transaction recorded on head office and visited the some local NGOs office as well. This report has been prepared and based on the transaction verification and analysis of head office and some local level NGOs like DECOS, Rolpa and SC Nepalganj regional office. In addition to this, we visited head office of all implementing partners and reviewed documents and analyzed the data. Working method was followed as illustrated in the ToR given by SWC. In addition to this, some other areas of transaction have been verified to negate the doubts while preparing the report.

3.3 Efficiency of the Project and Cost Effectiveness

Since Jan 1, 2010 to till preparation of this report, all together, the project period was 22 months and actual working period on the field level was nearly 15-18 months. However while making field visit we found that this project was very effective in the community level and beneficiary people were asking for extension of the project period. In short period of time, the project has succeeded in winning the confidence of local people and achieving goals by demonstrating practically through concrete actions.

The administrative cost allocated for the SC was € 106,223 (7%) and for the local office was € 80,047 (5%), but for the human resources the allocated budget was € 582,970 (36%). Similarly, total travel cost was €64,414 (4%), equipment and supplies € 270,385 (17%), other cost services € 24,001 and other program costs was € 451,450 (28%). A budget of € 44,198 (3%) was allocated for contingency provisions, but this portion of the budget was not spent as it had complications in releasing process. The ratio of Administrative and Program cost were broadly within the limits agreed in the project documents. Project activities were conducted according to the scheduled plan and no activities were found to be curtailed or postponed due to lack of financial resources.

This was a set standard budget while making project agreement between SWC and SC Nepal. The result shows that the project has maintained agreed percentage of program cost and administration overhead cost ratio during the project period (Table. 1).

Table. 1 Budget Sheet (Expenses and Balance)

S. N.	Budget Line Items	Original Budget	Revised Approved Budget	Expenditure as of Nov 2011	Balance	Percent
		Euro	Euro	Euro	Euro	
1	Human resources	535,872	582,970	560,548	22,422	36%
2	Travel	46,756	64,414	64,677	(262)	4%
3	Equipment & Supplies	243,295	270,385	276,206	(5,822)	17%
4	Local Office Cost	92,608	80,047	74,522	5,525	5%
5	Other Cost Services	22,626	24,001	17,440	6,561	1%
6	Other	532,112	451,450	470,724	(19,275)	28%
7	Sub Total Direct Eligible Cost	1,473,268	1,473,267	1,464,117	9,150	91%
8	Contingency provisions	44,198	44,198	-	44,198	3%
9	Administration Cost	106,223	106,223	75,875	30,348	7%
10	EC portion of Total Budget	1,461,319	1,461,319			90%
11	SC portion of Total Budget	162,369	162,369			10%
10	Total Eligible Cost	1,623,688	1,623,688	1,539,992	83,696	100%

Note: The above figures may be slightly changed

1. EC has provided 7 per cent as indirect cost on total direct budget. 7 per cent includes country level management cost of SC, ME and IDE.
2. Local office cost represents programme support cost of all the field level implementing offices including partners.

3.4 Actual Comparison with Standard

Monthly comparison of actual cost incurred till date with budgeted figure has been done by all local NGO partners and all other stakeholders and prepared and reported to their superior authority. The below figure shows the actual and budgeted amount of SC HO till the end of Sept., 2011 (Fig. 13)

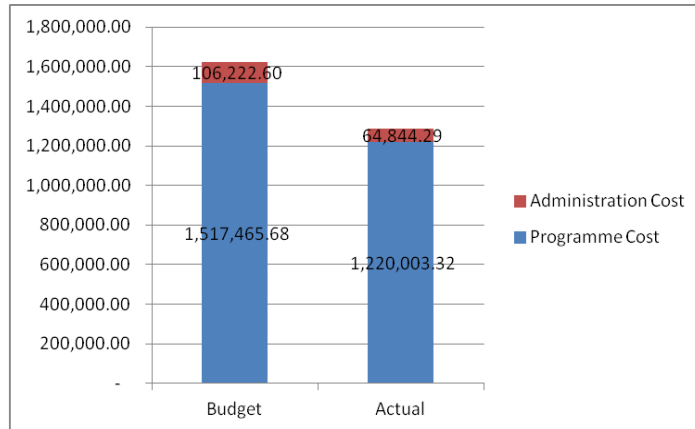


Fig. 13 Program & Administrative cost of Budgeted & Actual Amount

3.5 Economy in procuring goods and service

Goods and services have been procured as per generally applicable practices. In the cases where competitive bidding quotation is not available, single supplier quotation has been considered. Verification of quality and quantity were made after receiving the goods or services.

Compliance with project agreement

In general, no cases of non compliance have been found during the period of evaluation.

3.6 Compliance with tax laws

Tax Deduction at Sources (TDS)

All the stakeholders of this project, so far transaction verified by us, tax law applicable to it has been complied with.

3.7 Fixed Assets

Recording of fixed assets was made properly. However capitalization of fixed assets has not been made by all NGOs and implementing partners. Record showed the control and custody of fixed assets management and periodical physical verification.

3.8 Evaluation of Internal Control System

Most of the rules and by laws has been followed by the local NGOs or Implementing partners are particulars rules given by donor agency. In addition to this their own rule and regulation has been followed while disbursing the payments. In some cases due to multiple rules and regulation to be complied with, most of the time of concerned department has been consumed to comply with different set of rules and regulation.

Periodic AGM, Board Meeting, PAC and PMC meeting has been held as per the requirement. Delegation of authority in terms of check sign has been made as and when necessary. In addition to this all implementing partners has strong control check system. Normally three fold auditing system is in use. Donor agency does auditing as per their own set rules and regulation; implementing partners also do the quarterly internal audit as per their requirement. In addition to this, annual statutory audit, as required by the government, is done within mid of January, every year.

3.9 Financial reporting framework

Financial reporting to the head office by all local NGOs was made on monthly basis. The reporting was done on format prescribed by donor agency. This report showed all necessary transaction as budget and actual expenses incurred till date. Reporting currency used in local level was Nepalese Rupees and in Head office both Euro and Nepalese Rupees.

3.10 Comparison of Budgets and Actual with committed Projects cost

Comparison of budget with actual has been made on monthly basis and reported to superior authority.

4. Sustainability of the Program

The Project Team has been successful in capitalizing the opportunities for income generation within its target communities where market network remained the key. The best ways promoted for the sustainability of production pockets were the support provided to local agro-vets, treadle pumps specialist, nursery managers, seed growers, and establishment and promotion of collection center in the target communities.

Out of the total 330 farmers groups, 273 (83%) have been registered in the DADO, and the rest are in process of registration. These farmers' groups have strong links with their community agro-vets and are well prepared to resort to them for the purchase of agro-inputs whenever/if needed. The decision made to help farmers groups combining both agricultural and veterinary competences was found very relevant and effective to enhancing long- term sustainable agriculture production. This development has not only enhanced their network with the DADO to receive services but also promoted access for local government support (technical and physical). The project has also facilitated the registered target groups in local planning / budgeting process. The DADO and Right to Food network group in the district could play a critical role in this process.

The project's strategy of involving women, Madhesi and dalits of vulnerable families and giving greater access to better paid skilled labour-based tasks under cash for work schemes empowered them to get involved with the activities related to sustainable agriculture. In addition, capacity development trainings on cereal crops, fresh and off-season vegetable production, use of local food (food diversity), use of improved seeds and cultivation practices provided opportunity to gain better health condition, especially of mothers, children and elderly people of the household who were suffering from malnutrition. Vocational training focusing on the processing and marketing of agricultural produce, and small financial support to start entrepreneurship after the training attracted youths, and found that several youths with interest are engaged in such activities.

There is often a risk - when promoting cash crops - that target communities end up giving prevalence to income generation through the marketing of their agriculture produces at the expense of their domestic food consumption, but in this project, significant increases in HDDS (Fig.3) shows that domestic consumption has increased greatly.

Overall, the project was on track and produced the expected outputs with good prospects for sustainability. The latter is connected to the promotion by the project of so-called "production pockets" based on systemic supply/demand relations within targeted communities. Farmers' groups are at the centre of those relations being both suppliers (vegetables) and consumers (agro-inputs) and in both cases enjoying proper market access through agro-vets or local vegetable traders. Comparatively easy market access in Banke district (as opposed to the other project target districts) has therefore likely been a critical factor of success. Project beneficiaries are very appreciative of the project although not fully confident in its sustainability yet mainly because of the risk factors inherent to agriculture in a flood-prone region. There is thus a need to capitalise on and consolidate the results achieved so far.

The formation and strengthening of farmers' groups are completed. The activities are implemented successfully in all targeted communities. Farmers are motivated and developing their capacity by gaining knowledge and skills, and by sharing and learning their experiences. Many groups have completed two cycles of crop and vegetable production. Capacity strengthening is observed as a key strategy for building

the community human resource base and for sustainability. Farmers who are involved in the farmers groups have developed their capacity in planning, communication, and market network development. The development of infrastructures like water collection ponds, collection centre, seed storage have developed, promoted and managed in active participation, contribution and leadership of local beneficiaries organized in farmers' groups and the strong link is developed with DADO and other related government and non-government organizations including local partner organization in each district.

FGs are following key principles of group management such as keeping records of all events, saving and credit, inputs and production data of crops and vegetables of all farmers and other related technologies adopted. The very positive thing was that the farmers were learning and gaining knowledge and skills of all project followed initiatives/practices and acting as a local resource person. Beneficiaries, other community people, service providers, line agencies and all other development leaders have welcomed the program whole heartily and overwhelmed with such a promising initiative that has improved the livelihood of needy people. The capacity development training has supported beneficiaries to oversee the planned activities including implementation of a social audit of the main planned activities. These processes have helped them to improve local accountability and promote community ownership.

Key action steps for sustainability are:

- **FGs Registered with DADO. 330 FGs formed from 36 target VDCs. 83% (273 out of 330) FGs were registered in DADO & the rest were in process of registration. All the FGs will be receiving Agriculture Extension Services from DADO/Agrovets).**
- **Group Saving: 6306 HHs of 277 FGs out of total 330 FGs are actively involved in the regular group saving. All the groups meeting monthly and participating actively in planning and marketing.**
- **Development of Local Resource Persons, Agrovets, Nursery growers & other service providers**
- **Alliance developed between service providers, farmers & traders**
- **Established market (collection Centre), MPCs and local service centre (forward and backward linkage) with appropriate stakeholders (Agrovets, Seed growers)**
- **The commitment of local partners (NGOs) in providing services to their level best. Most of the social mobilizers are from the local community and they are involved with the local partner NGOs and will be staying in the same community, and they are willing to continue in providing technical services after the phase out of the project.**

4.1 Issues and challenges

Feminization of agriculture and increased women's workload. In the targeted communities, especially males were leaving home for searching employment opportunity to urban cities, India or overseas. Recently this practice is increased and youths especially male are leaving the country in large numbers, which has resulted to Feminization of agriculture and increased women's workload.

There were some families in the communities who were still suffering from poverty and food insecurity. This effect was encompassing to malnutrition, vulnerability, indebtedness, migration and dislocation, and

social instability; marginal livelihoods, limited employment especially for women and the disadvantaged people, lack of ability to take up opportunities, and unsustainable management of the natural resource base. There have been teething problems: intermittent rainfall, floods and droughts, disease and pests problem, time availability of the beneficiary households, no market and/or no practice of buying/eating vegetables, not aware of growing and eating vegetables, value and processing/storing facility. Also that competition from weeds had hindered progress in some areas. Furthermore, some of the improved vegetable species seed have been slow or unable to take hold, often due to variations in climate, soil quality, terrain, altitude, and lack of irrigation water.

There were four groups of underlying causal problems (Fig. 14) (i) Many men often migrate to the city in search of work, and women are left to raise families and farm. (ii) The remoteness and challenges of the hill environment have made poor access to input and output markets, often not organized local markets (iii) Very small, fragmented and degraded land holdings with poor or sometime no source of water for irrigation pond and with no or less farm yard manure to add in the soil. The micro-irrigation facility is not enough to all, (iv) lack of local capital.

Major Constraints

- Hill terrain and remoteness
- Challenge of working with Vulnerable peoples
- Long motivation process
- Transportation, communication difficulty
- Delayed delivery of inputs and services
- Challenge of generating matching fund (Kind) at initial phase
- Project Life - Short (Time frame- Short)
- Absence of reliable credit facility

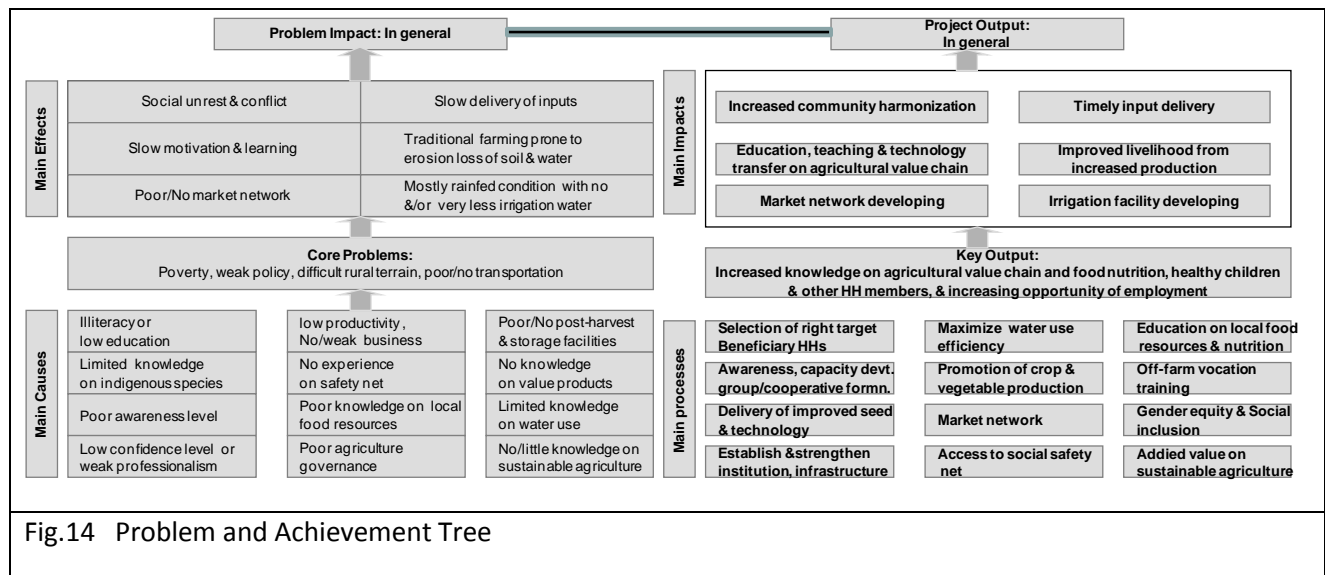


Fig.14 Problem and Achievement Tree

4.2 Lessons learnt and best practices of the project

Major Lesson Learnt:

- The people in the communities who were benefiting from the project directly or indirectly were mostly uneducated, but had good hearts, wisdom and rich experiences. They were passing simple life, but they were filled with the qualities of strength, speed and clarity. Program farmers and their neighbors in the communities were overwhelmed and deeply touched with the FSI program and participated greatly. Women were being empowered both at knowledge and skill level, and economically.
- It was learnt that the synergy produced from strong bonding and richness of long experiences of all 3 partners SC, IDE and ME at the central level have made possible to achieve the success. The partnership approach model for the overall management of the project, and PPP approach for the effective implementation and monitoring of the activities to achieve successes was highly appreciable.
- It was also learnt that the processes of motivation, development of education packages and teaching on improved practices/techniques of farming system took longer as ethnic, dalits and women were participating in such program for the first time. Mostly the beneficiaries were uneducated, and thus, it took longer for them to understand about the program although they used their wisdom fully. Finally, they gained valuable knowledge and skills from the series of sessions on learning lessons and sharing experiences.
- In some cases, initially, the farmers were not fully aware of the activities being carried out. It could be due to the language and education problem.
- Small, fragmented subsistence rain fed farming of most of the beneficiary farmers took longer for land management and cultivation process as it needed to keep waiting for the rain water to come. For FSI beneficiaries, the land holding was much smaller. In many cases less than 0.4 hectares. The average land holding of Nepalese farming household was only 0.8 hectares¹².
- The problem was seen in microfinance. Farmers were keen to start small agribusiness, but they had no access to financial facility.
- Instead of transporting from regional and outside market, the priority would have given to local level service providers for purchasing agricultural inputs and materials locally if available such as seeds of turmeric, ginger and other agri-inputs.
- Project was in action in developing infrastructures such as market/collection centers and transportation facilities through social safety net, and encouraging and empowering farmers to increase production considering that small irrigation, technical services, input supply, market network and collection centers were vital for increasing income of the beneficiary farmers from agriculture production.

¹² Statistics Office, Government of Nepal 2008

- Most of the beneficiaries were not growing vegetables in their garden and did not know the nutritional value of agricultural product before to start the project, but after the initiation of project activities, they started growing vegetables for the consumption and also for trading locally.
- Project staffs with job description understood their roles on project implementation and cross coordination with partners, and thus, it needed to carry out as soon possible.
- The allocated technical staffs in the field were not enough to provide the technical support to the farmers. There was a need of additional agriculture technicians due to scattered project sites and large no of beneficiary groups in all project districts.
- The cereal crop seed production by 1600 households is the major outcome of the project, and it was learnt that this achievement was made with the major contribution of CEAPRED. This is vital in upscaling and replicating cereal crop production activity.

4.3 Links and Synergies developed to implement Actions

This project was designed and implemented in cooperation and coordination of three partners in the centre namely Save the Children, Mission East (ME) and International Development Enterprises (IDE). Save The Children was the lead organization. There were five implementing partners namely- CEAPRED, SDF, RSDC, DECOS and KIRDARC in the districts who also played important role in the management and coordination at central and regional level. The practices of sharing each other's demonstrated experiences and learning lessons has made the action live in all central, regional, district and community level. The strong relationship between organizations and feedback mechanism from central to the community level remained vital to develop link and synergies for effective implementation of the action and achieve targeted results.

Community led: The project has made the provision of initiating sustainable agriculture production plans with a special focus on supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged families at the local level. The action was centered in motivating and mobilizing the people of local community respecting their knowledge, traditional culture and values. Thus the action has made effective implementation and comprehensive development of the food production program at community level to achieve the changes. All the farmers are involved in farmers' group, and these groups are registered in DADO with the view of sustainability of the ongoing activities. The collection centers are developed at the community level and are taken care by the farmers groups.

4.4 Best practices/Innovations of the project

- **Team Work.** The project operated with the involvement of three international organizations at the centre and using different partnership modalities and leveraging resources in the field. The project team working modality with other organizations, professionals, development workers, private sectors and farmers for building alliance in collaboration, cooperation, affiliation and attachment helped to add strength for speedy action. Team work facilitated for operationalizing the activities and created opportunity of values driven in action.

- Development of MPC, farmers groups, cooperatives, collection centers have developed potentiality for the beneficiaries and other local peoples on improving agriculture performance and increasing production, women leadership development, community empowerment, gender and social inclusion, share ideas and thoughts for team building and sustainable development.
- The project action was complemented with its vision, purpose, innovation and creativity which generated or transformed to professionalism (skill and technology) at farmers level, increased agriculture production, increased food sufficiency level (food and nutrition), improved marketing and planning abilities, and increased household income (Fig. 15). **Participation mechanism** for disadvantaged groups (by caste and gender) single women and female headed household and women leadership. The Action supported women’s active participation in the groups and their leadership development through to capacity building training at community level, which brought changes not only in increased agriculture production but also in nutrition, education, health hygiene and social harmony. Gender responsive behavior was observed at the household and community level, which has empowered single women and female headed households and the provided opportunity of women leadership in the groups or cooperatives.

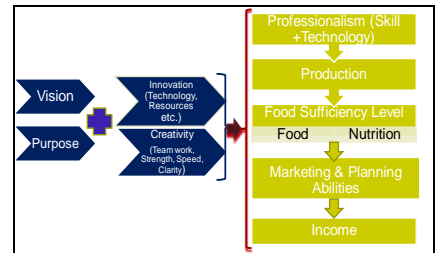


Fig. 15 Changes brought by the project

- FSI’s **monitoring activities** appeared to consist mostly of tracking performance indicators for outputs in terms of numbers of MITs installed and farmers trained. It appeared to have very strong monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRVs) of agriculture production, food consumption in the family and income from marketing agricultural production.
- **Marketing was** a major component of the action so that farmers supported by FSI can sell their products through a collection center managed by the Marketing and Planning Committees (MPCs), which contacts traders who purchase vegetables wholesale and transport them to markets.
- The productive agricultural assets consisted of small irrigation, use of improved seeds, seed production of cereal crops and access to services. Development of small irrigation system (treadle pump, cement and plastic ponds with pipelines and canal construction), supply of improved seeds of both cereal crops, fresh and off-season vegetable, and seedlings of medicinal and aromatic plants, provision of land for the landless on lease have been the most popular program. These programs have enabled beneficiaries to prevent them from immediate hunger from increased agriculture production, and increase their income.
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) were practiced at action level. Almost the entire farmer’s groups consisted of more than 50% women and they were able to manage and operate cultivation of cereal crops and vegetables, and had access to market network, seed storage and other facilities.
- Farmer’s demand based community seed production as one of the best practice which was distinct from other subsectors.

Reasons for the successes

- Communication strategy to reach the target groups with services
- Focus on the nutrition of child and mothers.
- Existing knowledge and skills of the rural women in agriculture and building upon on it towards modernization
- Off farm vocation training- creating employment for the youth
- Mainstreaming Gender in the farmers' groups

Replicable practices / lessons

- Community-led
- Women leadership
- Promotion and supply of improved quality seed use suitable to each eco-zone
- Fresh and off-season vegetable production
- Small irrigation (treadle pump, MUS, water collection pond, sprinkler irrigation etc)
- Group/ cooperative management
- Planning and Marketing
- Collection centre
- Input supply services
- Capacity Building
- Gender and Social Inclusion

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The project explored the issues and challenges, and captured the opportunities to establish bases for long-term food security to vulnerable and disadvantaged communities of rural areas as a model program. They include improving agricultural performance and productivity through increased awareness and capacity building, increased land and water use efficiency, increased access of improved seed and technology, and tackling issues related to citizen empowerment respecting human rights, gender and social inclusion, and the role of women and those related to networking and governance. The production of maize and wheat, the major cereal crops of the targeted households and both seasonal and off-season vegetables have increased as a result of awareness and strengthening capacity, and application of improved agricultural practices, including improved seeds and improved irrigation services. More importantly, the action provided education for consuming local food and fresh vegetables to children, mothers and elderly people.

The most significant change techniques adopted by the action are capacity development of the beneficiaries by formation and establishment of farmers groups and cooperatives, delivery of improved seeds and other services related to improved farming, development and use of small irrigation facility, development of market network, formation of district development alliance/network, provide awareness and education on local food use, health and nutrition and strengthening capacity of poor to undertake self-reliant in food to feed the families, especially to children and mothers, and promotion of income generation activities to meet household expenses, seed production and storage, emphasis on the use of improved quality seeds, access to resources and its' management, and development of network all levels – national, district and local for sustainability of the action.

The project achieved successes in selecting and organizing target groups, and provided government and non government organizations, private sector and other service providers and leader farmers with access to strategies, tools, mentoring skills, systems and resources to help vulnerable farmers advance their capacity on food security and sustainable livelihoods. The action responded to new approaches and innovative technologies, and demonstrated the effective designing, implementation, monitoring and verification processes such as formation, registration and establishment of farmers groups and cooperatives, collection centre and other resources management processes, and development of a comprehensive network “District Agriculture Development Alliance” for sustainability of the action. The action contributed to farmer friendly sustainable land management practices required for enhancing agriculture performance including improved seed production and other related management aspects that contributes to food security. The project learned lessons from the field, enriched its experience, responded to climate change and new technologies, and aiming to upscale and replicate best practices/innovations for sustainable agriculture suitable to improve food security and livelihood of vulnerable families of remote rural areas through various means to inspire, motivate, serve and add values of equality to human health and happiness.

5.2 Recommendations

- A new approach combined with knowledge, promoting respect for the environment and improving the quality of life of the community as a whole. More long-term efforts needed to empower rural farmers with the skills needed to generate increased production and profit.

- The provision of direct technical assistance to farmers through field extension agents (local resource person), who live and work in communities to promote changes in attitudes and systems, while enhancing clients' skills in agriculture would help to promote more in developing capability with strength, speed and clarity.
- Although the trainees seemed to be happy with the skills they were provided, practical learning opportunities with a well established local vocational training provider with a ready-for-use training would help to learn better. There should be a room for greater innovation and increased responsiveness of the training to the local labour markets needs.
- More sustainable improvements needed in farming production and resource utilization through instruction and skills improvement in growing, processing (especially postharvest cleaning, grading and packaging) to improve standardization of quality product and marketing practices.
- Women friendly technologies especially farming practices and post harvest technologies would be vital to increase production and income.
- Development of teaching materials in local language can help for faster learning to the beneficiaries.
- Upscaling the promotional efforts on suitable Green Growth practices and institutional development focusing to replicate these types of interventions in other areas, and on the use of local food biodiversity.
- Exchange creative ideas and improve upon lessons learned in efforts to improving food security and reducing poverty through sustainable agriculture.
- Greater emphasis on direct economic impacts through business planning, especially on post harvest technologies.
- More efforts on promoting ecologically, socially and financially suitable Green Growth practices and institutional development.
- Learning from the current Action on the project, Save the Children is envisioning that it is now "Public Private Partnership Approach, Collaborative, Cooperative, Participatory, Gender Powered, Inclusive, Community Led, Integrated and Climate Smart Sustainable Agriculture Production", with active involvement and contribution from local people, service providers, and other concerned organizations and personnel. The new generation of food security programme being developed has a different approach, design and implementation strategy. The key issues related to new generation paradigm in Sustainable Agriculture are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Key issues related to New Generation Paradigm in Sustainable Agriculture Initiative

Focus

- Development of capacity, women leadership and adequate infrastructure facilities
- Local socio-economic development processes, clustering and strengthening of producer organizations
- Combination of crop and animal husbandry activities, regulatory issues, transportation problems
- Business and market orientation, access to credit and crop insurance, and multi-stakeholder participation.
- Use of indigenous knowledge, reduce cost of input, and reduce production losses and transportation costs
- Flexible program design that adjusts to local governance processes, long-term planning and financing

Safeguard natural resources:

- Improving yields on existing arable land, crop biodiversity and composting, SALT and
- Invest in technologies and techniques to promote water-use efficiency, such as improved irrigation systems, conservation agriculture and better water allocation systems.
- Promote soil and moisture conservation techniques
- Build up soil organic matter and prevent erosion by applying techniques such as conservation tillage, nutrient management and the use of reclamation varieties.
- Facilitate drought-preparedness and mitigation through appropriate technologies such as drought-tolerant crops, use of check dams and improved drainage system, early warning information systems, irrigation technology (drip/sprinkler irrigation) and the building of resilience in rural communities.

Share information/knowledge

- Encourage education in locally-relevant agricultural practices and technologies which significantly increase carbon sequestration, reduce GHG emissions and improve agricultural productivity.
- Build capacity for the efficient application of existing climate-friendly technologies by making them more affordable and efficient in use as well as more accessible to farmers.
- Rapid education and dissemination of improved efficiency of Livestock Keeping, manure management, methane capture for biogas production and enhanced feeds and feed additives.
- Use Integrated Crop Management (ICM) best practices (notably by deploying the right nutrient source, at the right rate, right time and in the right place to improve nutrient use efficiencies) and apply Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to optimize pesticide effectiveness

Build local access and capacity

- Encourage improved cropping systems (e.g. the use of cover crops and appropriate crop rotation methods, such as nitrogen-fixing legumes), cultivation practices (e.g. by limiting fallow periods and reducing cultivation) and soil quality practices to increase overall resource productivity.
- Invest in infrastructure-building such as micro-irrigation, PLCs, community seed bank, collection centre and other upscaling programmes.
- Provide training to existing extension networks to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of farm inputs (e.g. fuel, mineral and organic nutrient sources, seeds and crop protection).
- Provide risk management tools to support farmers in managing weather and market variations.
- Facilitate the use of modern varieties which are resistant to pests and diseases and low tilling.
- Strengthen local institutions such as farmers groups/cooperative, information/communication, PLC, Agro-vet, participatory marketing and planning chain approach.

Protect harvests

- *Efforts to enhance food quality, safety and reduce waste along the food chain through to end consumers.*
- *Improve storage techniques, processing, grading, and packaging and transportation infrastructure.*

Enable access to markets

- *Support farmers' organisations, enabling them to operate as aggregating agencies (groups/cooperatives) by assessing market requirements and needs of farmers, and by developing mechanism for improving access to market, financial mechanisms, and funding.*

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7. ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of the tools

Following tools and techniques were used in the field to collect data/information for the study. These were basic guideline, i.e, was not limited to this if we felt more to understand during field exercise.

A. Key Research Areas:

2. How far the project interventions have been effective to reduce vulnerability of the marginalized groups and improve Food Security as stated in the project goal and set objectives.
3. How far the FSI project has been effective to increase food production and income of the targeted HHs (as reflected in the project logframe).
4. How far the FSI project has been effective in identifying the marginalized groups and reach them to ensure their active participation
5. What are the innovative concepts, ideas, interventions and technologies identified and tested by the project which can be replicated.
6. What sustainability measures have been put into place to ensure the continuity of the results achieved by the project at different levels (maintenance fund, LRP, Coordination & linkage, group strength), Seed production/community seed production and multiplication (cereal & others).
7. Central level working modality to bring Synergy in planning & application process (Challenge & Strength).
8. Low Carbon Technology: Green growth for local development. (Climate smart technology), Water use efficiency, Organic kitchen garden, FYM (Farm Yard Manure) Use, Micro-irrigation, Land Improvement,.
9. Added Value: Social Harmonisation (group discussion)- political conflict, gender violence, family violence/economic tension, community conflict.
10. Room to explore applied technology/ Research (Collection Centre.
11. GESI (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion)

B. Questions

1. Observation of FS project interventions
2. Group Discussion with farmers group (lease land holders/ Self Help Groups/Cooperatives)
3. Interactive Interview with key stakeholders who have the key roles co-operative approach in farming techniques/leasehold farming approach (Project officials/DADO/Partner NGO/ farmers/Marketing service managers/community agro-based collection center/agro-vet owner)
4. Observation of project related documents at fields (SC office, Partner NGO, Groups)

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Guidelines for Observation (DCA interventions)

During the field visit, team members are expected to observe the following things.

- Land use ,exchange visits, plant conditions, time given for crops
- Farmers own initiatives for cash crops
- Any visible reflection of economic growth (eg. dress, house, food, schooling of children etc.)
- Farmers/stakeholders reactions towards FS project
- Availability of Technicians, Seeds, Fertilizer and other required things at suppliers
- Management of collection center/ (space, methods, documentation etc)
- Relationship of FGs small holder farmers with SC and DADO staff

Key questions for group discussion and interactive interview with FS Stakeholders

Guidelines for Group Discussion with farmer (FS user groups)

- Can you explain the structure, functioning and governance of your group?
- Can you explain about your group objectives and activities?
- Do you know about FS project? How it is related with you?
- How do you supported by SC? Is this sufficient?
- Does DADO help in FS Project? How?
- What are the practical problems in farming and marketing?
- What is your access to saving and credit programmes/farming techniques/marketing management /supply? Do you think that right based approaches in food security/livestock management trainings/ saving and credit system have improved your economic status? If so how? Give some examples.
- What are the good things and what were to be improved in FS interventions?
- Can you continue farming without external support? If no, why not? If yes how?
- Do you know that FS project is phased out? Do you have any opinion regarding its continuity after completion of this project?

Guidelines for Interactive Interview with Project officials

- Can you explain the objectives and activities of FS project?
- What is your relationship with DADO? How do you work with them?
- What were the practical problems in implementing FS project?
- Do you think that FS has improved farmer group's economic status? If so how? Give some examples.
- Can you explain strengths and weaknesses in the component of value chain?
- What are the good things and what were to be improved in FS project?
- Do you think that objectives of the FS project are met? How do you justify?
- Have you ever felt some thing missing in project intervention that could contribute more?
- What do you think about the sustainability of this project?

Guidelines for Interactive Interview with DADO

- What is your relationship with SC? How do you work with them?
- Can you explain the activities of FS project? How this project is implemented through DADO?
- What were the practical problems in implementing FS project?
- Do you think that livestock/agro based support initiatives has improved farmers' economic status? If so how? Give some examples.
- Can you explain strengths and weaknesses of FS project?

- Do you think that objectives of the FS project are met? If so, How?
- What do you think about the sustainability of this project?
- Would you like to put suggestion to SC?

Guidelines for Interactive Interview with Partner NGO

- Can you briefly describe the objectives and activities of your organization?
- Can you explain your partnership model with SC for FS project? How do you work with them?
- What were the practical problems in implementing FS project?
- What is the size of budget and fund mobilization pattern in FS project?
- Are you happy with SC in your partnership? Do you have any suggestion to SC for good partnership?
- Do you think that farming techniques/lease land system/livestock initiatives has improved farmers' economic status? If so how? Give some examples.
- Can you explain strengths and weaknesses of FS project?
- Do you think that objectives of the FS project are met? If so, How?
- What would happen to your intervention after closing of this project?
- How do you take care of the base laid by you in future?
- What do you think about the sustainability of this project?
- Anything you would like to mention in relation to FS project?

Guidelines for Interactive Interview with Collection centre bearer

- Can you briefly describe how this work was started?
- Can you explain the structure, functioning and governance of this centre?
- What is your relationship with SC and DADO? How do you work with them?
- How you are supported by FS/SC?
- Do you think that you are institutionalized or fragile for continuity?
- How this centre has contributed to improve the economic growth of people?
- What are your problems and what could be the solutions to overcome these problems?
- Do you like to say anything that we have not discussed/shared?

Guidelines for Interactive Interview with Agro-vet owner

- Do you know about FS project of SC? Are you connected with this programme? If so, how you are connected?
- What kind of items do you sell in relation to FS project?
- How many clients of FS are your customers?
- What kind of differences you observe among the FS clients after implementation of this project? (in relation to their affordability, level of knowledge on different items, improvement in their living standard etc?)
- Can you explain positive and negative side of partnership with SC?
- What is your say based on your experience on demand and supply of agro based items? (Increasing or decreasing trends of items demand in future?)

Questionnaire for FGs

Name(s) of Interviewer(s):

Date:.....

District:

VDC and Ward No.:

Village: _____ Name of Users' Group: _____

Strength of group (number of group members): _____

Names of Respondents: _____

1. How did you come to know about SIMI Project at first?
 - a) through Government agencies
 - b) through project officials
 - c) through neighboring villages
 - d) other (specify) _____

2. Do you know about the project's objectives?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 If your answer is 'yes', what are they? _____
3. Did you know about the project activities that would be implemented?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 If your answer is 'yes', to what extent have they been implemented? _____
4. What were the difficulties/hindrances in the ways to implement project activities? _____
5. What kind of supports did you get from the project and other agencies to remove the difficulties and resolve issues? _____
6. List the activities that were implemented in your group (e.g., construction of minor irrigation system, supply of low cost diesel pump, construction of plastic house, introduction of off season/high value crops, arrangement of market, micro credit, extension services, etc.) _____
7. Who initiated the formation of user's group? (e.g., Project officials, district government agency, etc.) _____
8. Are there other such groups in your area? Name them. _____
9. What is the average landholding by type before the project?
 - a) Irrigated
 - b) Unirrigated
 - c) Total
10. What is the average landholding after the project?
 - a) Irrigated
 - b) Unirrigated
 - c) Total
11. Cropping intensity (percentage of cropped area out of total land area) **before project:**
 - a) Irrigated
 - b) Unirrigated
12. Cropping intensity (percentage of cropped area out of total land area) **after project:**
 - a) Irrigated
 - b) Unirrigated
13. Name of crops and yield **before project:**

Irrigated		Unirrigated	
Crops	Yield (t/ha)	Crops	Yield (t/ha)

14. Name of crops and yield **after project:**

Irrigated		Unirrigated	
Crops	Yield (t/ha)	Crops	Yield (t/ha)

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15. Inputs used **before project**:

Irrigated			Unirrigated		
Particulars	Quantity	Price	Particulars	Quantity	Price
Seeds			Seeds		
Manure			Manure		
Chemical Fertilizers			Chemical Fertilizers		
Animal Draft			Animal Draft		
Agricultural Implements			Agricultural Implements		
Labour			Labour		

16. Inputs used **after project**:

Irrigated			Unirrigated		
Particulars	Quantity	Price	Particulars	Quantity	Price
Seeds			Seeds		
Manure			Manure		
Chemical Fertilizers			Chemical Fertilizers		
Animal Draft			Animal Draft		
Agricultural Implements			Agricultural Implements		
Labour			Labour		

17. Use of Agricultural Produce **before project**:

- What percentage of households had sufficient food for the entire year?
- What percentage of households had food deficit? (also mention the duration in a year)
- Where did you use to sell surplus produce?
- Any difficulty in marketing?
- Farm-gate price produce-wise: (cereals, vegetables, livestock, fish, etc.)
- Any idea about the difference between market price and farm-gate price?

18. Use of Agricultural Produce **after project**:

- What percentage of households has now sufficient food for the entire year?
- What percentage of households has now food deficit? (also mention the duration in a year)
- Where do you sell your surplus produce?
- Any difficulty in marketing or have the difficulties been removed?
- Farm-gate price produce-wise: (cereals, vegetables, livestock, fish, etc.)
- Any idea about the difference between market price and farm-gate price?

19. Income **before project**:

- Average household gross sell of agricultural produce:

- b) Average household expenses in inputs:
 - c) Average net income per year:
20. Income **after project**:
- a) Average household gross sell of agricultural produce:
 - b) Average household expenses in inputs:
 - c) Average net income per year:
21. Institutional Aspect:
- a) What provision is there in the constitution of your user's group to ensure women's participation and inclusion of DAGs?
 - b) Has the project implemented any activities to enhance capacities of Women and DAGs?
 - c) What difficulties did you encounter while trying to include women and DAGs and enhance their capacities?
 - d) Are norms and rules of your groups based on traditions?
 - e) What refinements did you introduce in the traditional norms and rules?
 - f) Specify in detail about user group's formation, functioning succession procedures:
Specify in detail about revenue generation for the upkeep of irrigation system and also the group's functioning:
 - g) Has the Project offered training opportunities to group members for maintenance of irrigation system, functioning of group, improving agricultural practices, etc.?
22. What problems do you foresee in the sustainability of irrigated agricultural systems even after project is completed?
23. Have you noticed enhanced interests of Government agencies and NGOs in your area after the initiation of the project?
24. What support do you expect from them, particularly from the Government agencies after the cessation of the project?
25. What is your general comment on the project?

Thank you!

Annex 2. Progress Performance Indicators

S. N.	Key result areas	Baseline survey	End line survey
1.	R1. 330 farmer groups of vulnerable households in 36 target VDCs meet	Not Applicable	There are 330 FGs with 6768 hhs formed in 36 program VDCs. All the groups meet monthly and discuss in different issues.
2.	R1. 60% of total 330 farmer groups formed in 36 target VDCs report having received technical support from at least one private or governmental source in past 12 months.	The baseline value shows that on an average 13.6% of the respondent receiving technical support from different private or government source (DADO, Agrovat, NGOs, Local traders... etc).	The endline value shows that on an average 31.86% (18% increased) of the respondent receiving technical support from different private or government source (DADO, Agrovat, NGOs, Local traders... etc). The regular report and records shows that 65.15% (215 FGs) of the farmers groups are accessing at least two (DADO and local agrovat) sources.
3.	R1. Of 6,600 targeted HHs, at least 15% Dalits and 30% Janajati/Madeshi participate in at least one program activity	Not Applicable	The overall beneficiary's participation shows that there are 21% of dalits, 33% of Janajatis and 46% others. In which 22% of them are Madhesis, participating in different activities.
4.	R2. 90% of the total targeted HHs report knowledge of at least 2 government safety net programs.	In the baseline it was found that only 56% of beneficiaries responded about knowledge on government social safety net (mentioned 12 different services), among them all responses were below 90%.	The endline survey shows that, on an average 82% of the beneficiaries responded that they have knowledge on government social safety net services and more than 90% have responded about knowledge of at least five government safety net services.
5.	R2. 10% increase in number of 6,600 targeted HHs accessing/receiving government safety net assistance.	The baseline value shows that 19% of the responded receiving the government safety net services	The end line value shows that the 23% of the respondent (4% increased) receiving the government safety net services. The regular reports and records shows that 680 Hhs who were never had access to such services are receiving the services with the facilitation of project interventions. The actual increase is of 10.04% (680 Hhs of 6768) from the baseline.
6.	R2. 2030 vulnerable HHs in 36 VDCs participate in cash for work activities.	Not applicable (Pls refer baseline and end line information on people participating in cash for work.	2245 vulnerable HHs with more than 42000 men/days benefited from different cash for work activities eg canal improvement/renovation, canal and culvert construction, terrace improvements work etc
7.	R3. 9% (600) of target HHs benefit from access to leasehold and/or forest land.	Not applicable	The total 12.48% (845) households benefited from leasehold land and forest
8.	R3. Minimum of 4.5% (300) of 6,600 target HHs receive access to Multiple Use Water Systems (MUS) by End of Project (EoP).	Not applicable	The total 5.21% (348 HHs) with 16 MUS schemes, have now access to multiple use water system
9.	R3. Minimum of 45% of total targeted HHs receive access to small-scale surface water irrigation and MIT by EoP	Not applicable	There are 48.44% (3279 out of 6768 hhs) of the beneficiary's households received access to small scale surface water irrigation and MIT by means of renovating and constructing canal, drip and

			sprinkler irrigation, electric motor pumps, treadle pumps and low cost diesel pumps etc
10.	R4. 75% of total target HHs have adopted 3 or more improved crop production technologies / practices.	The baseline report shows that 30.5% have responded that they have improved cultivation practices among the five listed. In which only one practice responded was above 50%.	In the endline the overall average of responding the improved cultivation practices was 78.38% for all listed five. Among the listed all five, more than 75% responded that they practices at list four from the list of five improved cultivation practices.
11.	R4.80% of indirect beneficiary HHs have adopted one or more agricultural or marketing technologies promoted by FSI project.	Not Applicable	The records shows that 87% of the indirect beneficiaries have adopted at least two agricultural (kitchen garden, improved seed) and two marketing (MPCs and collection centres) technologies promoted by FSI project.
12.	R5. 90% of total target HHs report receiving technical services from local resource persons and input suppliers within the past 12 months.	The baseline report shows that about only 8% of the beneficiaries responded receiving technical services (considering the missing values).	The endline data shows 90.4% respondent replied that they are receiving the technical services from different institution.
13.	R5. 40% of total target HHs are members of group marketing initiatives.	The baseline value shows that only 1% responded replies that they use and are associated with group marketing initiatives with highest in Banke (1.6%) and least in Rukum and Mugu (0%).	The final evaluation data shows that 37% of them are associated with group marketing and use marketing centres for selling agricultural products.
14.	R6. 80% (168) of vocational education participants have completed the Vo-ed training. 40% (67) of vocational education participants who completed training have gained full time and part time employment opportunities by Sept., 2011. 82% (137) of vocational training participants completed training, received investment and technical support, and established a micro-enterprise		
15.	80% (168) of vocational education participants will complete the Vo-ed training	Not applicable	80 % (168) of vocational education participants actively participated the Vo-Ed training in which 52.97 (79) % were female participants
16.	40% (67) of vocational education participants who completed training will gain	Not applicable	88.69% (149) have been employed and in self employment

	employment by EoP		
17.	82% (137) of vocational training participants complete training, receive investment and technical support, and establish a micro-enterprise	Not applicable	56.54% (95 out of 168) of vocational training participants completing training received investment and technical support and established different Mes

Annex 3. The project districts and the coverage VDCs

District	VDCs
Humla	Jaira, Kalika, Shreenagar (3 VDCs)
Mugu	Dhainakot, Rara Kalai, Rara Gilans (3 VDCs)
Rukum	Muru, Rungha, Sankh, Khara, Bhalakcha, Jhula, Duli, Magma, Athbisdandagaun, Ghetma (10 VDCs)
Rolpa	Raak, Irribang, Ranksi, Talabang, Bhawang, Jankot, Ghartigaun, Whama, Kotgaun, Dhawang (10 VDCs)
Banke	Phattepur, Baijapur, Binauna, Kalaphanta, Kaskusma, Mateiya, Narainapur, Gangapur, Laxmanpur, Katkuiya (10 VDCs)



Name of implementing Partners in the Action

- Save The Children, Nepal
- Mission East (ME)
- International Development Enterprise (IDE)
- Social Development Forum (SDF)
- Center for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED)
- Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Center (KIRDARC)
- Rukumeli Samaj Development Center (RSDC)

Annex 4. List of the main respondents

List of the participants in the Focus group discussion (Banke)

S.No.	Name	Sex	Address	Position
1.	Hom Lal Gharti Magar	Male	Fattepur VDC ,Harwahawa,Banke	Member of Harwahawa FSI FG, Harwahawa,Banke
2.	Kausila Gharti Magar	Female	„	„
3.	Chukeli Gharti Magar	„	„	„
4.	Bhumisara Gharti Magar	„	„	„
5.	Asha Kumari Pun Magar	„	„	Secretary of „
6.	Mana Kumari Pun Magar	„	„	Chairperson of „
7.	Khusi Ram Tharu	Male	Baijapur VDC, Deupurwa	Chiarperson of Munal FSI FG,Deupurwa,Banke
8.	Thakur Prasad Tharu	„	„	Member of „
9.	Ram Bir Tharu	„	„	„
10.	Shri Ram Tharu	„	„	„
11.	Dharma Daiya Tharu	„	„	„
12.	Mina Tharu	Female	„	„
13.	Phulkumari Tharu	„	„	„
14.	Raj Kumari Tharu	„	„	„
15.	Nirjala Tharu	„	„	„
16.	Ratni Tharu	„	„	„
17.	Radha Tharu	„	„	„
18.	Phulbasi Tharu	„	„	„
19.	Parbati Tharu	„	„	Vice chair person
20.	Karna Bahadur Oli	Male	Khaskushma VDC,Bairiya,Banke	Chairperson of Hitkari FSI FG, Bairiya,khaskusma,Banke
21.	Sandhya Oli	Female	„	Member „
22.	Goma KC	Female	„	„
23.	Krishna KC	Male	„	„
24.	Lahani Devi Tharu	Female	Binauna 7 Chilariya, Banke	Chiar- person of Chilariya FSI FG,Chilariya, Binauna , Banke
25.	Ram Narayan Tharu	Male	„	Secretary
26.	Gajamoti Tharu	Female	„	Member „
27.	Sabitri Tharu	„	„	„
28.	Parbati Tharu	„	„	„
29.	Sitan Tharu	Male	Sidhanawa, Fattepur VDC	Chiarperson of Manakamana FSI FG Group, Sidhanawa,Banke
30.	Gita Tharu	Female	„	Member
31.	Shiba Kumari Thay	„	„	„
32.	Jugani Tharu	„	„	„
33.	Dev Kumari Tharu	„	„	„
34.	Dhamina Chaudhari	Female	Hawarhawa, Fattepur 8	Chiar person of Milan FSI FG, Hawarhawa,Fattepur,Banke
35.	Ram kumar Tharu	„	„	Member of „
36.	Ram Kumari Chaudhari	„	„	Member
37.	Nausari Bhandari	Female	Dakshipurwa, Binauna VDC, Banke	Chiarperson of Dakshinpurwa FSI Group, Binauna VDC, Banke
38.	Lalita Tharu	„	„	Member „
39.	Atiulla Khan	Male	Katkuinya VDC,Katkuinya,Banke	Local resource person
40.	Kamal Narayan Tharu	Male	Baijapur 7, Baijapur,Banke	„
41.	Ram Balak Paswan	„	Narainapur VDC,banke	Community Mobiliser
42.	Mamata Kumari Tiwari	Female	Mataihya VDC,Banke	„
43.	Krishna Chaudhari	Female	Gangapur VDC,Banke	„

List of the participants in the Focus group discussion (Rukum)

S N	Name	Sex	Address	Position in the group
1	Himal Bahadur Budha:	Male	Dandagaun VDC - 8	<u>Trainee of furniture making (carpentry)</u>
2	Nar Bahadur Malla		Ghetma VDC- 3	„
3	Prithivi Raj Roka:		Sankha VDC - 5	„
4	Shushila Gharti Magar:		Chunwang VDC – 5	„
5	Shristi Gautam:		Duli VDC - 5	„
6				
7	Bishnu Oli		Bhalakcha VDC – 7, Lahun	Chairperson of Pipal Farmers group
8	Kalpana Khadka		Bhalakcha VDC – 7, Lahun	Secretary
9	Gita Pur		„	Member
10	Bhawani Nepali		„	„
11	Ganga Dangi		„	„
12	Naina Pun	female	„	„
13				
14	Man Bahadur Budhathoki			Treasurer, Tribeni fresh vegetable & fruits collection & selling center Rungha VDC – 2, Simruti
15	Keshar Bahadur Oli			Secretary
16	Pahal Singh Khadka-			Member
17	Sarita B. K.			Member
18	Sita Malla			Member
19	Indra Pur			Secretary
20	Dal Bahadur Kathayat			Member

List of the participants in the Focus group discussion (Rolpa)

S N	Name	Sex	Address	Position in the group
1	Saman B.K.	Male	Thulabang, Kotgaun-4	Thulabang Farmers Group, Kotgaun
2	Mr Shiva Bahadur Thapa			Kalyan FG, Whama
3	Mr. Deepak Kr. Shrestha			Member of vegetable production farmers group, Whama
				Madikhola FG, Whama

District: Banke

Name of the respondents

1

District:

Name of the respondents

Annex 5. TOR of the study

SOCIAL WELFARE COUNCIL (SWC)
General Scope of Work for Final Evaluation of

**Food Security Initiative (FSI) in Nepal Project
by Save the Children International
Country Office Kathmandu Nepal**

1. Background

Save the Children Norway has been carrying out FSI project as per the general and project agreement signed with the Social Welfare Council (SWC). This TOR is designed for evaluating this project as per the Project Agreement signed between/among the Social Welfare Council (SWC), Save the Children International on 4th November 2010.

2. Scope of the work

Save the Children has been implementing a Food Security Initiative (FSI) project from January 2010 to October 2011 and aim to carry out the final evaluation of this project. The focus is to assess on the results and impact of FSI against the project result frame work. The evaluation of the FSI is based on the approved project proposal being implemented from January 2010 to October 2011, a total of 22 months project period (project proposal annexe-1) funded by Food Facility Programme, European Union. Besides the regular monitoring, SC plan the final external evaluation of the project to assess the result out comes and impact measuring the success of the project to address the goal of reducing vulnerability to soaring food prizes and food insecurity in target groups. The evaluation therefore assess the result out comes and impacts on beneficiaries, documents success case stories and lessons learnt, share those outcomes among the stakeholders and partners.

3. Project Summary

Name of the Project and its location: Food Security Initiative (FSI), in Nepal, implemented in Humla, Mugu, Rukum, Rolpa and Banke Districts of Mid-western Region.

Period of Project Effectiveness: 1st January 2010 to 31st October 2011.

Name of the Partner NGO/s and Location/s:

- Rukumali Samaj Development Center (RSDC) Rukum coverage of 10 VDCs.
- Social Development Forum, Banke- coverage 10 VDCs of eastern Banke
- Karnali Integrated Rural Development Centre (KIRDARC-Nepal) –coverage 6 VDCs of Mugu and Humla
- Centre for Environment and Agriculture Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) –to support seed sub-sector in Mugu, Humla, Banke, Rukum and Rolpa.
- Development Concern Society (DECOS) Rolpa)-coverage 10 VDCs of Rolpa.

Total budget of the project: Euro 1,517,465 (Rs 163886220)

Goal, Objectives and results

Goal: To reduce the vulnerability of targeted families and their children to soaring food prices and food insecurity in in Mid-Western Nepal.

Specific Objectives: Increased food production and incomes; improved nutrition for children and families in five districts most affected by food price increase and food insecurity, both in the short term and long-term.

Results:

Result 1. Vulnerable groups identified, mobilized and governance strengthened to access on farm and off farm support

Result 2. Access to community safety nets and access to government social safety nets strengthened, and immediate support provided to mitigate effects of food prices for vulnerable groups

Result 3. Increased access to land and water resources for vulnerable groups

Result 4. Improved agricultural and nutrition practices applied by vulnerable groups

Result 5. Agricultural service providers and market outlets developed and strengthened, and linked with government agencies and the private sector

Result 6. Off farm vocations and micro-enterprises established by vulnerable groups

4 Objectives of Project Evaluation

The main objective of this evaluation is to document the result outcomes, and impacts of the project and share learning and challenges among project partners and stakeholders in the following areas:

- Assess the quantitative, qualitative achievements and sustainability of the actions in relation to goal, objectives, results, outcomes and impacts.
- Partnership mechanism with local bodies and other line agencies.
- Level of public/community participation
- The extent of social inclusion in the project implementation.
- Impact of the project in the community.
- Partnership modality/strategy with counterpart/partner and its contribution.
- Extent of the level of up-to-date completion of the project activities.
- Inventory/assets management system of the project/programs (records, uses and condition of durable goods purchased under duty exemption) maintained by the I/NGO/s.
- Income and expenditure pattern of project/program and level of accounting transparency.
- Internal financial control system of the project.
- Sustainability component of the FSI project.
- Project's target and achievements as per the log frame stipulated under project proposal.
- Successful cases/stories of the project, which can be replicated in other areas/programs, and failure cases and the lesson to be learnt.
- Compliance with the general agreement signed between FSI partners, SWC and INGOs.
- Review of findings and suggestions midterm review, previous monitoring and evaluation reports.
- Selection of partners/counterparts and its performance in implementing projects; institutional capacity, planning implementation and monitoring/ evaluation modality.

5, The Study Team should undertake the following activities:

- Prepare a suitable strategy to work in the team.
- Review all the relevant FSI project documents, planning framework, progress reports, need assessment reports, baseline study reports, mid-term review reports and financial reports available in the project.
- Visit the project sites and conduct focused group discussions, interview with the beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- Share the draft report with the project partners before the submission to SCN and SWC for final presentation.
- Submit the evaluation report to SCN and SWC after incorporating any suggestions after the presentation.

6. Methodology of Evaluation

The Study team will adopt the following methodologies for evaluation:

- Review of related project documents/agreements/progress reports, website information, etc.
- Key informant interviews and discussions in the office of I/NGO/s before departure to project sites.
- Focus group discussions with the user groups and individuals.
- Personal inspections of the project sites.
- Interviews with the executive office bearers of the I/NGOs after the field visits.
- Discussions with the service recipients, contact officers, related line agency officials, etc.
- Instruments:
 - FGD Guidelines,
 - Structured and non-structured questionnaires,
 - Observation checklists,
 - Evaluation forms, and so on.

In addition to the study methodology mentioned above, the study team may add and apply other methods, as it seems necessary to achieve the objectives of the evaluation.

7. Composition of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation mission will comprise of five Members as mentioned below:

- a. Team Leader/Consultant
- b. Representative from SWC, Member
- c. Financial Expert, SWC
- d. Representative from Nepal government (Ministry of Agriculture) – Member, coordinate by SWC
- e. Consultant –.....

The Lead consultants will facilitate the whole process of the evaluation from developing tools and methods, field survey and final report. The represent from MoA/ Dept. of Agriculture will oversee technically on agriculture, nutrition and food security component, financial expert from Social Welfare Council will review the over all financial systems. While doing field survey at each of five districts, District Agriculture Development Officer (DADO) in addition should be consulted as a part of the field survey. The FSI regional and district team will support the logistics and provide required information for the evaluation. SC M&E Advisor will technically support to develop the tools and methods.

The Lead Consultant along with other consultant will fully responsible to lead the whole process tool development, field survey, analysis of information and prepare final report.

8. Roles and responsibilities of the team leader/members/financial expert

The Team Leader and members will be responsible for overall activities done in this evaluating mission and the members will perform their works as specified by the team leader

a. Team Leader and associate consultant

- i. coordinate and lead the evaluation team, and process
- ii. prepare a suitable strategy for the team
- iii. allocate the responsibilities for the team members
- iv. gather and analyze all relevant information
- v. provide the framework of activities to be accomplished before the onset of the fieldwork by team
- vi. adopt the appropriate evaluation methodology for fulfilling the evaluation objectives
- vii. receive feedback and suggestions from team members
- viii. write a comprehensive evaluation report
- ix. Present the draft report to SC and SWC in consultation with coalition/implementing partners.

b. Team Member

- x. participate actively in each step of the evaluation function
- xi. Provide analytical written/ inputs/ suggestion/ feedback to the team leader.
- xii. (Representative member from concerned Ministry should give technical feed back / suggestion / inputs as per the nature of the project)
- xiii. accomplish the responsibilities as per the direction extended by team leader
- xiv. assist the team leader in accomplishing the evaluation objectives

c. Financial Expert

- i. Assess the efficiency of the projects/cost effectiveness
 - Review of set standards of cost both for program and administration
 - Review of actual and comparison with standards
 - Identification of areas of cost reduction
 - Economy in procuring goods and service
- ii. Check the compliance with project agreements
 - Actual support vs. committed support
 - Actual level of activity vs. committed level of activity
 - Expenditure in non budgeted areas, if any
- iii. Compliance with Tax laws
 - Tax registration and return filing
 - Tax deduction at resource
 - Compliance of tax laws in procurement of goods and service
- iv. Fixed Assets
 - Review of fixed assets records and physical verification
 - Review of control system on utilization of fixed assets
 - Review of Disposal of fixed assets
- v. Evaluation of the internal control system
 - Rules bye laws
 - AGM and board meetings / PAC and PMC meetings
 - Delegation of authorities and responsibilities
- vi. Financial reporting framework
 - Periodic and annual reports preparations and submission
 - Disclosure in the reports
 - Uniformity in reports
 - Overall Review of financial good governance
- vii. Comparison of the budgets and actual with the committed project cost
 - Review of budgeting procedure
 - Comparison of budgets with agreed projects cost
 - Comparisons of budgets with actual and variance thereon

9. Budget Estimate, Remuneration and other logistic arrangement

SN	Budget item	Unit	Unit Rate	Total man days	Total Amount	Remarks
1	Lead consultant	days	11,000	23	253,000	SWC will pay all costs incurred to the remuneration as
2	Consultant	Days	7,500	23	172,500	

3	Rep. of SWC	Days	3,000	12	36,000	consultancy fee to all team members as per SWC policy.
4	Finance Expert	Days	7,000	12	84,000	
5	Rep. of MoA	Days	3,000	12	36,000	
Total					581,500	

The logistic arrangements for the field visit, including accommodation (lodging & flooding) and transportation cost will pay on actual basis based on the SC policy directly.

10. Evaluation Report

The evaluation will result in the drawing-up of a report written in straightforward manner in English including executive summary that should appear at the beginning of the report. The report format appearing in annex could be helpful for team leader. A tightly drafted, to the point, and free standing Executive Summary is essential in the report. It should focus on the key issues of evaluation, outcomes of the main points of the analysis, and should clearly indicate conclusions, lessons learnt, and specific recommendations. The final evaluation report should be submitted on hard and soft copy. Opinions of the SC and SWC will be incorporated in the draft report for finalization. Before the finalization of the report, there would be a post-evaluation meeting at SC where the team leader will present the outcomes of the evaluation.

11. Evaluation Schedule

	Activities	Responsible	Remarks
By 30 August	Agreement with Consultants and form evaluation team.	SC and SWC	
September 1-5	Initiate review, develop tool and methodology.	Evaluation Team	
5-20 September	Field survey and collection of information.	Evaluation Team	
By end September	Draft Report	Lead Consultant and consultant	WSC representatives should provide constructive feedback to the report.
By 30th September	Share draft report with SWC, FSI partners and receive inputs	Lead consultants and consultant	
By 15th October	Submit final report to SWC & SC	Lead Consultant and consultant	

The evaluation schedule will be decided with the mutual understanding between evaluation team and SC.

12. Payment Procedures

SC deposits the agreed total remuneration for the evaluators in the name of SWC an Account Payee Cheque (with, confirmation of signature, institution seal, status of fund at bank, etc.) The SWC provides 50% of agreed amount to the evaluation team at the assignment of evaluation work and remaining 50% will be paid after the successful completion of the assignment. No full payment is made to the team unless the final report is provided to SWC along with the covering letter from the team leader. The standard tax rate as per the prevailing rules and regulations would be applied and additional 15% will be deducted from the agreed amount for the institutional development of the Council.

13. Liability

Among the team members (excluding the personnel/office bearer of ministry and SWC) including the lead Consultant and consultant will not be temporary or permanent staff of SWC, SC or the partner organizations and thus, they will not fall under their terms of employment and shall not be covered for any kind of accidents compensation by ministry or SWC or I/NGO or the partner organization. Similarly, above said institutions will accept no liabilities for all kind of losses and damages that may occur during the execution of the assignment. They may not claim for any medical expenses or for any compensation for injuries or death. Regarding the personnel/office bearer of ministry and SWC they will abide by their respective institution's regulations.

Annexure

(Final Evaluation Review Checklists) –SC will provide the following documents to the team for evaluation.

- Baseline Survey report
- Mid-term Review Report
- ROM Mission Report
- Project Proposal
- Interim Report 2010
- Audited Financial Report
- Detail Implementation plan of each of the partners(both years)
- Report-Lesson Learning workshop 2-3 February 2011.
- Other related project specific documents.

Annexure A

General Structure of the Evaluation Report

Prefatory Part

Title page

Acknowledgement

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures/Diagrams

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List of Appendices

List of Abbreviations

Executive Summary (should include a precise summary of the total study report with an attempt to give information pertaining to **WHY? WHO?, WHAT?, HOW?, and WHERE?** The Executive Summary should precisely present with the **learnt replicable events** as well as the most severe **problems for immediate correction** by the concerned agencies. The purpose of this section is to give a complete glimpse of the total report whereby the most of the readers would get completely synthesized information about the paper even without going through each section. It should not exceed 3 pages in length.)

Main Body

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

1.1: Project Background

- 1.2: Project Objectives
 - 1.3: Intended Outcomes of the Project
 - 1.4: Intended Beneficiaries of the Project
 - 1.5: Donor Information
 - 1.6: Project Composition
 - 1.7: Financing Arrangements
 - 1.8: Objectives of the Evaluation
 - 1.9: Scope of the Evaluation
 - 1.10: Evaluation Research Questions
 - 1.11: Evaluation Team Composition
 - 1.12: Organization of the Study Report
-

SECTION II

METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

- 2.1: Study Approach
 - 2.2: Study Designs
 - 2.3: Selection of the Participants
 - 2.4: Study Instruments/Tools of Data Collection
 - 2.5: Mechanism for Fieldworks
 - 2.6: Data Presentation and Analysis Techniques
 - 2.7: Work Schedules of the Study
 - 2.8: Limitations of the Study, if any.
-

SECTION III

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Format and structure should be based on the identified scope-objectives–research questions set in Section I. Necessary case studies, and narratives should be placed to verify the qualitative nature of information from the perspectives of the user groups/beneficiaries. Finally, the neatly composed summary of findings should appear to answer all research questions.

SECTION IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1: Summary

Give a quick overview of the overall task, its structure, objectives, purpose, methodology, and instrumentation. Then produce precise picture of the key findings reflecting the project status, uses/misuses, rationalities, etc., followed by lessons learnt.

4.2: Conclusions

On the basis of overall study, claim 2-3 points what evaluation team has proved through your presentation and analysis of the information processed.

4.3: Recommendations

Finally, produce with to-the-point, action-oriented corrective measures to be undertaken by whom within which time frame.

Supplementary Part

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REFERENCES

Reference on project agreement, evaluation reports etc can be included on this part

=====

ANNEXTURES

All the data collection tools/instruments to be placed in page-by-page order.

APPENDICES

All necessary financial analysis and statistical facts related to the project components should be placed in page-by-page order. These should be referred in the main body of the text.

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Annex 6. Case Studies

Beneficiary 1. Saman B.K, 50 years old farmer is the chairperson (Fig.1) of Thulabang Farmers Group, Kotgaun-4,Rolpa, used to involve in labour work. He said that “I and my family had no other income source except some wheat production for consuming at home. I had no idea of improved seed, micro irrigation system, and other tools, inputs needed for high value crop production. *When FSI project initiated, I got the opportunity to learn farming technology to increase the production of wheat, maize and vegetables. Due to new irrigation system like drip and sprinkler system and construction of plastic ponds, the production has increase increased that supports me and educating our 3 children*”. He further added that “I have 7 family members including 2 daughters and 1 son. During the period of 14 months out of 22 months of the project duration, I received a seed bin and 10 kg of foundation seed from DECOS. From the total produce of our land we consumed 8 quintal of maize for household use and made income of Rs. 13,380.00 for the first time in my life by selling the maize seed in one season. I am very happy from this income. He proudly said he will appropriately utilize the skills, knowledge and technology he learnt from the training even if the FSI project phases out.



Fig. 1 Mr.Saman B.K.of Kotgaun, Rolpa with his improved goat.

Beneficiary 2 . Deepak Kumar Shrestha of Krishna Agrovet, Input supplier/dealer,Libang,Rolpa. Deepak shared his experience that around 13 HHs of Mijing VDC (out of target VDC) and other farmers who were not the targeted beneficiary, demanded sprinklers and drip systems for irrigation. They learnt it from the farmers of neighboring VDC. This is how the technology transformation is increasing day by day. Krishna showed his record that during the FSI Project period, he had sold 500 drip systems, 150 sprinklers, from which he made income of Rs.95,000.00 and net profit of approximately 2 lakhs 50 thousand rupees from agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers etc. Krishna Agrovet established two more sub dealers in Bhawang VDC. This project has been a great opportunity for us said he.

Beneficiary 3. Mr Krishna B Khatri, Khas Kusma VDC,Banke

Mr Krishna B Khatri, 46 years old from Khas Kusma VDC, Banke is the member (Fig. 2) of the Hitkari Farmers Group. He has been engaged in farming since 50 years with his fathers young stage. They used to raise livestock about 15 livestock were a heavy load to them.This was because of the forest area in the nearest distance. No knowledge in the importance of vegetable. Only oilseeds were grown at that time. Rapeseed was produced in his land and was sold. These were only to collect money. Now they are growing vegetable, eating vegetable and also selling to the market of Kohalpur. *“I really thank to the Food security project to show me the path of income generating activities and the importance of eating vegetables due to which our children are healthy”* He has three members at home. Other 2 sons are working in Nepalgunj. All are healthy. He has



Fig. 2 Project intervention changing life of Krishna Bahadur

cash saving. This has been the best time for him compared to the past life. He is active to every work. He suggest to make the mechanism to technical service in the emergency time. Insects and pest attack sometimes in large scale. They need services from the project side .Otherwise he himself can manage in small problems

Beneficiary 4.

Maisara Janha Mukeri of Phattepur VDC, Ward 7, Banke district (Fig 3) said our community is a multi-religious, multi-lingual, and multi-cultural community. Although, Madeshis, Tharus, Pahadis and Muslims are living together, they neither participated in each others' social events and activities nor shared their problems and had competitive feelings and negative perceptions towards each other. The Social Development Forum (SDF) came to us and oriented about the Food Security Initiative project. We have formed a group, Hariyali Food Security Initiative farmers' group consisting of 25 members, including 11 Madeshi, 5 Tharu, 4 Muslim, and 5 Pahadi members. SDF provided us training and meetings on group management, good governance, leadership, kitchen gardening, social safety nets, crop and weeding management, social inclusion, and nutrition education. They have participated together and produced paddy seeds under this program. They organize regular meetings, group planning, share and address each other's problems, and attend social events together. These activities brought them closeness and intimacy. These interactions have reduced the negative perception and unhealthy competition between them. They have developed a feeling that they are equal and work together for the betterment of their whole community.



Fig.3 FSI brought her close (The case of social inclusion)

Beficiary 5:

Sabitri KC of Khaskusma, Banke has got retail daily consumption goods worth Rs 19200 from the FSI. Her husband used to be outside many of the month. She was the one who looks her two children. She was suffocating with the burden of children education and feeding . She is now exploring her retail shop (Fig. 4). She has maintained the record of selling and the income of the shop. Her one child is in 2 class and the other is in LKG who are doing better in the class. She says “ The micro enterprise support of the SFI has given me the opportunity to educate children,Thanks to Mentor Mr. Bhola Nath Pathak, Fattehpur who has helped me “ . Bhola Pathak is the mentor through the project. He used to monitor the activities of micro enterprenuer. He used to visit 2,3 times a month. Now the project is off. No plan for future.This has created the local self employment opportunity through micro-enterprise development for off farm job opportunities proved to be an effective alternative solution to food insecure landless households.



Fig 4. Sabitri KC, happy with the opportunity of promoting micro enterprise

Annex 7. Models of empowerment framework followed by the project

Levels

- 'Deeper levels'
Structural relations of class/caste/gender
- Intermediate levels
Institutional rules and resources
- Immediate levels
Individual resources, agency and achievements
Change is needed on all these levels.

(Kabeer 2003)

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- **power over** : changes in power relations within households, communities and at macro-level

- **power with** : organisation of the powerless to enhance individual abilities and/or ability to challenge and change power relations

(Rowlands 1997 building on Kabeer 1994 and Nelson and Wright 1996)

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CHEN FRAMEWORK

commissioned by UNIFEM for AIMS micro-finance impact study.

Distinguishes between:

material change

- income: increased income and income security
- resources: increased access to, control over, and ownership of assets and income
- basic needs: increased or improved health care, child care, nutrition, education, housing, water supply, sanitation and energy source
- earning capacity: increased employment opportunities plus ability to take advantage of these opportunities

perceptual change

- self-esteem: enhanced perception of own individuality, interest and value
- self-confidence: enhanced perception

LONGWE FRAMEWORK

Women's empowerment as a progression through:

- **welfare**: The level of material welfare of women, relative to men in such matters as food supply, income and medical care.
- **access**: Women's access to the factors of production: land, labour, credit, training, marketing facilities and all publicly available services and benefits on an equal basis with men.
- **conscientisation**: The understanding of the difference between sex roles and gender roles, and that the latter are cultural and can be changed.
- **participation**: Women's equal participation in the decision-making process, policy-making, planning and administration.