



ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

Himalica Pilot Project

Udayapur, Nepal

Building the resilience of highland communities
by improving livelihoods



CEAPRED



Project funded by the
European Union



Overview of Himalica

The Support to Rural Livelihoods and Climate Change Adaptation in the Himalayas (Himalica) initiative is a demand-driven programme financed by the European Union (EU) and managed by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). The programme supports vulnerable mountain communities in the Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH) in mitigating and adapting to climate and socioeconomic changes.

The expected results of Himalica are:

- The capacities of national and regional stakeholders in dealing with livelihood development, more sustainable and efficient use of natural resources and the protection of the environment in the HKH region are enhanced.
- Poverty among mountain people is reduced through increased resilience and the unlocking of new livelihood opportunities, and through the promotion of more equitable approaches.

Himalica pilot sites in Udayapur



Pilot projects in vulnerable areas are a key component of Himalica. Under these pilots, community-specific interventions are designed in collaboration with local partners and communities to improve the resilience of mountain women and men.



What we are doing

Designed as part of the Himalica programme, the pilot project is being implemented in Udayapur district of Nepal in Triyuga municipality (wards 7 and 8), Rauta village development committee (VDC) and Saune VDC by the Center for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) together with ICIMOD.

The expected outcomes of the pilot are:

- i) Increased incomes for target households through improvements in productivity and the vegetable and spice production systems, the strengthening of vertical and horizontal linkages, and the reduction of post-harvest losses.
- ii) Enhanced resilience of local stakeholders in dealing with the effects of climate change and other risks through community based micro planning around climate change adaptation and management, private sector engagement, and improving access to market information and business services.

The sites are located along the road corridor at elevations ranging from 350 m to 1,400 m. Seasonal vegetables grown at higher elevations have an offseason price advantage in the plains, while vegetables grown during the main season at lower elevations have a price advantage in the mountains. The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are groups that are in most cases economically active or can potentially become so with access to appropriate technical support. From the inception of the project, focus has been placed on leveraging the seasonal market advantages between Solukhumbu and Udayapur districts.



The key interventions of the pilot include demonstrations of climate resilient agricultural practices (e.g. resilient nursery establishment), effective and efficient use of water, maintenance of soil health and organic production methods through the promotion of biocomposting and the use of biopesticides ('jholmol'), crop management in line with weather trends, capacity building of local institutions, strengthening farmers' groups and cooperatives, and facilitating linkages among actors along the value chain to maximize income for producers.

The pilot is also supporting enterprise development, with a focus on creating an enabling environment for the sustainability of small businesses throughout the value chain. A first

step in strengthening linkages between farmers and traders is the introduction of a mobile information system, which provides market, weather, and crop-related information. Strengthening enterprise development and business planning skills will help local communities secure access to financing needed to upscale production and business in each node of the chain.

The pilot has also helped build connections between farmers' groups, cooperatives, other enterprises, and financial institutions to encourage the commercialization of the agricultural sector. The establishing of linkages with local vegetable traders and the provision of market assurance have encouraged farmers to expand commercial vegetable production in line with market requirements. Farmers' field schools and hands-on trainings are key instruments to promote sustainable practices among local farmers and to enhance their ability to develop micro-plans, diversify livelihoods, and adapt to changes.

What we have done so far

The initial results of pilot interventions are encouraging. Capacity building activities, technical support, and constant field level mentoring have encouraged farmers to take up vegetable farming as a lucrative alternative livelihood option. So far, 474 households – this includes a 65 per cent representation of women – have participated in the pilot. After the interventions, a total of 620 tonnes of vegetables have been harvested from 56 hectares of land, generating NPR 11.4 million (USD 10,700) in revenue. In the first half of 2016, each farming household generated an additional income of NPR 19,000 (USD 180) on average, which is significantly higher than their income from the same period the previous year.

Potential for outscaling/upscaling

The technologies and good practices tested under the project are expected to be outscaled and upscaled by concerned stakeholders, with whom CEAPRED is maintaining strategic cooperation. These can be applied in similar agro-ecological zones elsewhere in Nepal and other countries of the HKH region by national and development agencies.



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