

Project Newsletter

SUMMARY

The quarterly update on Project SRIJANA for the period from July to September provided a comprehensive overview of the project's progress and challenges. Key highlights included coordination with local government, beneficiary support, training programs, budget updates, emphasis on sustainability of the results, and new project staff hirings.

The project continued to support both new and existing beneficiaries through in-kind contributions and training programs aimed at building capacity and improving livelihoods. By the end of the quarter, approximately 50% of the annual budget is utilized.

Key Activities and Progress (Jul-Sep'24)

The overall project updates from Cordaid included the release of Project Newsletter Vol. 9, website enhancements, and ongoing project activities. New hires are being made to fill vacant positions that have been open for a month. Virtual meetings with partners UMN and INF were held by Cordaid to discuss agreed-upon results and reporting requirements within the project agreement.

The monitoring and reporting template has been revised, together with partners, to better compare activities against achievements. Additionally, the annual report has been updated to reflect project outcomes and annual targets. The baseline survey findings are currently being consolidated and validated, with the final report

to be shared soon.

Project Updates: Jumla

In Jumla, the project focused on youth re-skilling through capacity-building training. Out of the 14 individuals completing the "Start and Improve Your Own Business" training, 7 were trained in homestay management, and 2 in rabbit farming. Additionally, the project emphasized training in goat and sheep rearing, cow and buffalo farming, and support for starting farming businesses. These areas of focus will continue into the next quarter. Of the allocated budget of NPR 8.7 million, NPR 3.7 million (42.6%) had been spent by INF, with progress regularly monitored through joint evaluations and social audits.

Project Updates: Bajhang

In Bajhang, UMN has spent NPR 4.3 million, utilizing 44.95% of the overall budget of NPR 9.6 million. The key achievements include providing in-kind support to 363 beneficiaries, comprising 168 males and 195 females. They also received subsidies for poultry farming, dairy businesses, training for *Chyuri* (wild butter plant) herbal soap producing skill, oil processing mill operations, turmeric/nettle processing machines, modern beehives, and sustainable agri-farming practices based on

market demand such as fox tail millet, chilly farming etc.

Implementing partner in Bajhang plans for the next quarter include post-harvest training, water pump distribution for irrigation support, youth job training, support for business registration, and negotiation meeting of local government with banks to enable youth entrepreneurs' business schemes to access the financial investment.

Moving towards Sustainability

In the second phase of Project SRIJANA, significant progress has been made toward sustainability in both Bajhang and Jumla.

Bajhang

The local government i.e. Thalara Rural Municipality has allocated a matching budget of **NPR 919,992 (EUR 6,166)** in this current fiscal year 2081/82.

Youth employment initiatives are being successfully replicated with the local government matching fund through local implementing partner- PYS.

A total of 111 youth entrepreneurs are actively engaged in their micro enterprises, with 24 receiving subsidies through the local government's matching fund. Among them 9 women are included in weaving fiber clothes and sewing bags, 8 youths are supported with mini tiller for ploughing the fields, three are operating processing mill, 3 are running carpentry enterprises, and one youth is running meat fresh house.

These entrepreneurs are generating monthly revenues ranging from **NPR 3,333 to NPR 25,000 (EUR 22.32 to EUR 167.40)**, with an average monthly revenue of **NPR 12,047.92 (EUR 80.66)**.

Jumla

There are currently 27 youth entrepreneurs actively managing their business enterprises. The local government i.e. Kanakasundari Rural Municipality of Jumla has committed providing **NPR 160,000 (EUR 1,072)** to support the scale-up of one livestock-based enterprise within this running fiscal year.

These initiatives highlight a strong commitment to fostering youth entrepreneurship and enhancing local economic development in both rural municipalities Thalara, Bajhang and Kanakasundari, Jumla.

SRIJANA-II, Sustainability Status

Jan-Sep 2024

	Bajhang	Jumla	Total
Doing business (Beneficiary)	111	27	138
Involved in groups (Beneficiary)	514	93	607
Group saving (Number)	7	4	11
Business loan from groups (NPR '000)	2120	144	2264
Business loan from MFIs (NPR '000)	900	2050	2950
Beneficiaries linked with Local Govt. Subsidies	24	1	25
Placed in jobs (Beneficiary)	2	0	2

Success Story

A Disabled Migrant Youth Earning Through Rabbit Farming

Chandra Singh Thapa (23) is a migrant returnee youth from Kanakasundari Rural Municipality ward no. 2, Malikabota of Jumla. He was doing labor job in India but returned with a serious illness concerning to his legs. His mother has leg impairment by birth and can't move properly. So, his family with three members including his wife faced hand-to-mouth problem when he returned from India.

Except for four rabbits, his family had no cash income source alternatives at that time. Meantime, he got notice about project SRIJANA when he joined an agriculture disaster management group as a member. Then he received rabbit farming skill training and some kittens from the project after decision and recommendation made by the group as a

business start-up support. With this, he increased the number of rabbits up to 24 in total.

Chandra experienced that as the rabbits consumed local feed and grass, coupled with their rapid breeding cycle, rabbit farming was both sustainable and efficient. His recent sale of 16 rabbits for NPR 17,000 (EUR 113.93) demonstrates the viability of his venture, especially with local hotels relying on his supply for their guests visiting Rara Lake.

He has stock of 28 rabbits on his farm and has plans for expansion to grow his business further. His success not only supports his family but also fosters trust with his mother, showing that entrepreneurial spirit can lead to meaningful change in their lives.



Success Story

Youth Enters Poultry Business Value Chain

Dipak Thapa (27), from Thalara Rural Municipality Ward No. 1, faced major challenges due to lack of job opportunities in his village. To support his family, he worked as a dishwasher in a hotel in India. Despite the tough conditions, his income barely met the family's needs. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in him losing job and returned to Nepal, where he struggled to feed for his family of six members.

Dipak became hopeful when he came to contact with SRIJANA project, which aimed to create youth employment and income opportunities in his village area. He became affiliated as a group member in his community and was recommended for the poultry farming skill training conducted by the project. It encouraged him to start and improve a poultry business. He built a poultry shed with capacity of 500 chicken rearing and started poultry farming by borrowing money from his group members.

With the support from project, a local value chain system in poultry business has been started in and around Thalara. Local poultry farmers demand poultry inputs like chicks, feed, vaccines/

medicines with the supplier. Then the supplier orders the inputs from Dhangadhi markets and distributes as per their orders. The farmers produce and sell their chicken products at meat shops and these shops sell meat to local snacks shops, hotels, homestays and local customers. The project contributed to establishing a poultry inputs local supplier and linked farmers with the supplier. It also supported in establishing meat fresh houses and homestays for the market management of chicken meat products.

Dipak is one of the representative of poultry farmers who is linked with the supplier with one time subsidy support of NPR. 25 per chick. He was subsidized for 500 chicks for one lot only. Now he has been able to earn nicely from his poultry business. He earns NPR 100,000 to 125,000 (EUR 751 to 939 Appx.) per lot. His yearly turnover is five times this amount. He is fully employed in his poultry business and well established in the local market value chain system. He is happy and wants to scale up his business. He said-'Poultry farm business helped me to bring hope and happiness back to my life.'