

# Farmer to farmer training of Improved Agroforestry Systems and Entrepreneurship Development

Nepal is experiencing serious challenges on declining productivity and increasing food insecurity in recent years. As a result of which many rural youths are migrating to the cities and abroad (Malaysia, South Korea and gulf countries) for job. There is a shortage of active male labour force in most rural areas, which leave agricultural land terraces without proper use. In order to address this challenge, the EnLIFT project funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) facilitated Improved Agroforestry Systems and Entrepreneurship training in every year starting from 2013.



Photo 1

The first training was held in March 2013. A total of 36 leader farmers (six persons/site) known as Local Resource Persons (LRPs) were trained who trained other 181 farmers known as Local Research Groups (LRGs). The follow up training focusing on vegetative propagation and value chain of selected products was held for 27 LRPs in November, 2014 (Photo 1). 'Farmers training farmers' approach focusing on home nursery was adopted for expansion of agroforestry action research activities in each site. The home nursery produced seedlings (400 to 500 seedlings/nursery) were not enough to cover the targeted households (300), and the seedling quality was also not good in all home nurseries (Photo 2). Therefore, medium sized nursery was started, which produced relatively better quality seedlings and in required numbers (5000 to 10000 seedlings/nursery) in 2015. In order to strengthen the business capacity of LRGs, a three days training on business

plan development of six priority products was organized in December 2015. During the training, focus was laid on preparing their own business plan of the selected six priority agroforestry products. As a follow up and dissemination of the learning from different training activities, LRPs were supported to provide trainings to other new LRG's members. The number of farmers who got training from LRPS was 239 in 2016/17 compared to the number of participants of 2013 (181) making a total of 420. However some LRGs were overlapping. Now a total of 363 households participated in Agroforestry action research activities as LRGs. Of the total households, 147 were female headed households, 109 were *Janajati* and 46 were *dalits*. At least six resource persons per site were recruited to train the rest of the farmers in each village. Despite men dominated society, women leadership was highly acknowledged, where more than half were female resource persons (RPs) to facilitate farmers' to farmers training.

## Description of major three training events



Photo 2

The three main training courses include (1) Improved Agroforestry systems and value chain (2) Agroforestry priority products business plan preparation and (3) Improved Agroforestry Systems and Entrepreneurship development. These are discussed below:

## 1. Improved Agroforestry System and value chain training



A five day training program was conducted for 27 Local Resource Persons (LRPs) (12 from Kavre & 13 from Lamjung district) at Bode, Saraswotikhel, Bhaktapur on Nov 24 - 28, 2014 (Photo 3). The main purpose of this training was not only help generating income and employment opportunities to participating farmers through agroforestry but also support to reduce pressure on community forests for fodder and forage, and fuel wood as well as to improve food security of farmers. The general objective of this training was to develop local farmers' resource for cultivation of selected agroforestry species that support food security. The major focus of this training was to promote fodder trees and grasses on abandoned agricultural lands and terrace risers with the objective of increasing value chain of milk and meat products. This training integrated the value chain information of 10 agroforestry commodities identified as a priority and potential products in six EnLiFT action research sites through series of discussions with local farmers and LRPs.

Both theory and practical sessions were held for each of the species selected at Saraswotikhel. Besides technical sessions, review and discussion on participatory action research, and integration of three action research themes (AF, CF and UUL) were also held. The training was quite enriching and refreshing to all of the participants. The training participants were able to share their experiences on collaborative action and learning and its link to selected species cultivation, marketing through value chain prospective, business planning and entrepreneurship development (at least half of participants could express what they learned in

the training) in coordination with various local and district level line agencies. The participants committed to act according to their action plan developed at the end of the training for nursery production, plantation and marketing of agroforestry products. The participants also became familiar with pro-poor enterprise and entrepreneurship development model, and business plan preparation and its application to selected agroforestry products based enterprise development and management. The participants gained knowledge and practical skill on nursery techniques of selected agroforestry species, its management and seedling transplanting in the field, its care and management, and harvesting, cleaning, storage and marketing through cooperative as a value chain prospective. A total of 27 participants were from different ethnicities, Brahmin/Chhetri (18), Janajati (7) and Dalit (2), of which 9 were female and 18 were male (Chart 1). Despite our efforts, the training was dominated by Brahmin/ Chhetri and male participants.

## 2. Agroforestry Business Plan Preparation Training

Training on business plan preparation based on selected priority agroforestry products (Table 1) was conducted at Bode, Bhaktapur on June 13 to 15, 2015 (Photo 4). The general objective of this training was to make training participants capable in developing business plan of selected agroforestry products for income and employment generation, and food security.

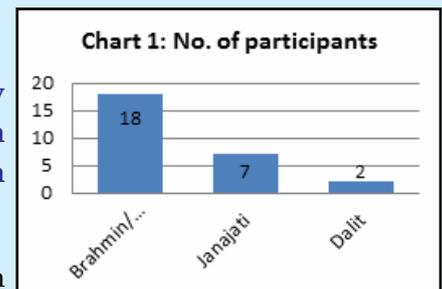
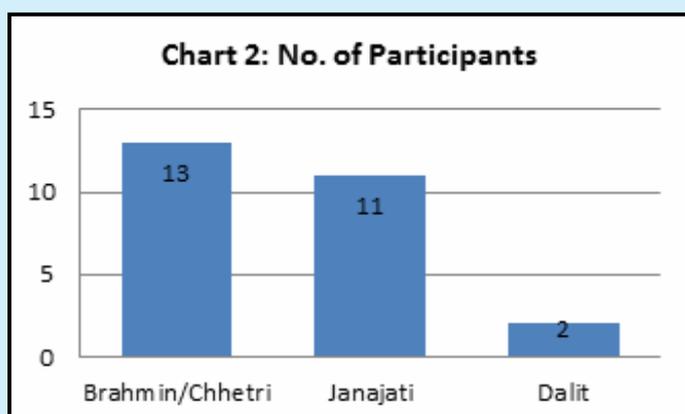


Table 1: Identified Products

S.N.	Action Research Sites		Identified Products for business plan preparation
	District	Research Sites	
1.	Kavre Palanchok	Chaubas	Cardamom based agroforestry
		Dhungkharka	Tomato and dairy based agroforestry
		Methinkot	Ginger and goat based agroforestry
2.	Lamjung	Dhamilikuwa	Banana, black pepper and diary based agroforestry
		Jeeta Taksar	Banana based agroforestry
		Nalma	Round chilly and goat based agroforestry

The training content covers topics such as knowledge and skills required for entrepreneurship development, entrepreneur and characteristics, role of LRPs in enterprise development and management, enterprise and its types, selection and prioritization of enterprise, business plan and its importance in enterprise development and management and contents of a business plan. At the second half of the second day, each of the groups prepared and presented their own business plan.

There was an active participation of all the participants (total 26 participants) including women and disadvantaged group members of whom 14 were female and 12 were male. The participation from Brahmin/Chhetri (14) and Janajati- indigenous community (11) is almost same (Chart 2). All six groups prepared their business plan of the selected products. Finally, training participants identified coordination and linkage as a crucial part of AF business plan implementation, which should be focused to improve the livelihoods of women, poor and dalit households. In terms of gender and indigenous communities' participation, their participation was better than before. This is the result of the deliberate motivation of the project.



### 3. Farmer to Farmer training on Improved Agroforestry System and Entrepreneurship Development

Farmer to farmer training on agroforestry practices and entrepreneurship development was conducted for all LRGs in all six sites. This training mainly covered two modules (establishment of improved agroforestry systems) and agroforestry business enterprise development. Various methods of training facilitation were adopted in the training that include group discussion and presentation, role play, games, stories, field visits, showing flipcharts, posters and session summary by the facilitators.

#### Objectives

The main objective of the training was to increase the institutional capacity of participant farmers for the promotion and adoption of agroforestry options and for increasing market access and enterprise development around agroforestry products and services.

**Learning objectives:** At the end of the training, participants will have increased their capacity to

1. Select appropriate agroforestry options and learn skill on seedling production and agroforestry plantation establishment and management,
2. Develop the skill required for production and use of organic based fertilizer (e.g. bio-char) in agroforestry farms and
3. Plan for, establish and operate agroforestry business enterprises.

This training was facilitated in all six sites by involving LRPs as trainers. A total of 239 farmers received this training locally with backstopping support of the NAF trainers. Female participation was higher than male in all sites except Jita Taxar (Table 2). The training package was pre-tested by

respective LRPs and NAF trainers in all sites and corrections made accordingly. The cultural practices and cultivation methods, disease and insect pests and marketing of all priority products were reviewed and revised the documents based on experiences of LRPs and LRGs during the training. Training manual is available at Nepal Agroforestry Foundation.

Table 2: Participants of the Farmer to Farmer training

Site	Female	Male	Brahmin/Chhetri	Janajati	Dalit	Total
1. Dhamelikuwa	22	17	18	13	8	39
2. Nalma	23	15	0	25	13	38
3. Jita Taksar	15	25	33	2	5	40
4. Dhungkharka	32	18	12	38	0	50
5. Methinkot	25	12	27	7	3	37
6. Chaubas	25	10	32	0	3	35
Total	142	97	122	85	32	239

### A glimpse of Farmers Training Farmers in six sites



**For further information:**



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