

PROJECT SRIJANA

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF MIGRANT YOUTHS

Quarterly Update

SUMMARY

This is the third quarterly update of Project SRIJANA. In this report, interventions up till December 2021 have been covered. The major achievements of this reporting period are: Annual review workshop held in Nepalgunj to review the progress so far and evaluate the future work plan, annual progress report with year end key results, and field monitoring conducted by Cordaid team in Jumla and Bajhang.

ANNUAL REVIEW WORKSHOP



MAJOR MILESTONES

ANNUAL REVIEW WORKSHOP

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

REALIGNMENT OF YEAR 2 ACTIVITIES WITH TOC

FIELD MONITORING CONDUCTED BY CORDAID IN BOTH DISTRICTS

The annual review workshop was conducted in Nepalgunj, Banke from 14-15 December 2021, to review the progress made in year I and revisit year II work plan with the SRIJANA project TOC as the main basis. Cordaid, UMN and INF, presented the project progress, issues and challenges. One of the most important outcomes of the review workshop was re-orienting and reinforcing the project teams - with a focus on job creation through local enterprises at ground level. In the third year, both partners have planned to focus on the linkage, coordination between local government, financial institutions for increasing the business volume of migrant returnees.

Participants also aligned the completed activities with our original project TOC, to find out where we are in the change process. The challenges and lessons learnt were reviewed against the assumptions we made at the start of the project. After this activity, it was realized that some activities were not conducted as per the original change pathway and some activities were conducted earlier than foreseen. Action point were agreed on to steer the project back in line with the original pathways. Full details in the Annual Progress Report and Annual Workshop Report.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

Challenges:

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, the project could not implement all planned activities in Year 1 as smoothly as hoped. The local government enforced health and safety protocols, which limited movement and banned larger gatherings. So, some activities remained incomplete and hence the budget was underspent.
- Natural disasters (unexpected flood, landslides) damaged economic infrastructures such as crops, croplands, livestock, sheds, watermills, irrigation schemes, enterprise workshops, touch bridges, RCC bridges, roads blocking and damaged connectivity. These challenged entrepreneurs supported by the project access the local markets and affected their productivity and revenue.

Lessons learnt:

- Using the ToC as a monitoring/reviewing tool was very effective and that assessment allowed the project to get back on track in terms of following the original pathways of change.
- Capacity building of field supervisors, social mobilizers in some areas is a necessary investment - primarily in areas of facilitation skills, entrepreneurship development, guidance for the business plan, documentation and report, input monitoring and verification of disaggregated data and information.
- Collaborate and align our market linkage development related activities. It needs to align with Rural municipality plan and priorities (such as collection centre operation and management), so that targeted group's entrepreneurship initiations can be sustained, and youths' employability is enhanced.
- Focus is needed on identifying and supporting the correct market-led vocational skills training activities to retain migrant returnees. For e.g., vocational trainees on house wiring are now earning good money in their own villages.

FIELD VISITS CONDUCTED

The Country Manager and PMEL Officer of Cordaid conducted field visits to Bajhang and Jumla for on-site monitoring in November. Key sites visited in Bajhang

- Eight cases (enterprises) monitored (furniture, tailoring, electrician, grill workshop, Barsha Pump, hotel, poultry & goat farming)
- Provided technical inputs and feedback (operational plan, maintenance guideline and sustainability of technology)
- Discussion with government representatives and project team regarding the field visit and findings

Jumla

- Five cases (enterprises) monitored (vegetable, goat, poultry, honey & mini-tiller support)
- Provided inputs and feedback to field team for business & enterprises model and follow up and field monitoring.
- Coordination meeting conducted with local government regarding their reflection about project interventions



DHANRAJ CREATING LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dhanraj Nepali (30) worked for 10 years in India in a grill factory. He lost his job and returned to Nepal last year during COVID-19 pandemic crisis. When he returned to his village, he was at a loss as to how to make an income. His joint family of 10 members were dependent on his income, and with every passing day, he grew more desperate to find a livelihood option at home. Nepali having left for India in his teens, did not consider himself suitable to get into agriculture.



Fortunately, the rural municipality, offered him an opportunity to train as a welder. This opportunity became a turning point for him. It encouraged him to think about

needs and service demand of grill workshops in Thalara. At the same time, RM started to implement its electrification program in the village. He put his all efforts and finally he established 'New Thalara Grill Workshop' after completing the legal process. He got loan support of NRs. 4 lakh, 50 thousand from local financial institution but the sum was not enough to purchase all the necessary equipment. During this period, he approached Project SRIJANA for support to get his business off the ground. After physically verifying his needs, as well as analysing the demand of grill services at the local level, the team assessed that it was a feasible opportunity. Project completed all the processes including getting recommendation from the respective ward office, after which Nepali received equipment support including- digital weight machine, grinder machine, , hand drill machine, and welding machine. These additional equipment helped him run his workshop at full capacity. He shares, "I use this hand drill machine as it is light and easier to carry to my working sites. I am making good money using this machine." Nepali's monthly transaction is upto NRs. 1 Lakh and is earning a net profit NRs. 35,000 per month. He has employed 3 migrant returnee youths in his workshop on a regular basis. They are being paid NRs. 15 thousand per month in total. Other 3 youths are being engaged in daily wages base as per requirement.

HONEY BUSINESS GIVES RENEWED HOPE

Lank Khatri is reliant on seasonal migration to India to support his family. Every year, he used to travel to India for 5 months during the lean period, to work as a daily labourer and bring additional income. Income from farming alone was not enough to sustain his family of 7.

After COVID-19 hit, he could not travel as usual and living conditions became difficult for his family. Under Project SRIJANA, he was selected for a training on bee-keeping and was selected to attend a 3 day long training on beekeeping. He also received input support to start his first hive. When his hives started doing well, he added another 7 hives to his total. His bees are doing well, and last September, he took out the honey and processed it, producing 12.5 kgs of honey and earning NRs 15,000 from it.

Since this business is going well, he has added 100 new empty hives. His family is also very supportive in bee keeping, and hopes that beekeeping might become a permanent solution to seasonal migration.

