

NARRATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

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Subrecipient: Vijaya Development Resource Center

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Report Type: Annual

Reporting Period: May 01, 2016 – July 15, 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The program in the first year has been able to register satisfactory progress despite of delayed start and prevailing political situation (specifically local level elections) in the country. The achievements were made possible also due to the extension of the reporting year by two and half months from end-April to mid-July. During the year, all of the planned program activities were delivered though some activities have had limited achievement.

Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention, e.g., 96% in Saving Credit training, 93% in Business Plan training and 75% in LRP training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups.

The internal Technical Advisory Committee has been actively engaged in guiding the program technically and professionally, which convened six times during the year. All 36 full-time budgeted staff positions (8 female and 28 male) were deployed in time and they are provided with several capacity building opportunities. A total of NPR 53,121,672 (92% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 21 million (38%) was utilized for the program activities delivery.

As anecdotal evidences suggest, the HFP interventions in general and training events targeted to the VMFs and HFPB group members in particular have been a great success.

2. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- **Summary**

During the year, all of the planned activities were delivered except food preservation training, which has been shifted to year 2. Again, two activities – LRP development training and VMF sustainability workshop – have had limited achievement. Rest of the program activities registered good progress. Specifically, Agri/nutrition fair support and Business Plan training exceeded the set target. Table 1 presents the quantitative achievement of the program activities against the set target.

Table 1: Program Activity Delivery				
SN	Activity Title (short)	Original Target	Revised Target	Achievement
1	LRP development training	10	7	2
2	VMF networking workshop	15	15	13
3	Agri/nutrition fair support	15	15	18
4	Saving, Credit training	50	50	45
5	Business Plan training	15	15	21
6	VMF sustainability workshop	152	94	49
7	Haat Bazar promotion support	15	15	12
8	Food preservation training	10	0	---
Grand Total		282	211	160

Besides above activities, staff and resource persons were oriented on the program philosophy and expected deliverables from their end. A Value Chain Study: Market Linkages for Homestead Food Production was commissioned focusing on two products – egg and orange-fleshed sweet potato.

For year 2, the activities listed in Table 1 will be supplemented with some new activities that include Barter shop promotion, VMF and agri. traders' meeting, Staff/Resource Person refresher, and Training on nutritional value chain and food processing.

• **Outcome 3.1: Increased and Sustained Homestead Production of Nutrient-rich Foods**

i. Key Accomplishments

Local Resource Person development training

Two parallel events of 10-days Local Resource Person development training in poultry were conducted from May 31 to June 9, 2017 covering a total of 48 (12 male / 36 female) participants from 17 districts. Most of the participants were the VMFs currently involved in brooding and poultry farming and some other poultry brooders. The training was focused on commercialization of poultry and brooding center development. Table 2 presents district-wise participation details.

Table 2: LRP Development Training - Poultry				
SN	Participant District	Male (VMF)	Female (VMF)	Total
1	Achham	1	4	5
2	Baglung	1	3	4
3	Baitadi		3	3
4	Bhojpur	1	2	3
5	Dadeldhura		3	3
6	Darchula		1	1
7	Dolkha		2	2
8	Doti		3	3
9	Gorkha	1	3	4
10	Lamjung		2	2
11	Myagdi		2	2
12	Nuwakot	4	1	5
13	Rasuwa		2	2
14	Sankhuwasabha	1	1	2
15	Sindhupalchok	3	1	4
16	Solukhumbu		2	2
17	Taplejung		1	1
	Grand Total	12	36	48

Establish VMF network and support to conduct VMF network meeting

Suaahara II has a major objective in ensuring VMF sustainability through networking at ward level as well as in Rural and Urban Municipalities. VMFs are facing problems in marketing their agricultural products and poultry and they could not get fair price of their products due to several reasons including the cartel. These networking meetings support VMFs to link with retailers, wholesalers and other stakeholders within the district with a view to access potential markets and resources support from government as well as private sectors. A total of 13 VMF networking meetings were organized against the target of 15 meetings and each meeting was attended by 13 participants in average. Table 3 in the following page presents the districts where networking meetings were planned and conducted.

Table 3: VMF Networking Meeting			
SN	District	Target	Achievement
1	Baglung	1	1
2	Bhojpur	1	0
3	Dolakha	1	1
4	Gorkha	1	3
5	Lamjung	1	1
6	Myagdi	1	1
7	Nawalparasi	1	1
8	Nuwakot	1	1
9	Rasuwa	1	1
10	Rupandehi	1	0
11	Sankhuwasabha	1	0
12	Sindhupalchok	1	1
13	Solukhumbu	1	1
14	Taplejung	1	1
15	Syangja	1	0
	Total	15	13

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

The promotion of homestead production of nutrient-rich foods in this phase has relatively been effective as the VMFs and FCHVs are now well aware about the Suaahara HFP intervention and they are disseminating the program message.

iii. Lessons learned

Appropriate partnership and working in alliance with like-minded agencies (e.g., District Agriculture Alliance in Bardia) have potentials in amplifying program messages in cost-effective manner. Likewise, regular monitoring and follow-up of the events with periodic group meetings is vital for sustainability of VMF and HFPB groups. Group registration with relevant bodies is a commendable practice in this regard.

iv. Priorities for the next quarter

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- VMF group networking promotions – 71 workshop
- Local Resource Person development training – 9 training

- **Outcome 3.2: Increased Income from Homestead Food Production**

- v. *Key Accomplishments*

- Agriculture and nutrition fairs

In total, 18 agriculture and nutrition fairs were supported so far. The fairs were organized in collaboration with DADO, DLSO and other agencies to sensitize community about importance of HFP for dietary diversity. Managing dedicated stall facilitates mainstreaming of nutrition objective in the fairs organized by government and non-government agencies. Again the stalls have been organized in a cost-effective way that also won acclamation.

- 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Set 1 pilot event was organized in Baglung from February 8-12 and re-orientation to the potential RPs was given on February 26. With these preparations, Set-1 training events were rolled-out in 21 program districts beginning of March to mid-April 2017. A total of 45 events were accomplished, which trained 914 participants (refer Table 4).

Table 4: Saving, Credit and Group Management Training				
SN	District	Female	Male	Total
1	Achham	40		40
2	Baglung	32	7	39
3	Baitadi	40		40
4	Bajhang	40		40
5	Bajura	39		39
6	Bhojpur	31	9	40
7	Dadeldhura	40		40
8	Darchula	40		40
9	Dolakha	66	1	67
10	Doti	37		37
11	Gorkha	39	3	42
12	Lamjung	40		40
13	Myagdi	37	2	39
14	Nawalparasi	43		43
15	Nuwakot	32	11	43
16	Rasuwa	40		40
17	Rupandehi	40		40
18	Sankhuwasabha	42	2	44
19	Sindhupalchowk	60		60
20	Solukhumbhu	39		39
21	Taplejung	60	2	62
	Grand Total	877	37	914

This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings and credit mobilization and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (96%) of the training participants with only 4% male.

SN	Category	Female		Male		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	FCHV	5	100%			5	1%
2	HFPB_Others	590	96%	27	4%	617	68%
3	1000 days Mother	40	100%			40	4%
4	VMF	242	96%	10	4%	252	28%
	Grand Total	877	96%	37	4%	914	

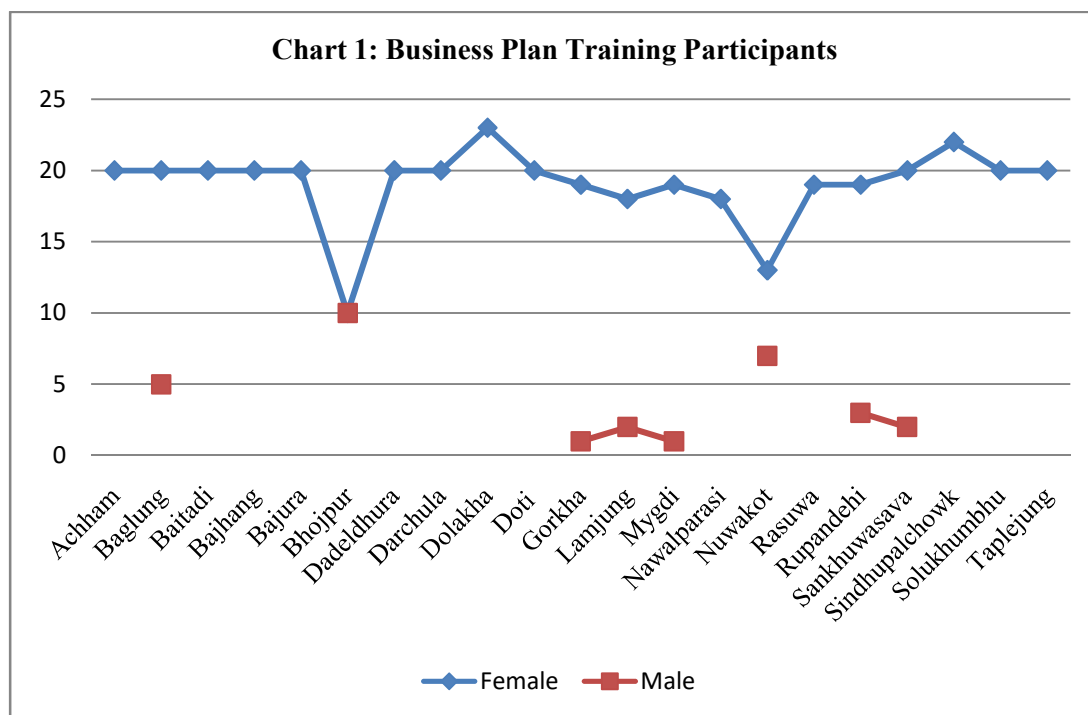
In terms of participant category (Table 5), the training saw majority (68%) of the participants from HFPB groups (with their main role in saving, credit and group management) followed by the VMFs (28%) and 1000 days mother (4%).

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented over half (52%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati (28%). The other groups have had nominal representation - 8% Dalit, 4% each from Newar and Gurung/Thakali, 2% each from Muslim and Tarai other caste and 1 % others (Table 6).

SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Female		Male		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Dalit	72	100%			72	8%
2	Muslim	18	100%			18	2%
3	Bahun/Chhetri	455	97%	16	3%	471	52%
4	Newar	29	88%	4	12%	33	4%
5	Disadvantaged Janajati	245	94%	15	6%	260	28%
6	Gurung/Thakali	31	94%	2	6%	33	4%
7	Tarai other caste	19	100%			19	2%
8	Other	8	100%			8	1%
	Grand Total	877	96%	37	4%	914	

5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training

5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training events were rolled-out in 21 districts (one event per district) from April to July 2017. In total, 431 participants (406 female and 25 male) were trained. Chart 1 presents the number of participants from each of the training districts.



Except in Bhojpur, participants were mostly female in all training events forming 93% of the total participants with only 7% male. As targeted, VMFs dominated the training with 62% followed by HFPB group members (involved in some form of commercial farming) 33% and 100 Days Mother 4% (refer Table 7)

SN	Category	Female		Male		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	1000 Days Mother	18	100%			18	4%
2	FCHV	2	100%			2	0%
3	HFPB Others	132	92%	12	8%	144	33%
4	VMF	248	93%	19	7%	267	62%
Grand Total		400	93%	31	7%	431	

In terms of caste/ethnicity, the highest (56%) participation was from Bahun/Chhetri group followed by Disadvantaged Janajati 26%. Other groups have had nominal participation with 7% Dalit, 5% Newar, 3% each from Gurung/Thakali and Tarai other caste and 1 % Muslim (refer Table 8).

SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Female		Male		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Dalit	30	100%		0%	30	7%
2	Muslim	4	80%	1	20%	5	1%
3	Bahun/Chhetri	230	95%	11	5%	241	56%
4	Newar	18	90%	2	10%	20	5%
5	Disadvantaged Janajati	98	88%	14	13%	112	26%
6	Gurung/Thakali	11	100%		0%	11	3%
7	Tarai other caste	9	75%	3	25%	12	3%
Grand Total		400	93%	31	7%	431	

Value Chain Study

A Value Chain Study: Market Linkages for Homestead Food Production has been commissioned and draft report prepared. The study focused on two products – egg and orange-flashed sweet potato – will serve as a basis for developing HFP marketing strategy. The study report is in finalization process incorporating the agriculture team inputs.

Conduct monitoring and supervision for VMF sustainability

A total of 49 monitoring and supervision visits and meetings were conducted with a view to sustain the VMF efforts against 94 events targeted.

Support to strengthen market management committee/HAAT BAZAR (weekly market) for promotion of surplus homestead food produces

Haat Bazars support towards nutrient food diversity and nutrition value-chain at local levels. Out of 15 planned, 12 Haat Bazars/market management committees were supported.

vi. Challenges and Opportunities

The ongoing political process in the country specifically local level elections has had some implications in scheduling and delivery of field training events in time. Again, for these events targeting VMFs, budgetary provision for associated costs of the caretakers and babies was also felt necessary.

vii. Lessons learned

The Saving, Credit and Group Management training events were found timely in reenergizing the HFPB groups. Yet, it would have been more effective if conducted also using local languages at the community levels. On Business Plan training, main feedback has been careful selection of literate participants given some arithmetic content.

viii. Priorities for the next year

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- Agriculture and nutrition fairs – 40 events
- 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training – 70 training
- 5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training – 21 training
- Conduct FGD for VMF sustainability – 76 workshop
- HAAT BAZAR (weekly market) promotion – 20 distribution/support

Besides above activities to be continued from year 1, following additional activities are proposed for year 2:

- Barter shop promotion – 11 distribution/support
(Material support to VMFs to promote diversified food consumption by utilization of barter system)
- VMF and agri traders' meeting – 14 workshop/1 meeting
(Organize interaction programme among value chain actors to improve marketing and consumption of diversified foods)
- Staff/Resource Person orientation and refresher – 3 workshop
(Organize interaction programme among resource persons, HFP Marketing Officers and training experts)
- Nutritious food preservation and processing training to VMFs and HFPB groups – 24 training
- Training on nutritional value chain and food processing to 40 HFP/Marketing Officers – 1 orientation

3. CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

A. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In terms of gender, VDRC-Nepal provided equal opportunities in program implementation at all levels, i.e. staff, trainer, and participants. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in three key sets of capacity building intervention, namely 96% in Saving Credit training, 93% in Business Plan training and 75% in LRP training.

The participants in the training were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups. Specifically in two sets of training events (Saving Credit and Business Plan), Disadvantaged Janajatis represented 26% to 28% and Dalits 7% to 8% of the total participants. The training events also witnessed participation of Tarai other caste 2% to 3% and Muslims 1% to 2%.

B. Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

The private agro firm Shreenagar was involved in Nuwakot during the Business plan training for potential support in the marketing of poultry products.

C. Emergency Preparedness

As per norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness was followed by VDRC-Nepal in its office as well as staff locations that included provision of fire extinguishers, data security, and go-bags.

4. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. Safety and Security

No issues on safety and security experienced during the year. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts specially during critical times, e.g. during local level elections.

B. Human Resources

The internal Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been actively engaged in guiding the program technically and professionally both with formal and informal meetings. During the year, six formal meetings of the TAC were convened to take on major agenda items including staff recruitment, training manuals development, value-chain study, program coordination, and periodic progress review.

All 36 full-time budgeted staff positions were hired and deployed in time including HFP Marketing Specialist (1), HFP Marketing Officer (30), Admin and Finance Officer (1), Assistant Finance Officer (1), Assistant Program Officer (1), Office Assistant (1) and MER Officer (1). Table 9 provides diversity of staff deployed by VDRC-Nepal.

Sr	Designation	Total	Sex		Caste/Ethnicity			
			F	M	B	K	N	O
1	Marketing Specialist	1		1	1			
2	Marketing Officer	30	5	25	18	4	2	6
3	Admin & Finance Officer	1	1		1			
4	Assistant Finance Officer	1	1		1			
5	Assistant Program Officer	1		1	1			
6	Office Assistant	1	1				1	
7	MER Officer	1		1		1		
	Total	36	8	28	22	5	3	6

F=female, M=male, B=Brahmin, K=Kshatriya, N=Newar, O=others(Dalits and hill ethnic group)

For effective program delivery, staff were provided with several training opportunities including two initial program orientation events in September and October 2016. Two administrative staff attended MER Partner Meeting (November 2016) and other three staff attended FAMAS training and HKI/USAID rules and regulation orientation (January 2017). The MER Officer attended MER Rollout Meeting/Training (February 2017) that introduced community mapping census tool and household visit checklists. Likewise, the HFP/Marketing Officers from 22 matured districts participated in a HFP team meeting (January 2017) to increase knowledge on HFP marketing strategies, nutrition value chain, and climate smart agriculture for improved nutrition.

A HFP review and reflection meeting with staff from all 40 program districts was held in April 2017. The 2+3 day event was utilized to share grass root level experiences, innovations, good practices, issues/problems/constraints, lessons learned and challenges; to identify necessary support from central team to district and thematic officers; to identify opportunities and potential activities for year II; and to provide basic orientation on DRR/CCA activities.

The challenge in Human Resource has been the frequent turnover of the HFP/Marketing Officers as well as their retention in remote program districts. Four out of 30 Officers have so far been replaced and several others have opted for transfer to the convenient districts. As an incentive for their service continuity, hardship allowance has been introduced for year 2.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed, specifically in preparing banners for training events in the program districts.

D. Finance and Operations

A separate block within VDRC-Nepal central office complex in Gaidakot-8 has been made fully operational for Suaahara II program. Necessary work space, office equipment, furniture, amenities and a HFP garden were ensured. The complex accommodates four full-time administrative and finance staff. Two staff (HFP Marketing Specialist and MER Officer) are stationed in Suaahara II central office and 30 HFP Marketing Officers are assigned to 30 program districts. The VDRC-Nepal Kathmandu liaison office is used as and when necessary specifically during program related meetings in Kathmandu.

A total of NPR 53,121,672 (92% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 21 million (38%) was utilized for program activities. With the total advance amount of NPR 52,472,618 a negative cash balance of NPR 649,054 has been reported.

ANECDOTAL

Rama Majhi, LRP-Poultry/VMF – Chyangli, Gorkha: “I felt like crying with happiness, I had never thought that I will ever get a chance to attend such grand training in my life. Meeting so many friends from different districts and learning their good practices was very fortunate opportunity for me. Accommodation and food was taken care very well, more over learning environment was excellent. Trainers/ Facilitators taught us in simple language that we could grab maximum. We had two trips, one to Bara District and another to Rampur College. We learnt from very basic but important topics about poultry rearing to diseases identification, which we can easily adopt at our local level. Trainers also taught us on how we can serve the community especially 1000 days mothers. Now, I am committed to grow my Poultry Business. Before, my poultry business was only focused on meat production but now I have thought to expand my product line to eggs and chicks production too. And, I will sell them on special discount to 1000 days mothers. All thanks to Suaahara Team for this opportunity.”

Afsana Khatun, LRP-Poultry/1000 days mother – Harmi, Gorkha: “Initially I was in doubt whether to attend this training or not thinking about the distance so far, unknown new place with child but I feel so happy that I attended this training. Food especially for child was taken care so well during our stay in VDRC-Nepal and overall management was so good. I learnt so many things and this learning will help me to run Brooding Centre well, which I am starting now with the help of Suaahara. I also learnt that Suaahara Program has added Adolescent as their beneficiaries in phase 2. Now, I will include Adolescents of my community in our HFPB group. Also, as LRP of poultry I can serve my community people in diseases identification of chickens, and things to be considered for poultry rearing, poultry feed, etc. I feel that we should not miss any training of Suaahara because they teach us very useful things.”

Sharada- The Model Agriculturalist

Sharada Adhikari, permanent resident of Kalika Rural Municipality Ward No. 3, Rasuwa is a Village Model Farmer who practices agriculture as her major source of income. She is a well-known model farmer in her community. She has been helping herself and her community members eat healthy food and use their garden to grow nutritious vegetables.

However the situation of Sharada was not same in the past. In earlier days, though agriculture was her major occupation, she was not able to make desired profit out of it. She says at that time, our food wouldn't last for more than six month. My husband had to go abroad for additional income.

Suaahara program has made efforts to increase the number of local volunteer agriculture support persons, such as VMFs and HFPBs who act as local agriculture resources for the community. Sharada was one of the beneficiaries for Suaahara program. It's when she got 2 days HFP training in 2069 B.S. her life changed. She considers the training as a breakthrough in her life. She says it drastically changed the way she was practicing agriculture.

She says: "I was practicing agriculture but it wasn't helping me at all. I was working very hard but was doing it all wrong. It's when you don't know something new you keep on doing the same old stuff. Same thing happened to me. I only knew traditional farming method. With modern farming you can earn more and on top of that you can have diverse green leafy vegetables all year round. It's a good value".

Later on, she was also chosen as a model farmer. Sharing about her experience of being selected as VMF she says: "The responsibility was more challenging than the previous one. But I was prepared for it. When I received HFP training it was mainly focused on how to help me and my child eat diverse and healthy foods through home gardening. But now being village model farmer I could serve as a supply center that would help my community members to produce and eat healthy.

After participating in 5 days training for VMF, she was given 5 small vines of OFSPs. She says "I sowed it in my garden. I was surprised with its growth. Within 2 months of sowing, it grew very well." She has not limited its' benefit to herself. She says, she shared about its importance and also gave 1 vine each to 1000 days mothers of her community. I insist them to have it because sweet potato is really amazing. You can eat its roots as well as its leaf. Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSPs) are said to be best source of vitamin A.

Now her business has become successful. She credits success to the support of her family members and hard work. Her husband has now come back home and they both work together. So far she has earned Rupees Three Hundred Thousand (300,000) by selling the vines of OFSP. Likewise, she has sold over 5 quintals of sweet potato.

Sharada now has plans to upsurge her occupation. She is thinking to make powder of the sweet potato in days to come. Recently, she also participated in capacity building training on group mobilization/saving & credit and account keeping. She says she is now well aware about managing the HFPB group. Nowadays, she is busy in sowing diverse vegetables. She now has a collection center from support of other organization, which has helped her household product to have access to market opportunities. She also has been marketing her vegetables for sale in some markets of Nuwakot and Rasuwa. She has registered her HFPB group in government. She says she has good relation with supporting line agencies. She has been going to Agriculture and Livestock service center for consultation on regular basis.

Sharada says, "I am thankful to Suaahara program for enhancing my capacity to serve as community-based agricultural change agent."

End

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Sub recipient: Vijaya Development Resource Center

Sub award No.: 21854-01-049

Report Type: Annual

Reporting Period: July 16, 2017 – July 15, 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

The program in the Second year has been able to register satisfactory progress despite of slow down due to budget crisis and prevailing political situation (specifically elections) in the country. During the year, all of the planned program activities were delivered other than hold on activities due to budget slow down.

Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention e.g., 93% in Saving Credit training, 90% in Business Plan training and 85% in LRP training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG.

All 36 full-time budgeted staff positions (8 female and 28 male) were deployed for program implementation and they are provided with several capacity building opportunities. A new position Program Officer – HFP Marketing was approved and deployed at Center Suaahara Officer from February, 2018. A total of NPR 73,609,035.89 (95% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 30 million (38%) was utilized for the program activities delivery.

As anecdotal evidences suggest, the HFP and marketing interventions in general and training events targeted to the VMFs and HFPB group members in particular have been a great success.

2. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

A. Summary

During the year, all of the planned activities were delivered though some activities like Strengthening HAAT BAZAAR/ Collection Center, Support to establish Barter System, Interaction Program among value chain actors and Nutritious Food Preservation and Processing training have limited achievements due to budget slow down scenario. Rest of the program activities registered good progress. Specifically, Establish and regularize VMG Network meetings exceeded the set target. Table 1 presents the quantitative achievement of the program activities against the set target.

Table 1: Program Activity Delivery				
SN	Activity Title (short)	Original Target	Revised Target	Achievement
1.	VMF Network Meeting	71	71	143
2.	LRP Development Training	180	140	147
3	Strengthening Market Management Committee – Haat Bazaar/ Collection Center	15	9	9
4	FS and VMF discussions	76	76	74
5.	Local fair/ exhibition	40	40	46
6.	Support to establish Barter Shop	11	2	2
7.	Interaction program among Value Chain Actors	260	54	76
8.	Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training	1620	1290	1292
9.	Business Plan and Agri- Marketing Training	576	140	176
10.	Nutritious Food preservation and processing training	430	54	57
Grand Total		3279	2106	2022

Besides above activities, staff and resource person’s review and interaction meeting, staff capacity building on Nutrition value chain and food processing and Year II Review meeting were conducted. A “Farm to Market” Facilitator book is designed and printed for FS/ CNF/ LRPs to use during households visits, group meetings and on-site coaching.

For year 3, selected and more effective activities from Table no. 1 will be implemented more intensively and post-training follow up will be focused. Activities for Year 3 are Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training, Business Plan and Agri- marketing Training, LRP development training, VMF networking meeting and Haat Bazaar.

B. Outcome 3.1: Increased and Sustained Homestead Production of Nutrient-rich Foods

i. Key Accomplishments

Establish and regularize the VMF network meetings

Suaahara II has a major objective in ensuring VMF sustainability through networking starts from ward level to Rural and Urban Municipalities level. These networking meetings support VMFs to link with retailers, wholesalers and other stakeholders within the district with a view to access potential markets and resources support from government as well as private sectors. A total of 143 VMF networking meetings were organized against the target of 71 meetings. Table 2 in the following page presents the districts where networking meetings were planned and conducted.

Table 2: VMF Networking Meeting			
SN	District	Target	Achievement
1	Taplejung	2	2
2	Sankhuwasabha	2	3
3	Bhojpur	2	4
4	Solukhumbu	1	3
5	Dolakha	2	2
6	Sindhupalchowk	2	3
7	Rasuwa	2	2
8	Nuwakot	2	3
9	Rupendehi	4	5
10	Nawalprasi	4	7
11	Gorkha	4	8
12	Lamjung	4	5
13	Syangja	4	1
14	Myagdi	4	5
15	Baglung	4	8
16	Darchula	4	8
17	Bajura	4	10
18	Bajhang	4	4
19	Doti	4	7
20	Dadeldhura	4	17
21	Baitadi	4	16
22	Achham	4	20
	Total	71	143

Local Resource Person development training

7 events of 10-days Local Resource Person Development training in poultry and vegetable production were conducted. 2 events on Vegetable production and 5 events on poultry vegetable carried involved 147 participants of 36 districts. Table 3 presents district-wise participation for the training.

Table 3: LRP Development Training – Poultry and Vegetable			
Participant District	Female	Male	Grand Total
1	Achham	3	3
2	Arghakhachi	2	1
3	Baglung	4	4

4	Baitadi	4		4
5	Bajhang	4		4
6	Bajura	5	1	6
7	Banke	2	1	3
8	Bardiya	2	1	3
9	Bhojpur	5	2	7
10	Dadeldhura	4	1	5
11	Dailekh	4	1	5
12	Dang	5	1	6
13	Dhading	2		2
14	Dolkha	6		6
15	Doti	5		5
16	Gorkha	3	1	4
17	Kailali	6		6
18	Kanchanpur	3		3
19	Kapilvastu	1		1
20	Lamjung	3		3
21	Myagdi	3	2	5
22	Nawalparasi	3		3
23	Nuwakot	4	2	6
24	Palpa	3	2	5
25	Pyuthan	1	1	2
26	Rasuwa	3		3
27	Rolpa	1	1	2
28	Rukum	2		2
29	Rupendehi	2	1	3
30	Salyan	1	3	4
31	Sankhuwasabha	8		8
32	Sindhupalchok	5		5
33	Solukhumbu	6		6
34	Surkhet	2		2
35	Syangja	2		2
36	Taplejung	6		6
	Grand Total	125	22	147

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

The promotion of homestead production of nutrient-rich foods in this phase has relatively been effective as the VMFs and FCHVs are now well aware about the Suaahara HFP intervention and they are disseminating the program message.

iii. Lessons learned

Regular monitoring and follow-up of the events with periodic group meetings is vital for sustainability of VMF and HFPB groups. Group registration with relevant bodies is a commendable practice in this regard.

C. Outcome 3.2: Increased Income from Homestead Food Production

iv. Key Accomplishments

Support to strengthen market management committee/HAAT BAZAR (weekly market) for promotion of surplus homestead food produces

Haat Bazars support towards achieving Suaahara II's one of the objective to promote the marketing of surplus homestead production for accessibility of diversified nutrient food at local level. Out of 15 original planned and 9 revised planned, 9 Haat Bazars/market management committees were supported in Year II. Nuwakot and Lumjung have started new Haat Bazaar with support of Suaahara, Local Government, Line agencies and other development partner where as in other districts support was made to regularize and strengthen existing Haat Bazaars.

Conduct monitoring and supervision for VMF sustainability

To know the service delivery of VMFs to 1000 days mothers of their community and their status of sustainability, Suaahara II program designed "Workshop: FS and VMF discussions on sustainability" is qualitative research using Focus Group Discussion method. During Suaahara II, in Year I - 49 FGDs were conducted which was continued in Year II. Total of 74 FGDs were conducted in 37 districts (2 events in each district) in Year II

Agriculture and nutrition fairs

In total, 46 agriculture and nutrition fairs were supported so far. The fairs were organized in collaboration with DADO, DLSO and other agencies to sensitize community about importance of HFP for dietary diversity. Managing dedicated stall facilitates mainstreaming of nutrition objective in the fairs organized by government and non-government agencies. Again the stalls have been organized in a cost-effective way that also won acclamation.

Material support to promote utilization of Barter system

Barter system promotion to enhance the accessibility on and availability of diverse and nutrient rich food at household level including DAG community and 1000 days mothers and children for improvement of the nutrition status. VMF, Sapana Shrestha, Gorkha district and Sushila Malashi, Doti district, only 2 supports were done, out of 11 original planned due to budget slow down scenario.

Organize interaction programme among value chain actors

Activity "Interaction Program among Value Chain Actors" has been successfully conducted and achieved by 2 districts Bardiya and Sindhupalchowk, whereas due to budget slow down it was kept on hold in other districts. This event has helped minimize the gap between vegetable producer and traders and establish linkage between VMF, traders, Restaurants and Chefs, Cooperatives, etc.

5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Saving, Credit and Group Management Training of 64 events were accomplished in 35 districts, which trained 1292 participants (refer Table 4).

Table 4: Saving, Credit and Group Management Training				
S.N.	Districts	Female	Male	Total
1	Achham	39	-	39
2	Arghakhachi	40	6	46
3	Baglung	30	7	37
4	Baitadi	34	-	34
5	Bajura	45	-	45
6	Banke	39	5	44
7	Bardiya	40	-	40
8	Bhojpur	19	1	20
9	Dadeldura	40	-	40
10	Dailekha	34	6	40
11	Dang	35	5	40
12	Darchula	44	-	44
13	Dolkha	21	-	21
14	Doti	41	-	41
15	Gorkha	38	2	40
16	Gulmi	38	5	43
17	Jajarkot	22	17	39
18	Kailali	38	2	40
19	Kanchanpur	34	5	39
20	Kapilvastu	36	-	36
21	Myagdi	49	-	49
22	Nawalparasi	39	-	39
23	Palpa	29	11	40
24	Panchthar	41	1	42
25	Pyuthan	26	5	31
26	Rasuwa	20	-	20
27	Rolpa	31	6	37
28	Rukum	37	1	38
29	Rupandehi	23	1	24
30	Salyan	39	-	39
31	Sankhuwasabha	44	3	47
32	Sindhupalchowk	20	1	21
33	Solukhumbu	18	-	18
34	Surkhet	40	4	44
35	Syangja	35	-	35
Total		1,198	94	1,292

This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings, credit, group mobilization and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (93%) of the training participants with only 7% male.

Table 5: Saving, Credit Training Participant – Category			
SN	Category	Total	
		No	%
1	FCHV	70	5%
2	HFPB Group Members	288	22%
3	1000 days Mother	325	25%
4	VMF	609	47%
Grand Total		1292	

In terms of participant category (Table 5), the training saw majority (47%) of the participants from VMFs (with their main role in saving, credit and group management) followed by the 1000 days mother (25%) and HFPB group members (22%).

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented around half (49%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati (29%). The other groups have had nominal representation - 12% Dalit, 1% each from Newar and Gurung/Thakali, 2% each from Muslim and Terai other caste and 5 % others (Table 6).

Table 6: Saving, Credit Training Participant – Caste/Ethnicity			
SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Total	
		No	%
1	Dalit	150	12%
2	Muslim	11	1%
3	Bahun/Chhetri	639	49%
4	Newar	18	1%
5	Disadvantaged Janajati	381	29%
6	Gurung/Thakali	25	2%
7	Tarai other caste	68	5%
Grand Total		1292 participants	

5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training

5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training events were modified after budget slow down scenario and 9 events were conducted (one event for 2 or 3 districts) from April to May, 2018. In total, 176 participants (158 female and 18 male) were trained. Chart 1 presents the number of participants from each of the training districts.

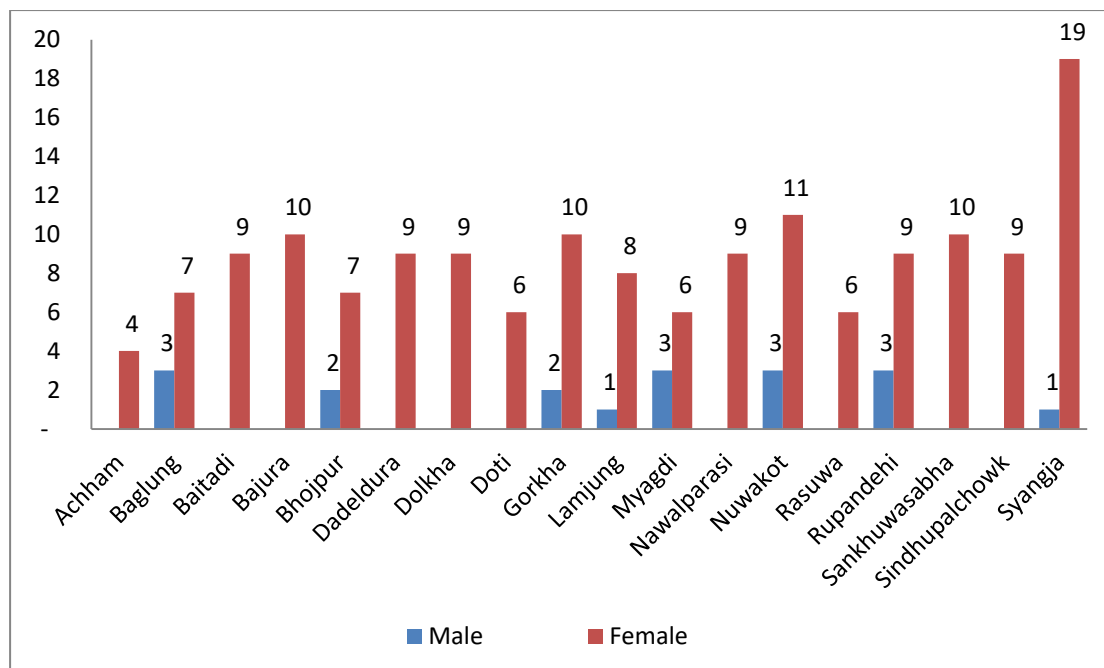


Chart 1: District wise participants in Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training

Participants were mostly female in all training events forming 90% of the total participants with only 10% male. As targeted, VMFs dominated the training with 73% followed by HFPB group members (involved in some form of commercial farming) 20% and 1000 Days Mother 5% (refer Table 7)

SN	Category	Total	
		No	%
1	1000 Days Mother	8	5%
2	FCHV	5	3%
3	HFPB Group Members	35	20%
4	VMF	128	73%
Grand Total		176 participants	

In terms of caste/ethnicity, the highest (58%) participation was from Bahun/Chhetri group followed by Disadvantaged Janajati 19%. Other groups have had nominal participation with 6% Dalit, 6% Newar, 3% each from Gurung/Thakali and Tarai other caste and 1 % Muslim (refer Table 8).

Table 8: Business Plan Training Participant – Caste/Ethnicity			
SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Total	
		No	%
1	Dalit	11	6%
2	Muslim	1	1%
3	Bahun/Chhetri	103	58%
4	Newar	11	6%
5	Disadvantaged Janajati	34	19%
6	Gurung/Thakali	6	3%
7	Tarai other caste	10	6%
Grand Total		176 participants	

Nutritious food preservation and processing training

A training of Nutrition value chain and food processing training was given to 40 HFP/M officers in February, 2018 so that they could roll-out in their respective district. Due to budget slow down scenario, only 3 events (Solukhumbu, Bhojpur, Sankhuwasabha) were accomplished. Total of 57 participants (52 female and 5 Male) were trained in these districts.

Farm to Market Facilitator’s Reference Book

“Farm to Market” facilitators Book is written designed and printed, which will be guiding book for HFP marketing.

v. Challenges and Opportunities

Unexpected budget slow down scenario had major implications in scheduled activities conduction. Technical support visit to VMFs, HFPB groups, etc. by HFPMO, FS and CNF found higher compared to target, which support to revise next year plan with quality.

vi. Lessons learned

Careful participant selection for trainings like Business Plan and Local Resource Development training helps trainings to be more fruitful and effective.

No. of FS/CNF visits to HFPB groups found higher however qualitative result is not satisfactory, therefore quality visits is one of the major points to focus on Year III program.

vii. Priorities for the next year

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- Establish and regularize VMF Network Meeting – 84 meetings
- 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training – 40 training
- 5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training – 22 training
- 10-days Local Resource Person Development Training – 10 training
- HAAT BAZAR (weekly market) promotion – 7 distribution/support

3. CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

A. **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

In terms of gender, VDRC-Nepal provided equal opportunities in program implementation at all levels, i.e. staff, trainer, and participants. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in three key sets of capacity building intervention, namely 93% in Saving Credit training, 90% in Business Plan training and 85% in LRP training.

The participants in the training were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups. Specifically in two sets of training events (Saving Credit and Business Plan), Disadvantaged Janajatis represented 29% to 19% and Dalits 12% to 6% of the total participants. The training events also witnessed participation of Tarai other caste 5% to 6% and Muslims 1% to 1%.

B. **Public Private Partnerships (PPP)**

The private agro firm R & D Solutions was involved in Shyanja during the Business plan training for potential support in the marketing of agricultural products. Poultry feeds and chicks were supplied to VMFs of Doti district after effective coordination with Private sector of Dhangadi and Dadeldhura.

C. **Emergency Preparedness**

As per norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness was followed by VDRC-Nepal in its office as well as staff locations that included provision of fire extinguishers, data security, and go-bags.

4. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. **Safety and Security**

No issues on safety and security experienced during the year. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts especially during critical times, e.g. during local level elections.

B. **Human Resources**

The internal Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been actively engaged in guiding the program technically and professionally both with formal and informal meetings. All 36 full-time budgeted staff positions were deployed in time including HFP Marketing Specialist (1), HFP Marketing Officer (30), Admin and Finance Officer (1), Assistant Finance Officer (1), Assistant Program Officer (1), Office Assistant (1) and MER Officer (1) and a new position Program Officer – HFP Marketing (1) was approved and deployed at Center, Suaahara.

For effective program delivery, staffs were provided with Nutrition value chain training opportunities in February 2018. 2 days review meeting was conducted as reflection of IR 3 achievement on June, 2018. Out of 40 HFP/MOs, HFP/MOs of 11 DRR/ CCA districts officers were provided with 5 days – TOT on Community Resilience Building.

The challenge in Human Resource has been the frequent turnover of the HFP/Marketing Officers as well as their retention in remote program districts. As an incentive for their service continuity, hardship allowance had been applied for year 2.

Due to budget deduction, out of 37 full time positions (including Program Officer-HFP Marketing) maintained by VDRC- Nepal, only 20 positions (1- HFPMS, 1- Program Officer, 1 – MERO, 15 – HFPMOs, 1 – Admin & Finance & 1 – Office Assistant) will continue in Year 3.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed, specifically in preparing banners and power point presentations for training events in the program districts.

Finance and Operations

A separate block within VDRC-Nepal central office complex in Gairidhar-8 has been made fully operational for Suaahara II program. Necessary work space, office equipment, furniture, amenities and a HFP garden were ensured. The complex accommodates four full-time administrative and finance staff. Three staff (HFP Marketing Specialist, MER Officer and new Position- Program Office) were stationed in Suaahara II central office and 30 HFP Marketing Officers are assigned to 30 program districts. The VDRC-Nepal Kathmandu liaison office is used as and when necessary specifically during program related meetings in Kathmandu.

A total of NPR 73,609,035.89 (95% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 30 million (38%) was utilized for program activities.

ANECDOTAL

1000 day's mother Binita is a change agent in her community

Meet Binita Budhathoki, she is one of Suaahara's village model farmers from Gubabari, Sankhuwasabha. Binita has honed her farming skills after she attended a series of agriculture focused training from the program. Her production has increased because her husband and her in laws actively help Binita and support her financial decision.

Binita has also changed her father in law's behavior towards rearing chickens in their home. Her father in law was against rearing chicken but Binita continuously communicated with him on the benefits of consuming eggs and meat regularly not just for her children but the entire family. Binita and her husband assured him that they would maintain a clean kitchen garden and have built a semi-caged hencoop with improved and local species.

"I told him that it would benefit the whole family every day until he agreed on the condition that we would keep the chickens away from the kitchen garden and the home. My husband supported me and helped build the semi-caged hencoop."

She has 7 hens, 1 cock and 16 chickens of improved and local species but says there is demand for the local species. She vaccinates and deworms her poultry regularly. Her neighbor Binod Khatri was impressed with the way Binita was rearing chickens and sought support from Binita and her husband. Binod has successfully built a semi-caged hencoop and is looking forward to consuming eggs and meat and selling surplus.

Binita regularly attends meetings organized by Gubabari health mothers group and Gubabari women farmers group. In the meeting, she shares her farming and chicken rearing experiences and encourages other members to do the same. Through Suaahara she was linked with the agriculture service center and livestock service center. She earns around NPR 120,000 (approx. \$1200) per year by selling vegetables, eggs and chicken meat.

"I was a 1000 day's mother when I attended Suaahara's village model farmer training. The information I received in the training was crucial for my children's wellbeing. Today I am financially independent. Last year I attended the business plan training where we learned to calculate loss and profit but I haven't faced any loss."

Group farming of OFSP by members of VMF network

A group member of VMF Network of Panchakanya RM has started the group farming of Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato in 3 Ropani land. This is very exemplary work first time initiated by the VMFs in a group approach farming. When they united in VMF network they have planned to cultivation of OFSP through group farming. The idea is generated by Mr. Ram Prasad Lamichane. He provided the OFSP vine for plantation, and encourages them about the significance of OFSP in terms of nutrient and economic value as well as it's by product and ensured the market linkage. He is proactively working to link OFSP farmers group to markets through personal connection with High Mountain Agriculture Cooperative Ltd during value chain meeting at Kathmandu. For OFSP cultivation Land is provided by the VMF Yak Bahadur Thapa (Nick name: Kauli Thapa).

Total 11 VMFs were energetically participated in planting time, there was also Representative from RM, ASC and LSC at this event, Technical supports provided by Suaahara II, Nuwakot.

END

NARRATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

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Sub recipient: *Vijaya Development Resource Center (VDRC – Nepal)*

Reporting Period: July 16, 2018 – July 15, 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The program implemented under VDRC – Nepal budget in the third year has been able to register very satisfactory progress. During the year, all of the planned program activities were delivered achieving added program of LRP onsite coaching.

Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention e.g., 90% in Saving Credit training, 81% in Business Plan training and 73% in LRP training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups.

All 20 full-time budgeted staff positions (5 female and 15 male) after reduction from 36 staffs, were deployed for program implementation and they are provided with several capacity building opportunities. A total of NPR 52,024,991 (99% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 27 million (51%) was utilized for the program activities delivery.

As anecdotal evidences suggest, the HFP and marketing interventions in general and training events targeted to the VMFs and HFPB group members in particular have been a great success.

2. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Summary

During the year, all the planned activities were delivered registering good progress. Specifically, Establish and regularize VMF Network meetings exceeded the set target. Table 1 presents the quantitative achievement of the program activities against the set target.

Table 1: Program Activity Delivery			
SN	Activity Title (short)	Original Target	Achievement
1.	VMF Network Meeting	84	146
2.	LRP Development Training	200	195
3.	Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training	800	805
4.	Business Plan and Agri- Marketing Training	440	409
5.	Strengthening Market Management Committee – Haat Bazaar/ Collection Center	7	5
Grand Total		1531	1559

Besides above activities, resource person's review and interaction meeting and onsite coaching of LRPs were conducted. Staffs were capacitated in Year III DIP at regional level and were engaged in their base districts as well as supported few districts to orient FS/ CNF on Year III DIP.

For year 4, selected and more effective activities from Table no. 1 will be implemented more intensively and post-training follow up will be focused. Activities for Year 4 are Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training, LRP development training, VMF networking meeting and Interaction meeting among LRPs and stakeholders.

Outcome 3.2: Increased Income from Homestead Food Production

i. Key Accomplishments

Activity 1: Establish and regularize the VMF/ LRP network meetings

Suaahara II has a major objective in ensuring VMF sustainability through networking at Rural and Urban Municipalities. These networking meetings support LRPs/VMFs to link with local govt. to tap the resources, discuss and find solution of their farm issues or marketing problems, etc. A total of 146 VMF networking meetings were organized against the target of 84 meetings. Table 2 in the following page presents the districts where networking meetings were planned and conducted.

Table 2: VMF Networking Meeting			
SN	District	Target	Achievement
1	Taplejung	2	2
2	Panchthar	2	2
3	Sankhuwasabha	2	10
4	Bhojpur	2	2
5	Solukhumbu	2	2
6	Dolakha	2	5
7	Sindupalchowk	2	2
8	Rasuwa	2	4
9	Nawakot	2	10
10	Dhading	2	4
11	Gorkha	2	2
12	Lamjung	2	2
13	Syangja	2	2
14	Baglung	2	7
15	Myagdi	2	3
16	Nawalprasi	4	5
17	Palpa	2	5
18	Gulmi	2	3
19	Arghakhanchi	2	3
20	Pyuthan	2	2
21	Rolpa	2	2
22	Rupandehi	2	2
23	Kapilvastu	2	2
24	Dang	2	3
25	Banke	2	2
26	Bardiya	2	2

27	Rukum	4	4
28	Surkhet	2	3
29	Dailekh	2	2
30	Jajarkot	2	2
31	Salyan	2	3
32	Kailali	2	2
33	Kanchanpur	2	2
34	Doti	2	2
35	Dadeldhura	2	7
36	Achham	2	10
37	Bajura	2	4
38	Bajhang	2	6
39	Baitadi	2	5
40	Darchula	2	4
Total		84	146

Activity 2: Local Resource Person development training

7 events of 10-days Local Resource Person Development training in poultry and vegetable production were conducted. 6 events on Vegetable production developed 125 LRPs on Vegetable production and 3 events on poultry rearing developed 70 LRPs on Poultry. Total of 195 LRPs from 39 districts were developed in Year III. Table 3 presents district-wise participation details.

Table 3: LRP Development Training – Poultry and Vegetable				
Participant District		Male	Female	Grand Total
1	Taplejung	0	3	3
2	Panchthar	0	7	7
3	Sankhuwasabha	1	4	5
4	Bhojpur	2	1	3
5	Solukhumbu	0	3	3
6	Dolakha	1	7	8
7	Sindupalchowk	2	3	5
8	Rasuwa	1	3	4
9	Nawakot	0	1	1
10	Dhading	0	4	4
11	Gorkha	0	6	6
12	Lamjung	0	4	4
13	Syangja	0	7	7
14	Baglung	5	4	9
15	Myagdi	2	3	5
16	Nawalprasi	1	4	5
17	Palpa	1	8	9
18	Gulmi	4	4	8
19	Arghakhanchi	5	1	6

20	Pyuthan	1	2	3
21	Rolpa	1	2	3
22	Rupandehi	0	5	5
23	Kapilvastu	0	0	0
24	Dang	3	3	6
25	Banke	4	4	8
26	Bardiya	0	8	8
27	Rukum	1	6	7
28	Surkhet	3	1	4
29	Dailekh	3	2	5
30	Jajarkot	1	2	3
31	Salyan	2	3	5
32	Kailali	3	2	5
33	Kanchanpur	2	2	4
34	Doti	0	5	5
35	Dadeldhura	1	4	5
36	Achham	0	4	4
37	Bajura	0	1	1
38	Bajhang	0	2	2
39	Baitadi	0	5	5
40	Darchula	2	3	5
Grand Total		52	143	195

Activity 3: Five-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Saving, Credit and Group Management Training of 40 events were accomplished in 23 districts, which trained 805 participants (refer Table 4).

S.N.	Districts	Female	Male	Total
1	Achham	40	0	40
2	Arghakhachi	34	9	43
3	Banke	36	3	39
4	Bardiya	40	0	40
5	Dailekh	23	19	42
6	Dang	31	8	39
7	Dhading	40	0	40
8	Doti	37	0	37
9	Gulmi	23	2	25
10	Jajarkot	23	13	36
11	Kailali	15	6	21
12	Kanchanpur	20	0	20
13	Kapilvastu	35	6	41
14	Nuwakot	15	2	17
15	Palpa	44	3	47
16	Panchtar	37	2	39

17	Phuthan	17	3	20
18	Rasuwa	20	0	20
19	Rolpa	35	4	39
20	Rukum	39	1	40
21	Salyan	34	5	39
22	Surkhet	41	0	41
23	Syangja	37	3	40
Total		716	89	805

This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings, credit, group mobilization, group registration and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (88.9%) of the training participants with only 10.1% male.

SN	Category	Total	
		No	%
1	FCHV	56	7%
2	HFPB_Others	383	48%
3	1000 days Mother	241	30%
4	VMF	125	15%
Grand Total		805	

In terms of participant category (Table 5), the training saw majority (48%) of the participants from HFPB group member and other category followed by the 1000 days mother (30%) and VMF (15%).

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented over half (48.8%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati (36.4%). The other groups have had nominal representation – 9.1% Dalit, less than 1% each from Newar and Gurung/Thakali, 1.5% each from Muslim and Terai other caste and 3.6 % others (Table 6).

SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Total	
		No	%
1	Dalit	73	9.1%
2	Muslim	12	1.5%
3	Bahun/Chhetri	393	48.8%
4	Newar	1	0.1%
5	Disadvantaged Janajati	293	36.4%
6	Gurung/Thakali	4	0.5%
7	Tarai other caste	29	3.6%
Grand Total		805 participants	

Activity 4: Five-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training

21 events of 5-days Business Plan and Agricultural Marketing Training were conducted in 21 districts with participants of 23 districts (Sankhuwasabh & Bhojpur, Nuwakot & Rasuwa). In total, 408 participants (330 female and 78 male) were trained. Chart 1 presents the number of participants from each of the training districts.

Chart 1: Number of participants from each of the training district

District	Female	Male	Total
Achham	19	0	19
Doti	20	0	20
Kailali	19	3	22
Kanchanpur	16	4	20
Surkhet	12	8	20
Salyan	10	9	19
Dailekha	7	9	16
Rolpa	14	7	21
Pyuthan	17	3	20
Palpa	15	6	21
Gulmi	20	1	21
Dang	13	6	19
Bardiya	17	1	18
Arghakhachi	10	9	19
Syangja	17	1	18
Lamjung	22	0	22
Nuwakot	15	3	18
Dolkha	19	0	19
Dhading	21	0	21
Sankhuwasabha	14	4	18
Panchthar	14	4	18
Total	331	78	409

Participants were mostly female in all training events forming 81% of the total participants with only 19% male. As targeted, VMFs dominated the training with 41% followed by HFPB group members (involved in some form of commercial farming) 38% and 1000 Days Mother 15% and FCHV 6%. (refer Table 7)

SN	Category	Total	
		No	%
1	1000 Days Mother	61	15%
2	FCHV	24	6%
3	HFPB_ Others	154	38%
4	VMF	170	41%
Grand Total		409 participants	

In terms of caste/ethnicity, the highest (51%) participation was from Bahun/Chhetri group followed by Disadvantaged Janajati 39.4%. Other groups have had nominal participation with 4.9% Dalit, 0.2% Newar, 3.4% each from Gurung/Thakali and Tarai other caste 0.7% (refer Table 8).

Table 8: Business Plan Training Participant – Caste/Ethnicity			
SN	Caste/Ethnicity	Total	
		No	%
1	Dalit	20	4.9%
2	Bahun/Chhetri	210	51.3%
3	Newar	1	0.2%
4	Disadvantaged Janajati	161	39.4%
5	Gurung/Thakali	14	3.4%
6	Tarai other caste	3	0.7%
Grand Total		409 participants	

Activity 5: Support to strengthen market management committee /HAAT BAZAR (weekly market) for promotion of surplus homestead food produces

Haat Bazars support towards achieving Suaahara II's one of the objectives to promote the marketing of surplus homestead production for accessibility of diversified nutrient food at local level. Out of 7 planned, 5 Haat Bazars/ Collection Center/ market management committees were supported in Year III. Rupendehi, Nawalparasi, Arghakhachi and Baglung supported to Haat Bazaar / Collection Center to strengthen existing ones.

Additional Deliveries: Onsite Coaching to LRPs

The capacity of selected successful VMFs was enhanced during these years of Suaahara II to capacitate as Local Resource Person (LRP) with 10 days intensive commercial vegetable production training curriculum or 10 days intensive poultry rearing training curriculum. Envisioning for the follow up and onsite coaching to the LRPs developed during I to III year period of project implementation. The follow up activity is supposed to identify the gaps between training and field based situation, so that it can contribute on upcoming planning to match the expectation of LRPs to maximum level.

Table 9 : LRPs visited details				
S.N.	District	Visited Date	No. LRP Poultry	No. LRP Vegetable
1	Kailali	20-May-19	2	2
2	Kanchanpur	21-May-19	2	2
3	Dadeldhura	22-May-19	2	3
4	Baitadi	23/24 May 19	2	2
5	Darchula	25-May-19	1	0
6	Palpa	12-Jun-19	1	1
7	Gulmi	13-Jun-19	1	1
8	Arghakhachi	15-Jun-19	2	1
			13	12

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

The promotion of homestead production of nutrient-rich foods in this phase has relatively been effective as the LRPs and VMFs serving their community and also are being linked

with local Government. Also, LRPs are well functioning justifying their roles and responsibilities as trained during the training.

iii. Lessons learned

Post Training follow up and regular onsite coaching are very helpful . Group registration with relevant bodies is a commendable practice in this regard.

iv. Priorities for the next year

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs/ LRPs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- Establish and regularize VMF Network Meeting – 84 meetings
- 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training – 100 People
- 10-days Local Resource Person development Training – 100 People
- VMFs/ LRPs meeting with stakeholders and value chain Actors – 40 districts

3. CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

A. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In terms of gender, VDRC-Nepal provided equal opportunities in program implementation at all levels, i.e. staff, trainer, and participants. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in three key sets of capacity building intervention, namely 88.9% in Saving Credit training, 81% in Business Plan training and 73.3% in LRP training.

The participants in the training were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups. Specifically in two sets of training events (Saving Credit and Business Plan), Disadvantaged Janajatis represented 29% to 19% and Dalits 12% to 6% of the total participants. The training events also witnessed participation of Tarai other caste 5% to 6% and Muslims 1% to 1%.

B. Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

With a view to promote Public Private Partnership, Suaahara II Program has partnered with VYCCU Saving and Credit Cooperatives in Nawalprasi district. VYCCU, pioneer co-operative organization working in field of saving /credit and social transformation, having 45,000 members from all across the Nawalprasi district. With common objective of both organizations, partnership excelled with conduction of 2 days orientation of Kitchen Garden at selected piloting areas i.e. Gaindakot – 12 and Madhyabindu Municipality – 2. Total 7 batches of orientation were conducted, training 238 households. And, Short term Training Follow up Consultant (JTA) was hired for 2 month from Suaahara II as part of technical support.

C. Emergency Preparedness

As per norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness was followed by VDRC-Nepal in its office as well as staff locations that included provision of fire extinguishers, data security, and go-bags.

4. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. Safety and Security

No issues on safety and security experienced during the year. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts especially during critical times, e.g. during local level elections.

B. Human Resources

The internal Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been actively engaged in guiding the program technically and professionally both with formal and informal meetings. All 20 full-time budgeted staff positions were deployed at program districts and Center level including HFP Marketing Specialist (1), Program Officer - HFP Marketing (1), MER Officer (1), HFP Marketing Officer (15), Admin and Finance Officer (1) and Office Assistant (1).

All 20 full time positions maintained by VDRC- Nepal, (1- HFPMS, 1- Program Officer, 1 – MERO, 15 – HFPMSOs, 1 – Admin & Finance & 1 – Office Assistant) will continue in Year 4.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed, specifically in preparing banners and power point presentations for training events in the program districts.

D. Finance and Operations

Suaahara-II HFP Marketing component is being managed by VDRC-Nepal from several locations. A shared block within its' central office complex in Gairidhar-8 houses 2 administrative staff. Likewise, three staff (HFP Marketing Specialist, Program Officer – HFP Marketing, and MER Officer) work from Suaahara-II central office and 15 Marketing Officers are deputed to the program districts. VDRC-Nepal Kathmandu liaison office is used by the Executive Director, members, trainers and consultants on intermittent basis in connection with the project assignment.

A total of NPR 52,024,991 (99% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 27 million (51%) was utilized for the program activities delivery. With the total advance amount of NPR 51,765,000, a negative cash balance of NPR 259,991.12 has been reported.

ANECDOTAL

From Demonstrator to Entrepreneur - LRP Tara Devi Bhurtel

All Tara needed was a platform to recognize her potential and grow. Seven years ago, when Tara was a 1000-day woman, she participated in homestead food production beneficiary (HFPB) group meeting as a member representing disadvantaged community in Dhurkot, Nawalparasi. In two years, her participation in the HFP meeting was engaging and she was one of the most prominent and eager participants. Suaahara then trained Tara as a village model farmer (VMF) and in the five days basic training she learned about the importance of kitchen garden, integrated nutrition, and poultry rearing. "I formed a HFPB group and started supporting my neighbors, friends and anyone who wanted to learn."

Tara has come a long way. She also works at the ward office in Vinayi municipality as an agriculture facilitator voluntarily. After the change in the federal structure, Tara was retained, and she also started drawing salary. Then Suaahara gave her another golden opportunity to get trained as Local Resource Person. Due to her hard work and knowledge, her job is retained by Ward office as Agriculture facilitator after changed federal structure with NPR 16000 per month salary.

Tara as an agriculture facilitator has helped connect the community with the local government to leverage agri related resources and services. "Being a farmer, I had the advantage to lobby with the ward office to allocate budget for the construction and establishment of a collection center based on my experiences, learning and the training. Additionally, I want the farmers to become self-sufficient and I have also linked our community members with the micro-finance for agri loans if required."

Despite support from the government, establishment of the collection center, and the linkage with the micro finance the farmers were not able to access basic farming equipment/tools, seasonal seeds and agri services. "I spoke with a few local shop owners and requested them to sell few agri products and services, but none showed interest. Therefore, I decided to open an agrovet and now I am authorized to sell small farming equipment and seasonal seeds. The more the demand, the more products and services I can introduce."

Tara plans to reach more farmers in surrounding villages by providing technical support which can help them increase their production, link them to the collection center, micro finance, and access government subsidies and services.

"My growth as a VMF and an agriculture facilitator is good. My journey has been promising and I am proud of my capabilities. And that is why I want to motivate the community members by demonstrating what I have learned and provide door to door technical support to the community so that they can become self-sufficient

The End

NARRATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

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Sub recipient: Vijaya Development Resource Center

Sub award No.: 21854-01-136

Report Type: Annual

Reporting Period: July 16, 2019 – July 15, 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

The program in the fourth year has been able to register satisfactory progress despite lockdown due to amid Covid- 19. During the year, all of the planned program activities were delivered except interaction among municipal agriculture and livestock coordinators with LRPs.

Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention e.g., 99% in Saving Credit training and 70% in LRP training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups.

All 20 full-time budgeted staff positions (6 females and 14 male), were deployed for program implementation and they are provided with several capacity building opportunities. A total of NPR 31,725,116 (92.5% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 6,501,933 was utilized for the program activities delivery.

As anecdotal evidences suggest, the HFP and marketing interventions in general and training events targeted to the VMFs and HFPB group members in particular have been a great success.

2. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- **Summary**

During the year, all the planned activities were delivered registering good progress except interaction meeting with Municipal Agricultural and Livestock Coordinators with LRPs due to Lockdown. Specifically, Establish and regularize VMG Network meetings exceeded the set target. Table 1 presents the quantitative achievement of the program activities against the set target.

Table 1: Program Activity Delivery			
SN	Activity Title (short)	Original Target	Achievement
1.	VMF Network Meeting	84	102
2.	LRP Development Training	100	97
3.	Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training	100	103
4.	Interaction meeting with Municipal Agricultural and Livestock Coordinators with LRPs to promote nutrition sensitive agriculture	40	10
Grand Total		324	312

Besides above activities, some additional mandatory activities were conducted since April 2020 to end of the Year IV like tele counseling of VMFs, LRPs, HFP group members, Linkages of VMFs/LRPs with Private sectors and Govt services for marketing and input supplies, profile update of VMFs, LRPs and Brooders, etc. Technical Staffs were capacitated in Year IV on planned DIP of the Year.

For year V, selected and more effective activities from Table no. 1 will be implemented more intensively and post-training follow up will be focused. Activities for Year V are Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training, LRP development training and VMF networking meeting.

- **Outcome 3.2: Increased Income from Homestead Food Production**

- i. Key Accomplishments*

Activity 1 : Establish and regularize the VMF/ LRP network meetings

Suaahara II has a major objective in ensuring VMF sustainability through networking at Rural and Urban Municipalities. These networking meetings support LRPs/VMFs to link with local govt. to tap the resources, discuss and find solution of their farm issues or marketing problems, etc. A total of 102 VMF networking meetings were organized against the target of 84 meetings. Table 2 in the following page presents the districts where networking meetings were planned and conducted

Table 2: VMF Network achievement and participants' details

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Achievement</i>	<i>Participants</i>		
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Achham	2	14	17	31
Arghakhachi	2	29	28	57
Baglung	2	2	17	19
Baitadi	3	26	24	50
Bajhang	2	15	31	46

Bajura	3	40	28	68
Banke	2	29	30	59
Bardiya	1	16	9	25
Bhojpur	6	34	39	73
Dadeldura	6	29	61	90
Dailekha	2	16	17	33
Dang	2	15	9	24
Darchula	1	1	17	18
Dhading	2	16	32	48
Dolkha	4	5	58	63
Doti	3	13	61	74
Gorkha	2	2	30	32
Gulmi	1	8	31	39
Jajarkot	2	16	14	30
Kailali	2	17	27	44
Kanchanpur	2	10	17	27
Kapilvastu	2	28	20	48
Lamjung	3	12	26	38
Myagdi	2	5	25	30
Nawalparasi-East	1	19	2	21
Nawalparasi-West	1	20	14	34
Nuwakot	4	32	90	122
Palpa	2	18	22	40
Panchthar	2	0	20	20
Pyuthan	2	17	13	30
Rasuwa	2	7	18	25
Rolpa	3	29	33	62
Rukum-East	3	20	34	54
Rukum-West	3	13	26	39
Rupandehi	2	19	24	43
Salyan	1	6	7	13
Sankhuwasabha	5	9	43	52
Sindhupalchowk	2	1	21	22
Solukhumbu	1	1	7	8
Surkhet	3	15	36	51
Syangja	4	65	48	113
Taplejung	2	1	15	16
Total	102	690	1141	1831

VMF Network of Salpachilichowk RM of Bhojpur district is completely owned by the RM, as RM has initiated to provide refreshment cost for meeting to regularize it, also to strengthen and encourage the Network members all 25members have been distributed Plastic tunnel by respective RM.

Network has capacitated the members; for eg: network member who has been able to be selected as members of National Level Farmers' Group Federation Mr. Nabin KC, LRP from Baglung is speaking up for their rights as farmers such as Farmers' identity card in national level federation meetings.

Activity 2: Local Resource Person development training

4 events of 10-days Local Resource Person Development training in poultry and vegetable production were conducted. 2 events on Vegetable production developed 56 LRPs on Vegetable production and 2 events on poultry rearing developed 41 LRPs on Poultry. Total of 97 LRPs from 29 districts were developed in Year IV. Table 3 presents district-wise participation details.

Table 3: Local resource person development training participants' details.

District	Female	Male	Total
Arghakhanchi	1	6	7
Bajhang	4	1	5
Bajura	4		4
Bhojpur		1	1
Dailekh	1	2	3
Darchula	8		8
Dhading	8	2	10
Dolakha	2		2
Doti	3		3
Gorkha	1		1
Gulmi		3	3
Jajarkot		2	2
Kailali	4		4
Kanchanpur	3	4	7
Kapilvastu	1	3	4
Lamjung	3		3
Myagdi	1		1
Nawalparasi-East	1	1	2
Nuwakot	2		2
Panchthar	7		7
Pyuthan	1	1	2
Rasuwa	1		1
Rolpa	1	1	2
Rukum-East	2		2
Rukum-West	3		3
Rupendehi	1	1	2
Salyan		2	2
Syangja	1		1
Taplejung	3		3
Total	67	30	97

Activity 3 : 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Saving, Credit and Group Management Training of 5 events were accomplished in 5 districts, which trained 103 participants (refer Table 4).

Table 4: Saving, credit and Group Management Training Gender

District	Female	Male	Total
Pyuthan	18	1	19
Rukum east	19		19
Rukum west	20		20
Dhading	20		20
Lamjung	25		25
Grand Total	102	1	103

This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings, credit, group mobilization, group registration and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (99.03%) of the training participants with only 0.97 % male.

Table 5: Saving, credit and Group Management Training affiliation

In terms of participant category (Table 5), the training saw majority (50%) of the participants from HFPB group member and other category followed by the 1000 days' mother (30%), VMF (16%) and FCHV (4%).

Categories	Frequency	Percent
1000 days	31	30
HFPB group member	52	50
FCHV	4	4
VMF	16	16
Total	103	100

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented over half (47%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati (24%). The other groups have had nominal representation – 8% Dalit, 4% each from Newar and 17 % Gurung/Thakali.

Table 6: Ethnicity of Saving credit and group management training.

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Dalit	8	8
Brahmin/Chhetri	48	47
Newar	4	4
Disadvantage Janjati	25	24
Gurung/ Thakali	18	17
Total	103	100

Activity 4 : Interaction of municipal agriculture and livestock coordinators , private sectors with LRPs to promote nutrition sensitive agriculture

10 districts (Solukhumbu, Dhading, Myagdi, Syangja, Rolpa, Pyuthan, Dang, Salyan and Nawalparasi-east) had conducted event with the aim of promotion of nutrition sensitive agriculture and share the lesson learned among the HFPB group member VMF, LRPs, local private stakeholders and agriculture and livestock's coordinator in local government. The primary objective of this activity is to discuss on HFP related issues/problems and identify the solution and also build the linkages of VMF, LRP and HFPB group members with local government and other stakeholders.

Additional Deliveries: Tele counselling to VMFs, LRPs and HFP Beneficiaries

National Lockdown due to amid COVID-19 disrupted program but immediately program changed modality keeping safety and security of front line workers on priority and respecting Govt's decision, tele counseling was adopted. Continuous follow up of VMFs, LRPs, HFPB group members through telephone and counselling was provided, Issues/ challenges from field were solved through private and government linkages. Some of the examples of Linkages are:

- LRP – Indra Chaudhary had problem on marketing of her produced goods due to lockdown. She was counselled to take permission letter from Palika and do direct selling to Army force barrack. Local Government was updated about her situation so that they could facilitate at Army force barrack to buy Ms. Chaudhary's produces.
- Brooder Mr. Prakash Rai and VMF Mina Rai benefited with 4sacks feed of poultry as she has 70 poultry among which 50 hen are laying and planning for hatching, once they reported poultry feed shortage to Suaahara staff.
- Mina Rai, Saraswoti Rai, Minu Maya Rai, Lila Maya Rai, Nirmala Rai, Kanchhi Rai, Thule Kanchhi Rai are continuously supplying their vegetables and earning income to meet basics of their household esp during lockdown which otherwise would have been very difficult. They are able to sell cucumber, tomato, cabbage, beans etc.
- 7 of the VMFs of Dang were supported on proposal writing and application which resulted them being selected as Green Vounteer Program of Province 5

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges faced during Year IV are;

1. Diversity in budget utilization by district in VMF Networking meeting as some district had to give DSA to participants and some did not give DSA.
2. Due to the geographical challenges and responsibility of household work, participation of VMFs/ LRPs of distance is challenging during Interaction meeting.
3. Repairing of damage Laptop of field staffs became almost impossible to due to lockdown and it hampered the flow of work.
4. Extension of technology for wider coverage of beneficiaries especially like social media has huge opportunity.

iii. Lessons learned

Lessons learned during activities implementation in Year IV are;

1. Activities which demands beneficiaries to travel away from their home should not be planned during winter season.
2. Weekly meeting with staffs during Work from home is effective rather than daily.

3. Even in regular situation, organization should adopt Work from home culture when needed like odd/even vehicle rules, stick in some specific location, etc. rather than forcing for leave if one cannot attend office physically.

iv. Priorities for the next year

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs/ LRPs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- Establish and regularize VMF Network Meeting
- Saving, Credit and Group Management Training
- 10-days Local Resource Person Development Training

3. CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

A. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

In terms of gender, VDRC-Nepal provided equal opportunities in program implementation at all levels, i.e. staff, trainer, and participants. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in three key sets of capacity building intervention, namely 99% in Saving Credit training, and 70% in LRP training. The participants in the training were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups.

B. Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

Public Private Partnership is core element to sell surplus Agri products and supply of inputs for production. Many districts are exploring and putting efforts to connect VMFs/ LRPs with private sector to address their problems. SP II program facilitated and signed MOU with Agrovets in Rukum district, as per understanding signed Agrovets are providing services to poor 1000 days family, VMFs, Group members, LRPs and FCHVs with inputs on subsidize price.

C. Emergency Preparedness

As per norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness was followed by VDRC-Nepal in its office as well as staff locations that included provision of fire extinguishers, data security, and go-bags. VDRC Nepal has introduced Tele Work Policy in this Year.

4. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. Safety and Security

No issues on safety and security experienced during the year. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts especially during critical times, e.g. during local level elections. Staffs were oriented and shared required materials on prevention of COVID- 19

B. Human Resources

The internal Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been actively engaged in guiding the program technically and professionally both with formal and informal meetings. All 20 full-time budgeted staff positions were deployed at program districts and Center level including HFP Marketing Specialist (1), Program Officer - HFP Marketing (1), MER Officer (1), HFP Marketing Officer (15), Admin and Finance Officer (1) and Office Assistant (1).

All 20 full time positions maintained by VDRC- Nepal, (1- HFPMS, 1- Program Officer, 1 – MERO, 15 – HFPMOs, 1 – Admin & Finance & 1 – Office Assistant) continued in Year 4.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed, specifically in preparing banners and power point presentations for training events in the program districts.

D. Finance and Operations

Suaahara-II HFP Marketing component is being managed by VDRC-Nepal from several locations. A shared block within its' central office complex in Gaidakot-8 houses 2 administrative staff. Likewise, three staff (HFP Marketing Specialist, Program Officer – HFP Marketing, and MER Officer) work from Suaahara-II central office and 15 Marketing Officers are deputed to the program districts. VDRC-Nepal Kathmandu liaison office is used by the Executive Director, members, trainers and consultants on intermittent basis in connection with the project assignment.

A total of NPR 31,725,116 (92.5% of obligated budget) has been utilized during the year of which about NPR 6,501,933 was utilized for the program activities delivery.

ANECDOTAL

Anita Pradhan: An incredible entrepreneur who brought market to her village

The transformation in Anita Pradhan's life within a span of just five years has become tremendous. From a housewife managing a meager income of her husband Nir Bahadur who went to villages selling utensils on his back, Anita, a resident of Pawuwadumma-4, Basteem, Bhojpur, now boasts an annual income of about a million and enviable social prestige.

She was under "Hard core poor" category because the earnings from her husband's seasonal work and agricultural produce from a small patch of land that her family owned were not enough even to meet family's food requirements.

Life changed for Anita in 2014 when she received a 5-day training on vegetable production from Suaahara program funded by USAID. After returning from the training, she developed a kitchen garden and started vegetable farming in it. She, along with 12 other women, formed a homestead food production group named *Namuna Krishak Samuha* and established a common model kitchen garden which brought change throughout the village.

Anita received additional support from Suaahara to strengthen her group (Saving, credit and group mobilization training); for growing her business (Business plan and Agri-marketing training and postharvest management training); and to provide technical support to other farmers (Local resource person training).

These trainings coupled with continuous follow up from Suaahara empowered her not only to excel in the business but also to advance her group. With her leadership and advocacy, the group was able to receive support for plastic pond and training in poultry rearing from other stakeholders.

At the beginning, she faced problems with marketing her products. However, she soon realized that market does not readily come to her doorstep. Therefore, she carried her products to weekly markets (*Haat Bazaar*) in *Chyangre* and *Tiwari Bhanjyang* where she started getting attention of the wholesalers. She also learned the intricacies of how market works and convinced her group to cultivate same crop in the community kitchen garden so that the volume will be enough for at least one truckload. Consequently, wholesalers from Dharan directly come to the village and purchase their produces.

"*Now market comes to our doorstep*", Anita says with confidence.

Meanwhile, she diversified her source of income. After receiving poultry rearing trainings, she started a poultry farm with 100 chicken which has now grown to 300; and grows diverse vegetables in her land. After receiving livestock training, she has also started rearing goats and she has 14 goats now.

"*Last year my annual income from vegetable alone was about half a million. I would never have thought that I could support my family, send my three children to school and for higher education and renovate my house only through agriculture,*" says Anita. Her elder son is pursuing higher studies in Itahari, daughter studying in Grade 12 and younger son is studying at a local school.

She is mindful of the fact that her community should also benefit from her enterprise and skills. Therefore, she sells eggs to 1000-day families in cheaper rates; and provides seeds, saplings, chicks and technical support to these families so that they can grow diverse vegetables and rear chicken themselves.

Now she has registered 'Anita Agriculture and livestock farm' and aspires to grow her business while continuing to inspire the entire community.

Sub recipient: Vijaya Development Resource Center
Sub award No.: 21854-01-180
Report Type: Annual
Reporting Period: July 16, 2020 – July 31, 2021

NARRATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The programs of year five started with restriction in movement and end with similar circumstances. In between major budgetary activities were conducted in three months only. Despite of this the program in the fourth year has been able to register satisfactory progress. During the year, all of the planned program activities were delivered except local resource person development training which was planned in between the year 5.

Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention e.g., 92% in Saving Credit training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both disadvantages group and non-disadvantages groups.

All 18 full-time budgeted staff positions (3 females and 15 male), were deployed for program implementation and they are provided with several capacity building opportunities. A total of NPR 17,384,728 (94% of obligated budget) has been utilized during December 1, 2020 to July 31, 2021.

As anecdotal evidences suggest, the sustainability of VMF network and HFPB groups can be insure through linkage and coordination with government stakeholders.

2. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Summary

During the year, only 4 events of saving credit and group mobilization was planned. All 4 events of saving credit were completed with active participation of more than 90 percent of female participants from HFPB groups. Beside this other mandatory like tele counseling of VMFs, LRPs, HFP group members, Linkages of VMFs/LRPs with Private sectors and Govt services for marketing and input supplies, profile update of VMFs, etc. activity had good impacts to the beneficiaries. Technical Staffs were capacitated in Year V on planned DIP of the Year. Beside this HFP/M officer were capacitated through virtual training on NAS, DHIS-2 data entry for year 5. For year VI, selected and more effective activities will be implemented more intensively and sustainability of VMF network, HFPB groups, LRP, and VMF will be focused. Activities for Year VI are Saving, Credit and Group Mobilization Training, LRP development training.

Outcome 3.2: Increased Income from Homestead Food Production

i. Key Accomplishments

Activity 1 : 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Saving, Credit and Group Management Training of 4 events were accomplished in 4 districts, which trained 78 participants (refer Table 1). This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings, credit, group mobilization, group registration and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (92%) of the training participants with only 8 % male.

Table 1: Saving, credit and Group Management Training Gender

District	Female	Male	Total
Darchula	20		20
Dhading	20		20
Surkhet	16	5	21
Pyuthan	16	1	17
Grand Total	72	6	78

In terms of participant category (Table 2), the training saw majority (49%) of the participants from HFPB group member and other category followed by VMF (19%), 1000 days' mother (18%) and FCHV (14%).

Table 2: Saving, credit and Group Management Training Gender

Categories	Frequency	Percent
1000 days	14	18
HFPB group member	38	49
FCHV	11	14
VMF	15	19
Total	78	100

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented over half (55%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati , dalit and Gurung/ Thakali 34 %, 8% and 3% respectively.

Table 3: Ethnicity of Saving credit and group management training.

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Dalit	6	8
Brahmin/Chhetri	43	55
Disadvantage Janjati	27	34
Gurung/ Thakali	2	3
Total	78	100

Additional Deliveries: Tele counselling to VMFs, LRPs and HFP Beneficiaries and coordination with local and provincial government.

National Lockdown due to amid COVID-19 disrupted program but immediately program changed modality keeping safety and security of front-line workers on priority and respecting Govt's decision, tele counseling was adopted. Total 2703 sessions of phone call were made to VMF, LRP and HFP Beneficiaries in year five. Continuous follow up of VMFs, LRPs, HFPB group members through telephone and counselling was provided, Issues/ challenges from field were solved through private and government linkages. Some of the examples of Linkages and good practices adopted are:

- Large number of beneficiaries were benefitted by resource of local government which was possible through phone follow up during lockdown. For eg. LRP Gita Sharma from Syangja received materials support cost around 44300 Nrs. Individual and materials cost around 300000 for group named Godavari Krishak Samuha materials includes seed, rose cane, power tiller, tunnel plastic etc form local government and AKC.
- VMF network reformed in ward level and own by Malarani rural municipality and move one step toward sustainability in Argakhanchi district. Rural municipality allocate Nrs. 400000 for reformation and training of VMF network.
- Coordination with local government in Sidhupalchowk leads to distribution 4300 seeds packets to beneficiaries by different municipalities and 61 poly houses were made during year five in coordination with local government stakeholders.
- Syangja has started the virtual meeting with VMF and LRPs.
- 8 VMF were selected as green volunteer in Lumbini province from Dang and Pyuthan

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges faced during Year V are;

1. It is almost impossible to solve issues and challenges faced by beneficiaries regarding disease and pest of crops and poultry through phone call only.
2. VMF network regularization was found as issues as it was formed as municipalities level and geographical condition don't allowed the regularization of this meeting in some districts.
3. Use of digital technology like Krishi Guru and online meeting platforms like viber, messenger or google meet etc have wider opportunities to solve the challenges faced during year 5.

iii. Lessons learned

Lessons learned during activities implementation in Year IV are;

4. Activities which demands beneficiaries to travel away from their home should be planned in consideration of COVID situation and cropping patter also need to consider.
5. Monthly meeting with staffs during Work from home is effective and plan of each months should be prepared.
6. Even in regular situation, organization should adopt Work from home culture when needed like odd/even vehicle rules, stick in some specific location, etc. rather than forcing for leave if one cannot attend office physically.

iv. **Priorities for the next year**

VDRC-Nepal and its technical team will provide technical and monitoring support continuously to enhance the technical, managerial, and marketing capacity of VMFs/ LRPs as well as HFPB group representatives. Several capacity building measures will be planned and undertaken towards this end. Major priorities of year 6 will be sustainability of VMF network, LRP, VMF and HFPB group through linkage and coordination with government and non-government bodies working on agriculture sector. For next year following quantitative targets are set:

- Saving, Credit and Group Management Training – 10 events
- 10-days Local Resource Person Development Training- 6 events

3. **CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS**

A. **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

In terms of gender, VDRC-Nepal provided equal opportunities in program implementation at all levels, i.e. staff, trainer, and participants. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in three key sets of capacity building intervention, namely 92% in Saving Credit training. The participants in the training were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both DAG and Non-DAG groups.

B. **Public Private Partnerships (PPP)**

Public Private Partnership is core element to sell surplus Agri products and supply of inputs for production. Many districts are exploring and putting efforts to connect VMFs/ LRPs with private sector to address their problems. In this restriction to movement situation PPP had started promotion of digital technology named “Krishi Guru” with intention to provide knowledge on crop production key practices like cultivation practices, intercultural operation and disease pest management. VMF in different district had adopted this technology but had network and internet has been issues in some districts.

C. **Emergency Preparedness**

As per norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness was followed by VDRC-Nepal in its office as well as staff locations that included provision of fire extinguishers, data security, and go-bags.

4. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. Safety and Security

No issues on safety and security experienced during the year. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts especially during critical times, e.g. during local level elections. Staffs were oriented and shared required materials on prevention of COVID- 19

B. Human Resources

All 18 full-time budgeted staff positions were deployed at program districts and Center level including HFP Marketing Specialist (1), MER Officer (1), HFP Marketing Officer (14), Admin and Finance Officer (1) and Office Assistant (1).

All 18 full time positions maintained by VDRC- Nepal, (1- HFPMS, 1-MERO, 14 – HFPMOs, 1 – Admin & Finance & 1 – Office Assistant) continued in Year 5.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed, specifically in preparing banners and power point presentations for training events in the program districts.

D. Finance and Operations

Suaahara-II HFP Marketing component is being managed by VDRC-Nepal from several locations. A shared block within its' central office complex in Gairidhar-8 houses 2 administrative staff. Likewise, three staff (HFP Marketing Specialist, Program Officer – HFP Marketing, and MER Officer) work from Suaahara-II central office and 15 Marketing Officers are deputed to the program districts. VDRC-Nepal Kathmandu liaison office is used by the Executive Director, members, trainers and consultants on intermittent basis in connection with the project assignment.

A total of NPR 17,384,728 (94% of obligated budget) has been utilized during December 1, 2020 to July 31, 2021.

NARRATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

Subrecipient: Vijaya Development Resource Center

Subaward No.: 21854-01-224

Report Type: Quarterly

Reporting Period: January 16, 2021- 15 April, 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

After achievement of second quarter target third quarter was planned to complete all the budgetary activities which could be disturbed due to upcoming local election. Six saving credit and group mobilization training in Bajhang, Dadeldhura, Dailekh, Dolkha, Myagdi, Taplejung and three batch of local resource person development training one batch of poultry and two batches of vegetable were accomplished in this third quarter of year 6. Beside this regular follow-up to VMF, LRP, HFP Group members, through phone call were also conducted during this quarter. Given the nature of the program, it focused on marginalized groups and increased female participation and they were targeted in most of the capacity building events. Female participants have had overwhelming majority in the capacity building intervention e.g., 91% in Saving Credit training and 73% in Local Resource Person (LRP) training. Again, the participants in these events were found from different caste/ethnic groups representing both disadvantages group and non-disadvantages groups.

All 14 full-time budgeted staff positions were continually deployed in the program districts. These filed staff are responsible for IR 3 activities implementation in filed and support district team on other yearly DIP implementation.

In terms of financial performance NPR. 24,789,972 has been utilized as of March 31, 2022 of which NPR. 34,181,459 was obligation.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3: IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS BY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Outcome 3.2: Increased linkages to KISAN/PAHAL services and to markets for selling surplus homestead food produces

- **Summary**

During this quarter, six events of saving credit and group mobilization was planned completed with active participation 91 percent of female participants from HFPB groups and three batch of local resource person development training one poultry and two batch of vegetable was conducted. Beside this HFP/M officer were engaged on their mandatory like tele counseling of VMFs, LRPs, HFP group members, Linkages of VMFs/LRPs with Private sectors and Govt services for marketing and input supplies, profile update of VMFs, quality assurance etc. and also few other budgetary activities of IR 3 like 2 days NSA training, 1-day NSA review, VMF refresher, VMF network etc. which had good impacts to the beneficiaries were conducted. During this period HFP/M officer had also completed 3 events of NSA review, 3 provincial level workshops was conducted also 2129 seed packets were distributed, 19 VMF network meeting conducted. HFP/M officer were regularly motivated and distant support as well as in-person support through filed visit were provided from central level through virtual/in-person meeting monthly on their issues and challenges.

i. Key Accomplishments

Activity 1: 5-days Saving, Credit and Group Management Training

Six events of Saving, Credit and Group Management Training was accomplished in Bajhang, Dadeldhura, Dailekh, Dolkha, Myagdi, Taplejung where 134 participants were trained (refer Table 1). This training focused on increasing group management capabilities in the community including basics of savings, credit, group mobilization, group registration and account keeping. As the groups are mostly led by female, they formed the majority (91%) of the training participants with only 9% male.

Table 1: Saving, credit and Group Management Training Gender

District	Female	Male	Total
Bajhang	23		23
Dadeldhura	25		25
Dailekh	15	10	25
Dolkha	20		20
Myagdi	20	1	21
Taplejung	20		20
Total	123	11	134

In terms of participant category (Table 2), the training saw majority (43%) of the participants from HFPB group member and VMF. Likewise, others category followed by 1000 days' (13%) and FCHV (1%).

Table 2: Saving, credit and Group Management Training Affiliations

Categories	Frequency	Percent
HFPB group member	58	43
FCHV	2	1
VMF	57	43
1000day's	17	13
Total	134	100

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group Bahun/Chhetri represented almost three-fifth (60%) of the participants followed by disadvantaged Janajati (26%), Dalit, Gurung/Thakali, Muslim, Newar and other caste 10%, 1%, 1%, 1% and 1% respectively.

Table 3: Ethnicity of Saving credit and group management training.

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Dalit	14	10
Brahmin/Chhetri	80	60
Muslim	1	1
Newar	2	1
Disadvantage Janjati	34	26
Gurung/Thakali	2	1
Other	1	1
Total	134	100

Activity 2: 10-days Local resource person development training

Three events on local resource person development training on poultry rearing and commercial vegetable production was accomplished. 65 participants from 31 district were trained (refer Table 4). This training focused on improve poultry rearing practices and income generation through commercials poultry farming as well as improved vegetable production technology for income generation through commercial production, provide the business idea and train on business plan preparation along with technical knowledge of poultry rearing as well as commercial vegetable production.

Table 4: Local resource person development district wise distribution.

District	Female	Male	Total
Achham	2		2
Argahakhanchi	1	2	3
Baitadi	1		1
Bajhang	2		2
Bajura	2		2
Banke	1	1	2
Bardiya	1		1
Bhojpur	1		1
Dadeldhura	1		1
Dailekh	2	1	3
Dang	1		1
Darchula	3		3
Dhading	1		1
Dolakha	1	3	4
Doti	4		4
Gorkha		1	1
Gulmi		2	2
Jajarkot		1	1
Kapilvastu	1	1	2
Lamjung	2	1	3
Myagdi		1	1
Nawalparasi	2	2	4
Nuwakot	3	1	4
Rasuwa	1		1
Rukum	3		3
Rupandehi	2		2
Rusawa	2		2
Sankhuwasabha	1		1
Sindhupalchowk	4		4
Surkhet		1	1
Syangja	1	1	2
Total	46	19	65

In terms of participant category (Table 5), the training saw majority (77%) of the participants VMF and remaining of the participants were from HFPB group members (14%) and 1000days (9%).

Table 5: Local resource person development affiliation

Categories	Frequency	Percent
HFPB group member	9	14
VMF	50	77
1000 days	6	9
Total	65	100

The training brought together almost all caste and ethnic groups. Yet, the caste group (Bahun/Chhetri) represented almost two third (48%) of the participants followed by Disadvantaged Janajati, Dalit, Non-dalit terai caste, Newar, Gurung Thakali, Muslim, and other caste 21%, 14%, 5%, 5%, 5%, 1% and 1% respectively.

Table 6: Ethnicity of Saving credit and group management training.

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Dalit	9	14
Muslim	1	1
Brahmin/Chhetri	31	48
Disadvantage Janjati	14	21
Newar	3	5
Non-Dalit Terai Caste	3	5
Gurung and Thakali	3	5
Other	1	1
Total	65	100

ii. Challenges and Opportunities

While working with government staff for sustainability time availability of them was challenges while if we could manage their time before their program or activities started or during the planning process we can convince them to allocate or design nutrition sensitive agriculture activities.

iii. Lessons learned

Conduction two batch of local resource person training parallelly helps to manage time efficiently as well as cross learning of both vegetable and poultry participants increase their understanding.

iv. Priorities for the next quarter

Following are the planning activities and targets for the upcoming quarter:

- Saving, Credit and Group Management Training – 4 events (80 person)
- Local resource person development- 3 events (60 person)
- Other regular field activity (mandatory activities)

2. CROSS-CUTTING COMPONENTS

A. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

During the phone follow up HFPM Officer also discuss on importance of GESI with

VMF/LRP/HFPBG member. Regular follow up with GESI champion VMF couple. And inclusion with higher priorities of marginalized people especially 1000 days mother in program activities.

B. Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

HFP/M officer regularly coordinates with district stakeholder in demand creation side and supply side through private sector. HFP/M officers from 10 district obtained private sector development training in Banke. Few districts had conducted half day egg promotion and vehicle branding campaign with aim of increasing in demand of egg for consumption.

C. Emergency Preparedness

As per the norms of USAID and HKI, required emergency preparedness is being followed by VDRC - Nepal in its office and as staff locations.

3. OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

A. Safety and Security

No issues on safety and security experienced during this reporting period. Staff have been advised to maintain low personal profile and adhere to the official code of conduct in the assigned districts especially during critical time.

B. Human Resources

All 18 full-time budgeted staff positions are deployed including HFP Marketing Specialist (1) HFP Marketing Officer (12), Province Agriculture Coordinator (2) Admin and Finance Officer (1), MER Officer (1) and Office Assistant (1) Capacity building of HFP Marketing Officers was carried through virtual meeting in DHIS-2 and other MER reporting tools and regular monthly meeting were conducted with sharing key achievements from districts which helps in cross learning.

C. Communications, Branding, and Marking

Suaahara II branding guidelines (especially, Suaahara logo and power point and email signature templates) as available from Suaahara II central were followed.

D. Finance and Operations

Suaahara-II HFP Marketing component is being managed by VDRC-Nepal from several locations. A shared block within its' central office complex in Gaidakot-8 houses 2 administrative staff. Likewise, two staff (HFP Marketing Specialist and MER Officer) work from Suaahara-II central office and 2 Agriculture Province Coordinators and 12 Marketing Officers are deputed to the program sub-offices.