



# Agro-met Advisory Services



Members of Ghumne Women Farmers Group having discussion on Agromet Advisory Services. Belaka Municipality, Udayapur

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## 1. Status of piloting and scaling of the model:

National Farmer Groups' Federation (NFGF), which led the piloting of the model in Belaka municipality, Udayapur is currently leading the model scaling with technical support from Local Initiatives for Biodiversity,

Research and Development (LI-BIRD). However, more and more local governments (LGs) are gradually taking on leadership role in the scaling process. About 64 climate vulnerable marginalized, small and women farmer groups are benefitting from this model.



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## 2. Collaboration with boundary partners:

NFGF constituencies at different levels are facilitating the model scaling process. Eight LGs have already initiated adopting the model. NFGF is in consultation with other LGs influencing them to include this model in their policies and extension system. Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) is updating the agro-met advisory portal, the main source of agro-met advisory service bulletin, every week. Agriculture Knowledge Centre (AKC) steps in as needed, while FM radio stations are supporting dissemination of agro-met information to larger number of farmers. The Belaka mobile app and CARE Nepal-designed mobile app-Krishi Path (Digital Marketplace) have the agro-met advisory service linked to it. Province 1 and 2 governments have pledged to incorporate the model in their policies and plans.

## 3. Model scaling phase:

While the model is gradually reaching the critical mass at farmers' level, LGs are in first mover phase in terms of adopting it. Large numbers of farmers are accessing agro-met information. LGs initiating the model scaling include Dhangadhimai municipality, and Bhagwanpur, Bishnupur and Sakhuwanankarkatti rural municipalities (RMs) of Siraha, Duduwa and Raptisonari RMs of Banke

and Katari municipality of Udayapur, and Siranchok RM of Gorkha. However, the scaling process has been impeded by the COVID 19 lockdowns.

## 4. Process adopted in model scaling:

The model was introduced to the LGs citing evidences of success from Belaka. After reaching an understanding with the LGs on model scaling their staff and local agriculture resource persons (LARPs) were trained in producing agro-met bulletin, drawing on [www.namis.gov.np](http://www.namis.gov.np) and other relevant mobile apps, websites and modifying them as necessary. They were also trained in basic agronomic practices; dissemination of agro-met advisory services by organizing farmer groups discussions, airing on local FM radios; collection of farmers' feedback and solving their problems. Arrangements were also made with rural/municipalities to put up agro-met advisory notice boards in their offices so that visiting farmers can receive information from the board.

## 5. The model's added value and key outcomes

### Farmers benefit from agro-met advisory services:

LGs have understood the importance of agro-met service for farmers and started incorporating it in their policies and plans. Belaka has brought into practice a mobile app with the agro-met bulletin linked to it,

developed production control system to track farmers' agricultural activities and needs and provide them necessary support. It has assigned one municipal staff and 19 LARPS for dissemination of the bulletin. Farmers find weather forecast in the bulletin very useful for planning their agricultural activities. This model has facilitated collection of farmers' feedback on the model's effectiveness and helped make adjustments for improvement. Farmers have increased knowledge and capacity to manage the risks and confidence to make long-term investment in cropping activities, which will result in increased production and their food security. The model has connected farmers with the AKC and Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) expanding their support network.

#### Households:

Farmers have increased knowledge of hydro-meteorological risks and appropriate agronomic practices. They have become more conscious of weather, appropriate types and timing of crops, and are able to take coping measures such as intercultural operations, pest management and improved post-harvest management, etc.

#### Community:

The LARPs make sure all the group members fully understand the information given in the bulletin, while the group members disseminate the information also to community members who are not in any farmer groups and those who cannot read and write. The community people turn to them when they need any information and advice. Some farmer group members have been trained as resource persons and are providing advisory support to the communities. With improved information and knowledge, the farmers are able to address minor problems in the field on their own. If new problem arises, they take it up with the municipal agriculture section and the AKC.

#### NFGF:

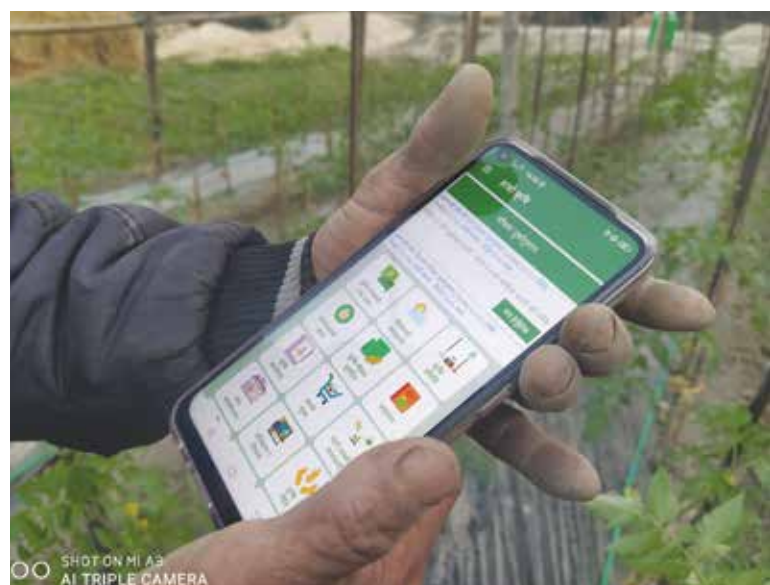
This model has effected change in NFGF's traditional extension system. Its campaigners use the bulletin to educate farmer groups about hydro-meteorological risks and appropriate agronomic practices, also by engaging FM radio stations. The campaigners in neighboring rural/municipalities, who are not engaged in this model, also use and share the advisory services to influence respective LGs and provinces to adopt this model.

#### Model's contribution to building climate resilience of landless and marginalized farmers:

This model has helped develop anticipatory capacity of small holder farmers to deal with climatic adversities and thereby, develop resilient farming system. Farmers have become more conscious of weather and appropriate types and timing of crops. They are taking adaptation measures such as intercultural operations, disease and insect management, use of bio-pesticides and fertilizers, climate-resistant crop varieties, improved post-harvest management, etc. They have been able to prepare cropping calendar and choose the best performing climate resilient varieties.

#### Model's contribution to improving inclusion and governance & selection of the right impact group:

The impact group-- most climate vulnerable marginalized, small holder and women farmers in the remote villages, whose food security and livelihood is under threat due to high climatic risks to agriculture and livestock--had no access to even existing services (for example: agro-met advisory services bulletin [www.namis.gov.np](http://www.namis.gov.np)) that would help them manage the risks. This model has demonstrated that vulnerable farmers in the country can be served well if LGs adopted this model. More than 60% of the farmer groups benefitting from this model are led by women. Effective coordination with LGs has helped create opportunities for farmers to share their issues and raise their voice collectively. This has led to the LGs becoming more aware of and responsive to the farmers' issues. Engagement of diverse stakeholders



Farmers using Agriculture App as a part of Agromet Advisory Services. Belaka Municipality, Udayapur

has made the model scaling inclusive and participatory. Increasing number of LGs have realized the model's importance for minimizing large scale commodity loss are gradually taking up the leadership for model roll out by incorporating it in their policies and plans.

## 6. Good practice and learning

### Good Practice:

As availability of useful information bears no meaning unless it reaches and benefits those, who need it most, this model gave meaning to [www.namis.gov.np](http://www.namis.gov.np). The NARC portal was far from the reach of the most vulnerable and needy farmers. The agro-met advisory services bulletin that draws on the portal has been an effective means of equipping vulnerable farmers with agricultural and weather information and enabling them to anticipate and manage climatic threats. The model has also facilitated connection between the impact group (rights holders) and the duty bearers such as the municipal agriculture and livestock section, AKC and NARC, and secured space for farmers to provide feedback and demand government services as per their needs.

### Learning

- Local government's ownership of a high impact model is imperative, if it is to be widely scaled out benefitting large masses and the impacts are to be sustained.
- Availability of localized weather information on a weekly basis helps farmers prepare themselves and plan their agricultural activities accordingly thereby averting or minimizing imminent loss and damage.
- LGs need to be convinced to collect weekly market prices of different agricultural produces from two to three major markets and provide this information to the farmers as part of the agro-met advisory services. This will increase the farmers' bargaining



Women member of Madhyawarti Home Garden Farmers Group with Agriculture Bulletin. The community use the bulletin to get information about weather forecast and agriculture practices. Belaka Municipality, Udayapur

power and their ability to sell their products to the markets, which will fetch them higher prices.



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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