



"We are happy on getting such information. Its is new to us and we find it reliable and applicable in our field."- Farmers

» 8 villages in Dhanusha received the services

» Total 79 weather based agro-advisories and 34 general messages were delivered during the period of 3 months

» Messages covered information for four crops-Wheat, Potato, Lentils and Summer paddy

Usefulness and reliability

- » Over 80 per cent of service receiver found the text messages easily readable, clearly understandable and very useful for their farming activities as they were delivered on time .
- » It has been observed that weather related information provided based on forecast data are most reliable based on responses from farmers.

Knowledge and Economic Benefits

- » Around 31 per cent perceived gaining new knowledge whereas only 7 per cent believed in increase in their economic level
- » Proper use of messages has resulted in increase of income from NRS 250 up to 1500 and above
- » Around 69% of farmers reported increase income by more than NRs 750 from cultivation in a hectare of land, with increase in yield, reduction of crop loss and saving of extra costs of fertilizers application, untimely application of water, timely application of insecticides as well as from the postharvest management.

Diffusion rate

The regular farmers receiving the services are found sharing the information with other farmers and nearby neighbors residing in nearby wards and VDCs. The sharing ratio is observed to be generally 1:5 and up to 1:20 is also reported.

Willingness To Pay

Over 65 per cent of farmers showed willing to pay NRs. 5-10 per month for subscribing such messages while 27.9% reported the service worth paying around NRs 10-15 per month

Study Team

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Building Strengthening Generation and Dissemination of Climate Based Agro-advisories Service to Smallholder Farmers in Nepal

Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) has initiated providing weather based agro-advisories services to smallholder farmer in Dhanusha district in support of USAID/DC. Potential of ICT use has been explored in linking the rural farmers to the expertise in dealing with climate related risks in agriculture in Dhanusha district of Nepal.

PROJECT CONCEPT



Climate change and climate variability pose the great unprecedented risks and challenges in agricultural system, particularly to the livelihood of smallholder farmers. Further, prevalent weak agricultural extension services and limited supply driven approaches of providing climate information have compelled them to sustain their self-subsistence livelihood relying on timeworn coping strategies. These necessities the urgency of generating, and disseminating farmer friendly climate services for smallholder farmers. For this, an efficient mechanism of Agro- advisory service based on reliable and trusted sources and expertise is required. Climate information and advisory services offer great potential to inform farmer decision-making, improve management of climate-related agricultural risks, and help farmers adapt to such changes and achieve stability in agricultural production in terms of quality and quantity. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can play a pivotal role to assist farmers to deal with their farming problems and to transfer new agricultural technologies and ideas resilient to climate change.



Goal and objectives

The project envisions experience sharing and creating linkages with different institutions/organizations for scaling up climate services to smallholder farmers in Nepal.

Objective 1: Enhance the institutional capacity for creating user-friendly agro-meteorological advisories

Objective 2: Establish and enhance appropriate ICT dissemination mechanisms

Objective 3: Empower smallholder farmers to utilize agro met-information

Identification of existing gaps in agro-advisories, and understand the perception of farmers on climate services

Developing mechanisms of dissemination of agro-advisories through ICTs

Sensitizing smallholder farmers, women and disadvantaged groups through roving seminars

Workshop and training on utilizing met data and information for developing agro-advisories

Piloting of agro-advisories dissemination through ICT (SMSs, Agro-bulletin)

Exposure visits of the smallholder farmers to India

Goal and objectives

Study was piloted in two VDCs-Sinurjoda and Bananiya VDCs of Dhanusha district, Southern Terai districts of Janakpur zone in the Central Development Region of Nepal.

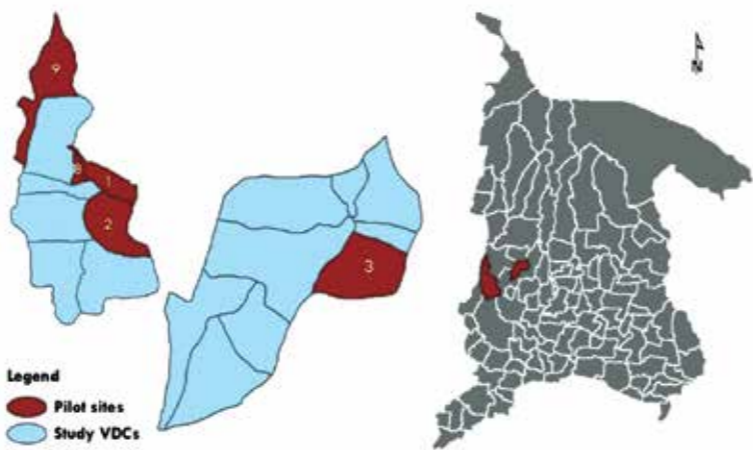


Figure: Map showing pilot sites in Dhanusha district

Beneficiaries

Four active farmer group, 20 farmers from each, were selected as beneficiary farmer who received the weather based agro-advisories services.

Number: 100 Farm households

Categories: Marginalized, women, socially excluded small holder farmers

Our Approaches

Bridging the gap (Experts to Farmers)

Collaboration with relevant line agencies (NARC and DHM) and private for mechanism development through consultation

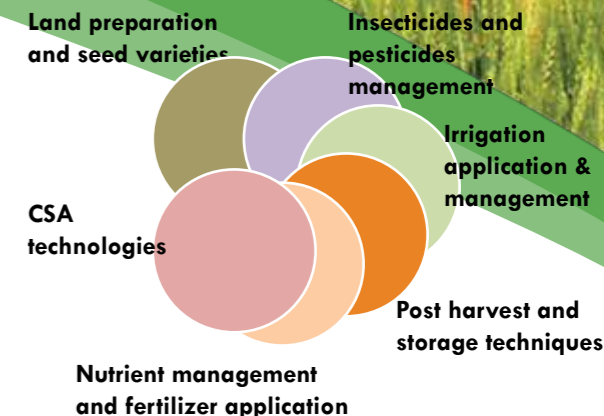
Engagement with the farmer group to ensure maximum diffusion of information within pilot areas

Target small farmers including women (25%) creating equitable environment for discussions and decision making

Capture dynamics of system with close interactions and feedbacks collection through toll free no.

Content focused on general and climate linked agro-advisories (utilizing current and forecast weather data)

Effective and timely dissemination of information and action through different ICT tools targeting different user groups



Agro-portal
Agro-portal is a web-based repository system to collect all weather and agricultural related information and to disseminate the information to the farmers.

Mobile
SMS services in the form of short messages in Nepali language were prepared and disseminated.

Agro-bulletin
Weekly agro-bulletin, containing same content as given in SMS including paste and forecast data was prepared every week and distributed to every targeted 100 farmers.

Toll Free no.
It was provided to farmers as free NTC service to get their feedbacks on messages and to solve any farming challenges.

