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KNOWLEDGE-BASED INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION (KISAN) PROJECT

MONTHLY REPORT — APRIL 2013
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KNOWLEDGE-BASED INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION (KISAN) PROJECT MONTHLY REPORT

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INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

Winrock International received a contract from the United States Agency for International Development in Nepal (USAID/Nepal) for the Knowledge-based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition (KISAN) Project. This project is part of the Feed the Future Initiative and is the flagship food security project of USAID/Nepal. The Project's overall goal is to sustainably reduce poverty and hunger in Nepal by achieving inclusive growth in the agriculture sector, increasing the incomes of farm families, and improving nutritional status, especially of women and children. The project is implemented in collaboration with five Nepali organizations as subcontractors: Antenna Foundation Nepal; Development Project Service Center (DEPROSC); Center for Environmental and Agricultural Policy, Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED); Nutrition Promotion and Consultancy Services (NPCS); and Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH). During the first year, the project will work in ten districts in the Bheri and Rapti Zones of the Mid-Western Development Region. This multifaceted project will integrate agriculture and nutrition in order to increase agricultural production and improve the nutritional status of women, and children under the age of five. As per the contract (Section C.4.8.8.c.), Winrock is required to submit monthly reports. This second monthly report covers activities in April 2013.

A. SUMMARY OF COUNTRY CONTEXT

There was one strike on April 7 that occurred without incident.

B. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND MAJOR ACTIVITIES

During April, the Project staff continued on mobilization activities and beginning to plan for program activities.

Mobilizing Staff

Over the month of April, Winrock has prepared and submitted approvals for and hired staff. As of April 30, 20 people are hired. Four more are being processed by Winrock, and will be submitted for approval in the first week of May. See Table 1 for list of approvals to be submitted in early May, others will be processed later in the month. Table 2 presents staff hired in April. KISAN posted vacancy announcements for District Coordinator positions in late April. Short-listing of candidates is underway and interviews will be conducted in May.

CEAPRED informed KISAN on 28 April that Dr. Lakshman Pun will not join the program due to health issues. Dr Pun had signed a contract with CEAPRED in Mid-April and was due to join the program on 16 May. CEAPRED, with support from Winrock, is in the process of seeking a replacement.

The first Quarterly Report was submitted and approved by USAID.

TABLE 1. APPROVALS BEING PROCESSED AT WINROCK

| Name | Status |
|--|---------|
| Staff | |
| Janardan Nepal; Diwakar Dawadi; Raj Kumar Amatya; Nabaraj Neupane; | Pending |
| | |

TABLE 2. NEW STAFF ENGAGED IN KISAN

| Name of Staff | Title | Name of Staff | Title |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chandra Thapa | WASH Manager | Manohar Singh Sodi | Driver-Regional |
| Mona Sharma | Public-Private Partnership Manager | Prakash Bhatta | Office Manager - Regional |
| Khagendra Thapa | Assistant Finance and Admin Officer | Virendra Upraity | Agriculture Management Expert |

Next Month: District Coordinator positions will be finalized. Winrock will continue to work with subcontractors to hire their staff, giving priority to senior positions.

Partner Sub-Contracts

Winrock has signed subcontracts with CEAPRED, DEPROSC, NPCS, and NEWAH. Winrock is finalizing the subcontract with AFN in preparation for signing. The subcontracts are for the life of project, but Winrock only obligated the first four months of their budget to the subcontractors. In the next four months, project staff will work closely to develop detailed one year (now until September 30th) implementations plans, scope of works, and budgets.

Next Month: AFN’s subcontract will be signed in May.

Office Lease

The Nepalgunj office as well as the district offices managed by Winrock have been identified in four districts. WI HQ is approving the Nepalgunj lease, and expects to move into that office in first week of May. District Leases will be sent to WI for approval.

Next Month: Partners will identify the KISAN district offices by the end of June. There will be one KISAN office per district.

Procurement

Winrock's Procurement Officer, Erin Watson, travelled to Kathmandu to review KISAN procurement plans and to provide training to KISAN partners on USAID Procurement regulations. While in Nepal, she helped finalized Winrock and the partner's procurement plan. Staff finalized the Procurement Plan upon confirmation of equipment to be obtained from NEAT and submitted the KISAN (Winrock and partners) procurement plan to USAID/Nepal.

Next Month: After approval, staff will begin to procure items.

TRAININGS

During April, Winrock sent US based staff to help set up systems and processes. While there they trained Winrock staff and partners.

Procurement Trainings

Winrock's Procurement Officer, Erin Watson, travelled to Kathmandu to provide training to KISAN partners on how to develop Procurement Plans, and how to procure equipment as per USAID regulations. A half day joint training was conducted at the KISAN office, followed up with one-to-one meetings separately at all the five partner offices. She helped each partner develop their procurement plan and procurement procedures.

Contracts Trainings

Winrock's Contracts Manager, Kimberley Dixon, and Contracts Officer, Melanie Berman, travelled to Kathmandu to provide contracts training to Winrock field staff and partners' staff. KISAN paid for Kimberley's travel while Winrock covered their time and Melanie's travel expenses. A half day joint-training was conducted at the KISAN office, where they walked through the contract and emphasized key FARS and AIDARS. The contract specialists then worked with each partner to address specific questions and review best management practices.

START-UP-MEETINGS

Over April, the COP and staff have continued meeting with GON, Winrock partners, USAID/Nepal partners, and other donors working on food security and nutrition in the Midwest. Table 3 presents a

list of meetings/events in April, and their outcomes. Table 4 lists organizations KISAN staff met in the Mid-Western Region.

Winrock conducted the second partners' meeting at the KISAN office on April 8th. Senior representatives from all five partners attended the meeting; this will be continued as monthly meetings. This provided an opportunity for the COP to review expectations and deadlines with the partners. He reviewed the Management Plan, and plans for signing sub-contracts, and expected deliverables. Winrock staff emphasized that partners need to focus on the Year One activities such as staffing issues, finding offices in the districts, planning for the next few months and the status of the Nepalganj office. Winrock staff confirmed the Procurement and Contracts trainings dates (see Trainings below) and the need to develop a detailed scope of work up to September 30, 2013.

TABLE 3. KATHMANDU MEETINGS/EVENTS

| Organization | Dates April 2013 | Purpose / Outcomes |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| CIMMYT | 1 | Meeting with CIMMYT Team Leader to discuss CIMMYT/HMRP and KISAN approaches and activities, and possible areas of collaboration. |
| NEWAH | 2 | Meeting to discuss work plan outline for WASH, and the WASH Manager interview. |
| NPCS | 2 | Meeting to review and discuss the NPCS Contract. |
| USAID | 4 | ICT Meeting with FTF Nepal partners to share individual project ICT interventions, and learn about potential ICT-based resources and programs. This ICT collaboration meeting to be continued monthly. |
| IDE IPM/CRSP Team | 4 | Meeting at IDE with IPM/CRSP team to explore cooperation between KISAN and IPM/CRSP in disseminating tested and revalidated improved technologies developed by IPM/CRSP in Western Development Region. |
| DOA | 4 | Meeting with DG, DOA. Introduction, KISAN project discussions. |
| USAID | 5 | Discussions with Health Unit and H4L in regards to modifications with CO-COR. |
| CIMMYT | 5 | Agreement in regards to possible ICT cooperation. |
| GAFSP/NAFSP | 8 | Discussions with World Bank Senior Agriculture Officer on cooperation between KISAN and NAFSP. Discussion on locations and components. |
| AFN, CEAPRED, DEPROSC, NEWAH, NPCS | 8 | Monthly Partner Management meeting. Discussed Management Plan Dates; sub-contracts; deliverables; Year one focus; staffing issues; field issues; and other urgent |

TABLE 3. KATHMANDU MEETINGS/EVENTS

| Organization | Dates April 2013 | Purpose / Outcomes |
|---|------------------|--|
| | | planning issues. |
| USAID | 10 | Policy Planning and Learning meeting conducted by USAID's Bureau of PPL |
| Regional Agriculture Directorate, Birendranagar | 9-12 | Field travel at district level to various government offices to introduce USAID/KISAN project, including information about KISAN outputs, working areas and project period. KISAN's hope to coordinate with these offices was expressed; this was reciprocated by all. |
| USAID | 11 | Indicator meeting with Mission FtF team |
| CSISA, CYMMIT, IDE | 16 | FtF Projects Collaborative meeting. Introductory meeting with the other FtF projects to explore potential for cross-linkages and resource sharing. |
| DEPROSC | 17 | Focused on launching of KISAN programs in the field |
| USAID | 17 | Communications meeting with USAID communications team and the COR. This was an introductory meeting to discuss branding and general issues. The KISAN official launches and proposed launch format were discussed. |
| Winrock and Partners | 17,18 | KISAN Partners Procurement training conducted by WI Procurement Officer E Watson. Carried out as a half day joint training at the KISAN office, and followed up with one-to-one meetings separately at all the five partner offices. |
| Agriculture Development Strategy Authors | 19 | Identified how KISAN could support GON Agriculture Development Strategy. The draft Action Plan and Roadmap is a major undertaking of Government of Nepal, USAID, and other donors. |
| DOA | 20 | Focused on KISAN programs and potential to collaborate and coordinate with DOA Offices. |
| USAID | 21 | Review of USAID presentation. |
| USAID | 22 | CO, COR meeting with WI contracts manager, COP and others. Discussions on modification, USAID forward. |
| Winrock | 22-26 | KISAN Partners Contracts training conducted by WI Contracts Manager- K Dixon and Contracts Officer M Berman. Carried out half day joint training at KISAN office, and followed up with one-to-one meetings separately at all the five partner offices. |

TABLE 3. KATHMANDU MEETINGS/EVENTS

| Organization | Dates April 2013 | Purpose / Outcomes |
|--|------------------|---|
| MOAD/USAID | 23 | Official introduction of COP to MOAD. Meeting in regards to VDC selection. With PC. |
| Regional offices in Nepalganj and Surkhet KISAN and FTF Partners, | 22-27 | Interaction with the MPC /collection center officials, farmers groups on their willingness to participate in the testing and demo sites, and adopting IPM based cereal and vegetable production technologies and practices in cooperation with the FtF program. |
| H4L | 26 | H4L's Sharing Workshop in Nepalgunj. Part of H4L's Nepalganj orientation for staff and stakeholders. Good opportunity to present an overview of KISAN activities, and potential areas for collaboration with H4L. |
| DLSO | 30 | Discussions with DG and other key staff on modalities for collaboration and potential areas of cooperation. Focus was on issues around goat and poultry breeding and diseases. |
| NARC | 30 | Discussions with the DG, directors, other planning key staff on modalities for collaboration and potential areas of cooperation. Focus on seeds, availability and supply. |
| DFTQC | 30 | Discussions with DG and other key staff on potential areas of collaboration and cooperation. Focus on assessing nutritional status of foods, and quality control. |

The Change Agent Manager and Output 4 Manager traveled to Surkhet and Banke from April 9-12, 2013 and April 22-27, 2013 respectively to meet with various KISAN Partners, such as Regional and District Based Government Offices, IDE/IPM CRSP Team, and CSISA Staff. Table 4 shows the groups with whom KISAN staff met. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce USAID/KISAN project to these key stakeholders and identify ways to ensure coordination and cooperation with line agencies at district and regional levels. KISAN staff explained the project's seven outputs, geographic focus, and project duration. In addition, they talked to partners about possible proven IMP technologies to replicate into KISAN trainings. Staff assessed the willingness of the MPC /Collection Center Officials and farmers groups to participate in KISAN. Staff learned that all the organizations met were interested in participating in and collaborating with USAID/KISAN.

Table 4 DISTRICT AND REGIONAL MEETINGS

| | |
|--|--|
| Mehelkuna Cooperative and farmer groups, | Regional Agriculture Directorate, Birendrangar |
| District Development Committee, Surkhet | NARC, Khajura Banke |
| Cereal Seed Production Group | LSO, Regional Livestock Directorate |

| | |
|---|---|
| MPC /collection center officials, farmers groups | SADO Banke and with Plant Protection Officer |
| Regional Agriculture Research Center, NARC, Khajura | Plant Protection Officer; Gurans Krishak Samuha, MPC chairperson, farmers |

During April, WI staff worked on drafting the work plan and establishing a field presence start district activities. KISAN staff started detailed district assessments based on primary (field visits) as well as secondary (data from census) information. The Team has drafted initial criteria that will be used to select YI VDCs in the project districts. KISAN staff will consultant with district level staff and identify priority VDCs where there is significant population of households earning less than \$1.25 per day, where they have land, road access, have potential to increase production and productivity, where KISAN can compliment (but not duplicate) other projects/programs, where there is VDC interest, need for water services, and where malnutrition rates are high.

C. SUMMARY OF GRANT IMPLEMENTATION AND APPRAISAL

The grants program has not started. The Grants under Contract Manual will be provided to USAID 180 days after signing the contract as per section F.4 of the contract.

D. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND PROPOSED REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Winrock’s COP was formally introduced to the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture Development (MOAD) during a brief meeting on 23 April, 2013. This meeting was intended as a preparatory meeting for the official meeting previously scheduled for 26 April, 2013. That meeting was subsequently postponed by the Ministry.

Winrock and USAID have yet to have a substantive meeting about the program activities and MOAD priorities. The delay is causing some concern as USAID has asked us to ensure the KISAN work plan aligns with GON strategy and have the approval of the GON. Moreover, we understand based on discussions with USAID on April 23 2013 may consider modification to Component B. KISAN awaits confirmation in regards to contractual modifications.

Winrock has agreed to provide USAID a work plan of May 24, 2013. A draft work plan is being developed based on our current contract. Any significant changes to the approach may require us to postpone the deadline or make changes to this draft work plan. In the meantime USAID and COR are working with the GON to resolve outstanding issues.

E. STATUS OF PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The first introductory meeting with MOAD, scheduled for April 26th, has been rescheduled by the Ministry as explained above. The meetings with MOAD on 23 April, 2013, and on 30 April with Department of Livestock services (DLSO), Nepal Agriculture Research Center (NARC), and

Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC) have served to improve KISAN's relationships with the GON. The major presentation by the Mission Director to the MOAD planned for 6 May will we hope fully normalize relations with the concerned Ministries.