

INTERIM REPORT ON TAWAL GOAT PROJECT:

Income Sources, Social Change and Future Development

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(Bimala Tamang with her goats)



(Bimala Tamang's goats)



(Kannchi Tamang with her goats)



(Kannchi Tamang's goats)

**Prepared for NAFA, English Family Foundation, Hilly Region Development Club (HRDC)
and Tawal Community Members**

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Nepal is constrained by poor local economic conditions, poor national governance, and global economic conditions impacting on essential item commodities. Since 1999 NAFA has been assisting Tawal and surrounding remote villages with small-scale infrastructure and development projects. A community development approach focuses on understanding individuals as part of a community and on building on the capacity of the community to address the social, economic or political challenges facing its members. The aim of community development is to assist the people to improve their own community by undertaking autonomous collective action. The majority of Tawal residents are subsistence farmers, with basket selling as a primary source of income for approximately 50% of people (Setterlund & Vuong, 2011).

The focus of this report will evaluate 10 women's experiences of their participation in a goat rearing and breeding project funded by the English Family Foundation as part of the re-establishment of the Pasang Chowk Agricultural Cooperative following a devastating earthquake in April 2015. It is important to keep key stakeholders accountable to the funds invested within the NAFA community projects. The following evaluation will include an analysis of records of sales of products, numbers of farmers involved in Co-operative activities, a focus group with women who received goats and a demographic data collection of the women involved within the goat-rearing project. At the completion of the project, a final Evaluation Report will be provided to Agricultural Cooperative, the NAFA committee and the English Family Foundation. The Report will also be able to be accessed online via the NAFA website www.nafa.org.au.

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The rural villages of Tawal, Dusheni, Ladap and Tawal Besi are located in Ri VDC, Dhading District, Nepal and comprise approximately 450 subsistence farming households from the Tamang ethnic group, one of the most disadvantaged groups in Nepal. NAFA has been working with these villages for ten years through the local, volunteer self-help organisation – the Hilly Region Development Club (HRDC) to build capacity, and improve education, health, and economic wellbeing. The Co-operative was set up to enable farmers to pool their resources to grow higher value cash crops, up-scale their animal raising, spread innovative farming methods and provide a savings bank facility to all farmers in the area. The community initiated establishment of the Cooperative by the HRDC in late 2013 is a major outcome of the capacity building process supported by NAFA in the past seven or eight years in particular. The projects aims to assist 400 Agricultural Co-operative members in four rural subsistence farming villages in Nepal, to receive training in, and support for growing higher value cash crops and animal raising.

A women's meeting was held on November 2015, which created an open space for women to share their concerns on current living conditions, health and security after the Gorkha earthquake on 26 April 2015. The findings from a report conducted by Setterlund and Vuong (2011) elaborates on how members of the Tawal community advocated

for better agricultural training, irrigation, farming and revegetation of land. The report further identifies an increased participation of women to be included within the future project developments as the women believed they had “strength and knowledge that was not been utilized” (Setterlund & Vuong, 2011). In addition, the HRDC also felt that women needed more opportunities in all areas of life. A focus on improving agricultural production and crop diversification in subsistence farming communities can lift people out of poverty and to help promote recovery from disaster of the Gorkha earthquake.

1.2 THE PROPOSED PROJECT INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

NAFA has received a grant from the English Family Foundation (EFF) to help assist with the re-establishment of the Pasang Chowk Agriculture Co-Operative following the destruction of the Co- Operatives assets in the Gorkha earthquake. NAFA provided \$15,000 to rebuild Cooperative infrastructure (two chicken sheds, a caretaker’s house, water infrastructure and electricity. The English Family Foundation funding of \$23,106 focussed on a number of activities aimed at re-establishing the Cooperative. The goat rearing and breeding component of the project had an estimated cost of \$3,888. The project timeline projected an 18 months period starting from April 2016 to the end of 2017 and comprised:

- 1) Engagement of experts to do two on-site visits for training (and follow up) of Co-operative and other interested farmers in cardamom and coffee growing (and processing).
- 2) Purchase of 20,000 cardamom plants, 700 chickens, 11 goats and one coffee pulping machine
- 3) Training (and follow up) of 10 women in goat rearing.
- 4) Sending a local person for CTEVT accredited, veterinary JTA training – formal qualifications that would equip that person to advise on agricultural methods and animal rearing.

1.3 INTENDED BENEFITS:

1. Having cash crops to provide an income other than from bamboo basket making, currently their only cash crop.
2. Training in more efficient and effective farming techniques
3. Increased community knowledge, skills and capacity
4. Involvement of women in the training and cash income activities will in turn lead to better health for families and children

1.4 KEY STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT:

- A Co-operative sub-committee will oversee the project: Mr Kanchha Tamang – President of the HRDC - overall responsibility for roll-out of the project.

- Mr Balsing Tamang – innovative Dhuseni farmer and Co-operative Treasurer - will disburse funds and keep accounts.
- Mrs Yuna Tamang – A female member of the Co-operative – will ensure women’s involvement.
- NAFA president Rod Setterlund will monitor expenditure throughout the project period and will inspect and reconcile the accounts each year

2. METHODOLOGY AND GROUP CONSULTED:

An interpreter had to be used when collecting data and conducting interviews with the 10 women involved in the goat project. There were two main interpreters used when conducting the interviews however, as the majority of the women preferred to speak ‘Tamang’, their native language. One of the interpreters could fluently speak ‘Tamang’ and English therefore he was used for the majority of the interviews. The language barrier made it difficult to collect data; nevertheless it was possible to obtain relevant data required for a detailed evaluation. It was also important to be flexible and adapt to cultural considerations. This includes respecting cultural norms and adapting to presenting circumstances that can arise when collecting field data. An example is acknowledging the collectivist Nepali culture and the preference of the women wanting to converse in a group discussion before replying with an answer. This identifies how the women wanted to clarify information with the other women in the group.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Name	Age	Ward/ Village	Marital Status	Education Level	No. In Family	Family Overseas	Member In Co-op	Monthly Income (Rupees)
Ram Maya Tamang	35	Tawal Ward: 8	Married	No Education	5	1	Yes	5000 - 6000
Ganga Tamang	36	Tawal Ward: 1	Married	No Education	6		Yes	Subsistence Farmer 600
Damchi Maya Tamang	45	Tawal Ward: 8	Married	No Education	5		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband casual labor 5000 - 6000
Bimala Tamang	29	Tawal Ward: 8	Married	No Education	4		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband casual labor 5000 - 6000
Prem Kamari	32	Tawal Ward: 1	Married	No Education	4		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Basket making 5000 - 6000
Pokoshj/ Kanchhi Tamang	36	Tawal Ward: 1	Married	No Education	5		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband casual labor 9000 – 10, 000
Mangachom Tamang	48	Tawal Ward: 8	Married	No Education	7		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband casual labor 12, 000
Kaishya Tamang	50	Tawal Ward: 8	Married	No Education	5		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband is builder 12, 000
Asmita Tamang	30	Tawal Ward: 1	Married	No Education	5		Yes	Subsistence Farmer & Husband sometimes is a porter 12, 000
Deu Maya BK	36	Ri Ward: 8	Married	No Education	9		Yes	Subsistence Farmer – reports no cash income

4. RESULTS OF SURVEY AND DISCUSSION:

There are five major themes identified when evaluating the data collected from the interviews. As all the women participating in the goat project had no level of education it is evident that most of the women could not foresee themselves turning this project into a long-term business in the near future. They however, were willing to breed and sell the goats to the local area and surrounding villages as there is a high demand for goat meat. This identifies the potential market supply for goat meat within Tawal villages and neighbouring villages for the sustainability of the goat project to be successful.

4.1 Reasons for participating in the goat program

All the women who participated in the goat project came from a subsistence farming background or had a history of goat rearing. This identifies that all the participants have experience in agriculture, livestock care and breeding. Majority of the women stated that they chose to participate in the goat program to create financial income for their family as this new breed of goats could be sold at a higher price. Other women stated that they chose to participate in the program as they saw it was an opportunity to improve the livestock they already owned.

4.2 Kids produced by goat & commodity price of goats

As the goat program is in the early stages of implementation, it was evident that majority of goats had not produced any kids yet. One goat owner has received 2 kids from her goat whilst another had 3 but unfortunately they all passed away including the mother. Another 3 goat owners informed us that their goats are pregnant and were due to give birth in 2-3 months time. All the women reported on the proceeds of selling their goats. If there is a female goat it has to be given to the Co-op, which will then be given to another woman and if it is a male she is allowed to keep it and raise it to sell. Whenever a goat is sold, 100 rupees has to be given to the Co-op as part of their share. All women knew the commodity value of the goats as most of the women distinguished that a one-year-old healthy big goat can be sold between 10,000 – 12,000 Nepal Rupees (\$133-\$160). That is roughly 1 months income per household just from selling one goat.

4.3 What is easy and difficult about caring/breeding goats

It became apparent that grass feed for the goats was an issue affecting all the women during dry season. All women stated that during the dry season it was hard work and time consuming to care for the goats, as they would have to walk long distances to gather grass to feed the goats. Some woman also stated that if they became ill during monsoon season it was also difficult to care for the goats, as it required rigorous work to clean the goat shelter and gather grass for goat feed. Apart from this issue all the women stated that they enjoyed caring for the goats and it wasn't difficult to gather grass during monsoon season as they didn't have to walk far to collect grass.

4.4 Important information and skills learnt from the goat training program

It is evident that the women benefited from the goat training program as the women were able to identify something that they had learnt and to explain the importance of the specific skill or procedure. Several of the

women identified the importance of having a spacious goat shed to prevent the goats from hurting one another and building the goat shelter higher off the ground as it will help with the prevention of diseases and improve the overall health of the goat. Even though the women knew the importance of having a bigger goat shed most still hadn't built the infrastructure, though they were planning to build it in the near future. The women also elaborated the importance of cleaning the compost of the goat shed regularly to ensure the health and hygiene of the goats. Some women discussed the importance of gathering the compost over time to use as fertilizer on the crops therefore they were not cleaning the goat regularly as was taught from the workshop. Other women talked about alternative feed to make instead of feeding grass, especially during the dry season. The women, however, elaborated that it wasn't financially viable for them to be producing the alternative feed and that they were not making it as frequently as they should. Some of the women discussed that they continued to make a traditional mixture to feed to the goats called 'dhuro', which was made up of corn, rice, beans, wheat, salt and water.

4.5 What can be improved within the goat training program

The women spoke positively about the workshops, as they believed if they follow the advice from the training program they will be able to improve the health of the goats and with healthier goats they can be sold at a higher price. However, two particular women discussed how some of the information being taught was a little advanced for them to understand or relate to. One woman expressed that the information being taught at the training wasn't relevant to her level of understanding and it was difficult to apply the information being taught. Damchi Maya Tamang - *"I am not putting into practice what was taught at the training program as it is hard."* This can be correlated to the level of education, as all women have not had the opportunity to receive an education.

Participants Experiences of Goats Care:

Asmita Tamang - *"I love caring for the goats as I don't have much other work to do in the village".*

Kaishya Tamang - *"In the past I have sold goats and received good money so I wanted to try to breed this new type of goat which can be sold at a high price."*

Bimala Tamang - *"I have benefited from the goat training program and I want to implement what I have learnt."*

5. OTHER PRODUCT IDEAS ARISING FROM THE INTERVIEWS:

- One farmer expressed interest in beekeeping during the interview. Balsing Tamang later confirmed in a meeting with Cooperative leaders that he does beekeeping on a small scale but that training and proper beekeeping hives were needed to expand what he also felt was a good potential product for the local area.

6. LIMITATIONS:

- The lack of survey piloting was a limitation of this research as some of the survey questions were not relevant to the target group. In the future it is recommended to pilot the survey questions in order to filter out unrelated questions before finalizing the survey.
- The limited timeframe to conduct the interviews has influenced the quality of the data collected as it prevented the interviewer from developing a deeper understanding of the issues being discussed. If the evaluator has more time in the second evaluation, issues raised in this mid-evaluation can be further explored.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

By establishing baseline data and evaluating the progress of the goat project, the following recommendations have been developed in order to improve the sustainability of the project.

- 7.1 Firstly, it is important to address the grass issue, as this is the main source of feed for the goats. The women have all identified this to be the major challenge during the 6 months per year dry season. The possibility of the Co-op investing in irrigation facilities in order to water and grow grass closer to the village is currently under consideration for funding by NAFA. This will alleviate the need for women to travel such long distances to collect grass. Having easier access to grass will encourage the women to keep and breed more goats as more than half the women did not wish to have more than 5 goats due to the difficulty of collecting grass.
- 7.2 Addressing the goat shed infrastructure needs to followed up with the HRDC/Coop to ensure the women receive the shelters required to keep their goats in. The funding provided by the English Foundation incorporated a budget for the shelters however, Kanchha (President of the HRDC and Coop) has informed us that since the 2015 earthquake people have been displaced and are still relocating themselves. Once the women have re-established themselves they will be able to ask for financial assistance from the Co-op in assisting with the goat shed infrastructure. This should be followed up in the near future.
- 7.3 Follow-up training will need to be conducted to assess whether the information that had been previously taught is being implemented and to also reinforce key information. It is recommended that the next trainer be from the local area and to have an understanding the local issues facing the current goat farmers. The next training program should also be simplified and easy for the women to relate to as all the women have no formal education and found it difficult to understand certain aspects of the last workshop.
- 7.4 A second evaluation is required to assess the progress of the goat breeding and to compile a record of the sales of goats. This data will be useful in measuring the economic success and sustainability of the project.

7.5 The possibility of introducing a new agriculture product into the community consisting of bee keeping. This will encourage local farmers to invest in additional agricultural commodities as a means of earning income. Further research should explore environmental concerns and which species of bees could be introduced into the local area. Following on from this training in bee keeping would be needed.

Reference List:

Setterlund. D. & Vuong.N. (2011). *Report on Tawal Village: Income sources, social change and future priorities*. University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Healy, K. (2012). *Social work methods and skills: The essential foundations of practice / Karen Healy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.