



Monthly Update – January 2010

## USAID/Nepal Flood Recovery Program

*Build Back Better*

USAID-NFRP works with flood-affected communities and NGOs throughout the Terai to increase farmer productivity and income, rehabilitate and develop small-scale community infrastructure, improve awareness of sanitation, nutrition, gender and protection issues and strengthen local organizational capacities through enhanced participation of youth and vulnerable populations. This 24-month activity started in June 2008 and is implemented by Fintrac Inc., a US agribusiness firm in partnership with METCON Consultants and a vast group of local NGOs and subcontractors.

Visit [www.usaid-nfrp.org](http://www.usaid-nfrp.org) for more information.

### UPDATE ON PROGRAM EXPANSION

**Livelihoods & Income Generation:** The LIG program is now fully operational in the 32 new program worksites of Sunsari, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts. More than 2,200 farmers are participating in the 18-month training program which will support the enhanced productivity and marketing of high value crops on 490 hectares of demonstration farmland over three crop cycles. Field technicians now regularly visit the 348 farmer irrigation clusters to provide hands-on, learning-by-doing training following the same curriculum and methodology that USAID-NFRP applied to previous worksites. Irrigation supply specialist, seed vendors and agricultural inputs suppliers have all been selected and coordinate with LIG staff on a daily basis.

In January, nursery management training was completed for a total of 2,074 participants, including 819 women (39.5 percent). Many nurseries are now producing High Value Crop seedlings and all nurseries will be established and functional by mid-February. The crops selected for the first crop cycle include wheat, maize, onion, cucumber, bitter gourd, pumpkin, ridge gourd, cowpea/long bean, okra, chili, tomato, radish, coriander and sponge gourd. More than 9,400 kg of seeds (mostly hybrids) have been distributed to all farmers who have shared 15 percent of the cost. Nursery management and IPM kits were distributed to all the farmer groups in January.

USAID-NFRP is effectively coordinating resources with Sunsari's Ground Water Office through its ADB-funded irrigation supply program, which has committed to the installation of 172 of the program's targeted 192 shallow tube well sites. More than 85 percent of the installation is complete; however the distribution of diesel pumps is slower than expected and has caused minor delays to the program. The LIG team in Kailali/Kanchanpur is set to complete the installation of the targeted 156 shallow tube wells by early March.

**Infrastructure:** Pre-feasibility studies were completed for 25 projects; technical designs and final cost estimates are underway. During this second phase, infrastructural support will focus exclusively on productive projects (ex. bridges,



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

**Madhu Sudan Rajbansi a worker on Chinkandas Chaudhary's farm, shows a cauliflower plant ready for harvest, Joshipur VDC, Kailali, Western Region**

roads and irrigation systems) that will complement USAID-NFRP's investments in livelihoods and income generation activities. Construction begins the first week of February.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

January marked the successful completion of the 86 infrastructure projects initiated by USAID-NFRP 18 months ago. The projects included 35 culverts, 28 flood control systems, 14 school buildings (also usable as shelters during the monsoon season), four surface water irrigation systems, two road improvements, two school bathrooms and a health post. The final project completed was a small bridge in Janakinagar in Kailali district that directly benefits 2,150 households.

Due to USAID-NFRP's support, Terai communities have received to-date \$1,822,777 in rural infrastructure investments. Beneficiaries total more than 57,000 households and projects have generated 127,219 person-days of temporary employment, amounting to over Rs. 30 million in paid wages.

## LIVELIHOODS & INCOME GENERATION

The second crop cycle ended in January and the third cycle is now in progress. Now that participant farmers have reached state of much greater economic stability thanks to USAID-NFRP's support, they will no longer continue to receive subsidized inputs in seeds, nursery supplies and IPM. This will also allow the LIG program to evaluate the sustainability of its investments by measuring how many participant farmers continue high value crop production by purchasing inputs on their own. Although land coverage for this cycle is not yet complete, to date an estimated 460 of the targeted 480 hectares have committed to continue high value crop production.

**Irrigation:** All groundwater irrigation sets remain operational and are routinely maintained. Farmer groups have reported additional benefits by selling irrigation services to neighboring farmers for Rs. 200 per hour. The additional income to beneficiaries assists in the maintenance of the sets and provides an unintentional added source of income.

**Seed & Nursery Management:** A supplementary amount of 3.74 kg of seeds of flood-resilient crops were distributed to demonstration farmers whose land was damaged by flashfloods in October 2009. Nursery management training for the third crop cycle started this month in the West and was completed for 892 farmers (569 male, 323 female). The Central region will begin the same training in February.

**Soil & Production Management:** Farmers have reported using a number of lessons learned during the second crop cycle such as the production and use of organic compost from farm waste and the use of plant nutrients as a form of developing sustainable soil fertility. Field technicians perform regular follow-up visits to reinforce farmers' skills in soil preparation and transplanting; application of manure, fertilizers and nutrients; and basic farming skills including staking, hoeing and weeding.



**Gabion Box, Basbani village, Joshipur VDC**



**Farmer shows visitors tomatoes on his demonstration plot, Thakurdwara VDC, Bardiya**

**Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** The 59 flood-affected demonstration farmers completed IPM training in January. Field technicians continue to provide technical support on the prevention, control, identification and treatment of pests and diseases in the field. Farmers are showing an increased commitment to IPM throughout the productive process and as part of their overall farming practices.

**Marketing:** Farmers were provided technical support in forming market linkages and in establishing a system of information collection and dissemination through local FM radio, SMS and information boards. Strategic market sites have been identified and are being established with program support.

**Income:** Production volumes this month amounted to 1,017 tons harvested from 94.6 hectares, generating Rs. 12,467,995 in net incomes.

**Field Monitoring & Crop Assessment:** Field technicians have been trained on using different techniques to monitor and assess crop status, farmer performance and results. To date, field technicians have noted that these techniques are useful in gauging where a farmer may need re-orientation training or reinforcement to continue properly.

## STRENGTHENING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

60 community-based organizations, 60 disaster preparedness and mitigation committees, and 60 youth clubs were trained with a total of 360 participants. Group members were trained in leadership, communication, organizational management and community development. In December and January, six district-level Sharing & Envisioning workshops were completed for 240 representatives from 120 organizations. Each participant was able to share his/her experiences with peers from other program-supported VDCs to discuss local development challenges, create important linkages and plan future leadership activities. USAID-NFRP has supported each group's initiatives by providing furniture, promotional materials and supplies to setup offices and initiate activities. Some of have reported achievements by formally registering their organization with the District Administration Office and organizing community development activities to generate resources.



Woman with her Improved Cooking Stove, Jaimanglapur, Central Region



A Disaster Preparedness Workshop where community members were trained on flood safety awareness and response and rescue tactics.

## SANITATION & NUTRITION / LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS / WOMEN & CHILDREN

The Social Inclusion program is now winding down for all original program worksites. The SHN program completed a total of 249 training events including 120 awareness trainings and 120 refresher trainings for 3,057 adults and children. Major achievements include the independent construction of private toilets by most participants; and the domino effect that the trainings have had on neighbors within their communities.

1,229 households installed Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS); 60 training events were organized to train participants in the repair, maintenance and correct operation of the stoves. To ensure sustainability and long term use, one person per VDC worksite was trained in the use, installation, maintenance and repair of the stoves.

1,243 summer and 1,290 winter demo-kitchen gardens covering 83 hectares of land have been established. Each 330 m<sup>2</sup> kitchen garden produces nutritious vegetable crops and 8,612 planted saplings of guava, papaya, pomegranate and aonla. Many households have also reported selling surplus products for a small profit.

## PROTECTION OF WOMEN & CHILDREN

A total of 60 women were provided four weeks of training-of-trainers sessions to facilitate 60 BLOP centers and 60 REFLECT centers in their respective communities. This was followed by 4,320 orientation training sessions for 1,395 adolescent girls in subjects such as personality development, reproductive health, human trafficking and the choice for better futures. REFLECT sessions on gender issues and literacy were attended by 1,403 women and 324 men. Parents of the adolescent girls have been orientated on the various subjects.



**Carla de Castro & Kamal Shrestha talk to a group of girls and their teacher participating in the BLOP sessions, Kailali, Western Region**