

BHAKARI

BUILDING HOPE ALONG THE KARNALI RIVER BASIN

FY22 Q1 Report

OCTOBER 1, 2021 – DECEMBER 31, 2021



ICAAP updating and review workshop, Mugu. The ICAAP process is updated and reviewed each year to identify and prioritize the vulnerable groups, households, infrastructure, and resources aimed to develop the action plan for the implementation to mitigate the risk and increase the food security of the working community

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Project Summary

Award Number:
72DFFP20CA00006
Start Date: September 30, 2020
End Date: Sept 30, 2023
Report Date: January 30, 2022
Total Award: \$15,000,000

1.0 Activity Summary

BHAKARI introduced Value Vouchers and Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) as an adaptation to the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) modalities. During this quarter, the program reached 2072 participants through value vouchers in 11 Palikas, specifically targeting the most vulnerable communities and households. The selection of the program and vulnerable households was through the weighted criteria that was developed based on the GESI first approach according to the context of the program areas. The deployment of the value voucher has been divided into two phases aligned with the available technological options: (i) with internet facilities, (ii) without internet facilities. The implementation of Phase 1 will be completed in January 2022, and is expected to reach 3,896 beneficiaries. The program is working on the most appropriate means of digital technology for the redemption of vouchers and has set up a real-time dashboard.

Prior to the distribution, the program conducted market and vendor surveys at the local marketplaces, serving the program communities to identify market capacity to fulfill the households' needs for a cash-based response. 119 local vendors in the identified markets were surveyed as to their preparedness to deploy value vouchers at the time of shocks or anticipated shocks. The vendor's information will also complement the Pre-Crisis Market Assessment which is planned for Year-2 of the program.

During this quarter, 926 farmers received agriculture inputs and 46 farmers received improved breeding bucks. The farmers are using the agricultural inputs for small-scale vegetable production and kitchen gardening, while the supported bucks will help start breeding services in their respective communities. Similarly, IPM (Integrated Pest Management) and a multipurpose nursery established last year were upgraded/strengthened targeting the winter season with additional technologies and materials, serving as a resource center for technology transfer. 164 farmers also participated in a kitchen garden training during this period, now taking the total trained in Kitchen Garden in BHAKARI to 624. As a part of front line staff capacity building, Climate-Smart Agriculture Technologies (CSA) and Resilience Design in Smallholder Farming System (RD) training were provided to Agriculture, NRM, and DRR technicians of partner staff. Similarly, 47 staff of Implementing Partners and the national consortium have been trained on key nutrition messages during this quarter and district specific key nutrition messages have been developed.

With the normalization of COVID -19 and release of restrictions, Q1 of Year II was started with new hope that there will be easy access to the field for conducting a feasibility study, detailed assessments and Survey of Water schemes in the BHAKARI working location. Starting with the capacity enhancement training of the engineering team of district IPs along with orientation to Program Coordinators, District Coordinators on the process of water component implementation and areas of intervention/input required from further coordination, collaboration and support, 13 Detail Project reports were finalized after conducting a feasibility study and detail survey. During the reporting quarter a number of coordination meetings were organized at federal, provincial and the local level to expand the level of coordination and collaboration with different stakeholders.

BHAKARI year 2 work plan was endorsed by the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting which was held on 3 December, 2021. PAC members also acknowledged the effort made by the BHAKARI team to achieve the progress despite the difficult geographical terrain and COVID context.

A collaboration workshop was organized between BHAKARI and the Karnali Water Activity team in Surkhet. The workshop was mainly focused on sharing each other’s work plans and identifying the areas for better collaboration. Both activity teams have agreed and identified some action points (Refer to Annex D) for collaboration and leverage the efforts to avoid possible duplication in implementation. With the support and presence of the USAID team, a “225” working group mechanism was established in Surkhet to expand the level of coordination, sharing and identify the areas for integration of resources among USAID’s implementing partners. Twelve different USAID implementing partner’s representatives participated in the meeting and BHAKARI’s Deputy Chief of Party was nominated to lead the mechanism until the new committee is formed.

Table 1: Total Number of Unique Individuals Reached

	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	Unique Participants
Participants (Male)	4003	1195	8419	13617
Participants (Female)	2886	1720	9262	13868
Total	6889	2915	17681	27485

2.0 Activity Outputs

Purpose 1: Increased Household level food access and availability

1.1 Cash Transfers

Community and household selection for value voucher: The program responded to the anticipated effect of food security in the communities, in particular to the vulnerable households facing recent and ongoing multiple threats such as a harsh winter, crop and asset loss due to the October rain and prevalence of COVID-19. These challenges were causing substantial reduction in crop yield, loss of livelihoods and limited income sources or job opportunities due to COVID-19 restrictions and the lockdown that led to potential harmful coping strategies. In total 3,896 households from 62 communities were identified based on the weighted vulnerability criteria: (i) Those hard hit by the drought; ii) Concentration of populations with more Dalits and other vulnerable groups including people with disabilities; (iii) Areas with more migrant workers and COVID cases; and

“Like they say, you can mend a torn cloth but you cant mend an empty stomach. The food supplies we have received will help us stay alive while give our children the opportunity to grow.”

Suriya Kami, Dailekh
Value Voucher participant

(iv) Areas prone to monsoon induced disasters. With the onset of off-seasonal rain during the month of October, the effect of the rain was also considered for selection of the communities. The weighted criteria was shared and agreed among the Community and Local Disaster Management Committees, thus identifying the qualified participants.

Districts	Communities	Proposed Caseload	Local Markets
Surkhet	11	745	4
Achham	9	541	4
Dailekh	8	833	6
Kalikot	16	732	12
Jumla	11	614	7
Mugu	7	431	3
Total	62	3896	36

Value Voucher Deployment: The first phase of the value vouchers in the markets with internet connectivity was rolled out this quarter. Electronic cards were used as vouchers to facilitate digital value vouchers to ensure participants' security and protection, real-time program monitoring and data management and reporting systems.

During the quarter, 99 local vendors including groceries, clothing stores, dairy shops, meat shops, fruits and vegetable shops from 17 marketplaces were oriented on the use of mobile phones for redemption of value vouchers while 68 enumerators were oriented on mobile application for participants' registration. The value voucher was deployed in 34 communities from 11 Palikas with outreach to 1,392 households from the 5 program districts:

District	Value Voucher Distributed as of December 2021	Value Voucher Redeemed as of Dec 2021
Surkhet	729	726
Achham	540	378
Kalikot	197	2
Jumla	196	195
Mugu	428	91
Total	2072	1392

The value voucher deployment is ongoing and will be completed by mid-February. The NFC (Near Field Communication) Card is envisioned to deploy value vouchers in the markets without internet connectivity during the second module of the value vouchers. NFC is used for short range transmissions which doesn't require regular internet connection for transmission. It's an offline application where the Internet connection is required to exchange data for synchronization to the system.

Partnership with Transfer Service Provider (TSP): Aria Technologies was selected as the TSP for deployment of value vouchers in the selected program communities including technical support to develop a real-time dashboard for participants and vendor data management and reporting. The value voucher participants were registered via mobile phones through the android application offered by the TSP to collect participant information related to vulnerability and household information.

Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP): Two wards, each in Surkhet and Kalikot were selected to implement SRSP as an approach to enable integration of humanitarian assistance with the Social Protection System to each of the most vulnerable populations. The program identified the additional vulnerabilities such as pregnant women within 100 days of delivery, people with disability Grade C and D, people with chronic illness, survivor women from domestic violence who are not in the social registry and who can be reached efficiently through cash transfers, either in anticipation of shocks or during the times of shock. The vulnerable households are identified in coordination with the Palika and Ward representatives while the program responds to the selected households at the time of disaster or anticipated disasters. The program aims to work with the local government on enhancing their capacity and systems on the anticipatory action. The identified households through this process can be efficiently reached during the time of action. Similarly, towards the end of year 2, the program plans to work on the SOP for the local government for the anticipatory action that will enable it to activate based on the defined trigger

Cash for Work schemes identification and prioritization: 24 CfW schemes, including seven DRR structural mitigation measures and 17 irrigation schemes, were identified throughout the program districts. The schemes will be further prioritized and selected based on the set criteria for the households and CFW schemes. The communities for Cash for Work schemes were identified based on the households and infrastructures affected by the post/late-monsoon flood during October 2021. In addition to the households and infrastructures affected by the October 2021 monsoon, other criteria were also considered; i.e. food and nutrition insecurity status, concentration of marginalized population, recurrent disasters in the last five years, communities identified as vulnerable by the local government, remoteness and concentration of COVID-19 cases while preparing the initial list for CfW. The CfW projects will start in February and are expected to be completed by the end of March 2022. The implementation of CfW depends on the COVID 19 situation.

Training on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA): 23 Social/Community Mobilizers and six newly onboarded CVA officers were trained on Cash and Voucher Assistance jointly by Aria Technologies, VIAMO and the program Emergency Team. The participants were oriented on the basics of CVA modalities with a deep dive into Value Vouchers, Cash for Work and Unconditional Cash Transfer modalities. As participant selection is one of the major concerns for emergency response, the process for participant identification and selection was clarified among the participants via interactive sessions and role play, where the major intention of the session was to reach the most vulnerable in coordination with government structures at Local, Ward, and the Community level. The social mobilizers were

oriented to sensitize the previous Cash for Work participants to conduct a second round of Post Distribution Monitoring through Interactive Voice Record (IVR) with the objective to validate the reports from the last PDM led by VIAMO.

Market and Vendors Survey: A household needs assessment was conducted through Key Informant Interviews (KII) with randomly selected households with the major objective to identify HH needs, capacity and coping mechanisms. The interview led to the identification of preferred commodities for the households in each community based on a transfer value of NPR. 10,350 (60% of Minimum Expenditure Basket - MEB was decided) as the transfer value for the value voucher. Following this, the program conducted local market and vendor surveys in the program communities to identify market capacity to meet households' needs. 119 local vendors in the identified markets were surveyed as a preparedness to deploy value vouchers at the time of shocks and stresses. The vendor's information will also complement the Pre-Crisis Market Assessment (PCMA) planned for Year-2 of the program. Currently the program is working with 104 vendors with 79 different commodities in the current deployment.

Districts	Local Markets	Surveyed Vendors
Surkhet	91	13
Achham	149	41
Dailekh	113	34
Kalikot	97	15
Jumla	88	10
Mugu	24	6
Total	562	119

Table 2: Total Number of Unique Individuals Reached with Cash Transfers

	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	Unique Participants
Participants (Male)	0	0	801	801
Participants (Female)	0	0	591	591
Total	0	0	1392	1392

1.2 Essential Complementary Activities

During this quarter, a national vendor as well as local vendors (local agrovets) were identified and contracted for agriculture input voucher packages distribution to project participants. The participants were selected based on the vulnerabilities of agriculture production due to access, land holding and land conditions. Vendors as well as project staff were well trained on using mobile applications (MC Vendor App and MC collector APP) for voucher redemption processes. The selected vendor, Karnali Agriculture Center distributed 926 packages of agriculture inputs to 23 local input vendors in six working districts. For this, vouchers were designed and distributed to individual farmers. By December, more than 79% of farmers had redeemed the vouchers and received agriculture input packages from the local input vendors (agrovets). The 21% delay in redemption was due to the delay in input supplies to vendors. Due to the snowfall, roads were blocked and inputs couldn't be delivered to the local vendors; however, we expect the remaining farmers to redeem the voucher by January 2022. Project staff are also providing technical support to those participants for the establishment of kitchen gardens using the Agri-input support.

Two additional farmers' groups were formed (one with limited access to agriculture land and irrigation and one with access to agriculture land and irrigation) in coordination with the ward office, rural municipality agriculture department and local lead farmers. The two groups were processed for the registration in the municipality office - Agriculture Department. BHAKARI now works with a total of 233 Farmers Group. The farmers groups' hold regular monthly meetings and have started savings and credit activities in their groups. This quarter, they were also oriented on their roles, responsibilities, and decision making of the group, highlighting the importance of GESI, governance and accountability. Two trainings related to group mobilization and management to lead farmers (leadership, governance, social audit) were completed in this quarter in coordination with the BHAKARI GESI team. The training highlighted the process of group meeting and the need for minuting meeting notes, proposal development, incorporating GESI in group management and meaningful leadership positions within the group. Altogether 38 project participants took part in the training (25 female/13 male).

During this quarter, three capacity building trainings for District Implementing Partners with participants from BHAKARI's cluster teams and partner staff were completed. Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) training to field staff (3 days), climate smart agriculture (CSA) and technology (3 days) and resilience design (RD) in smallholder farming system training (3 days) were provided to the Agriculture Supervisor, NRM/DRR Supervisor and DRR Officer from district IPs. After the training, field staff will carry out NTFP related activities at the field level including training, multipurpose nursery establishment, land allocation, plantation and NTFP collection, sustainable harvesting, value addition and marketing as well as incorporating the knowledge of CSA and RD during implementation of project activities at the community/field level.

During this quarter, six trainings related to small scale vegetable production using Kitchen Garden approaches, including post-harvest use/ consumption were provided to 164 project participants (F:108; M:56) focusing on winter season vegetables linking it with nutrition diversity for the HHs. Key

nutrition messages were also shared during the training sessions. Kitchen gardens, its design, major winter crops farming methods, nursery operations, insect pest management, crop calendars, wastewater collection and management, farm yard manure and compost management were the key topics discussed. After the kitchen garden training, 553 selected farmers were supported with agriculture inputs from the implementing partner for the establishment of kitchen/vegetable gardens in their yard. After seeing the vegetables growing in those selected farms, other farmers from the community are also expected to grow vegetables in their yards, either by sharing the seedlings among themselves or by procuring them from the vendor. Water schemes constructed in the communities were also supporting vegetable production.

With the purpose of improving local goat breeds, 46 high breed bucks (Boer; 75% and 87.5%) were provided to 46 groups in BHAKARI working districts. The bucks were handed over to an individual member selected by the group for rearing. The supported buck will provide breeding services to all households of the group. Documents required during procurement and distribution have been verified and are well documented/filed. A training related to improved small livestock production practices is planned for the coming quarter to support farmers for better rearing of their goats as well as breeding buck.

During this quarter, the IPM learning center and multi-purpose nursery were also upgraded/strengthened based on the seasonality and the needs of the farmers. Project participants from nearby groups, communities and districts are visiting those sites and are replicating the technologies demonstrated. The multipurpose nursery is serving as the resource center for quality seedling of vegetables, fodder/forage and NTFP species at local level.

Training on Key Nutrition Messages for BHAKARI staff, led by NTAG (Nepali Technical Assistance Group, BHAKARI's technical partner), was conducted at the regional level (Jumla) and district level (Achham and Dailekh) in this quarter. A total of 47 participants including project staff from the Jumla cluster, district coordinators, national partners and district IPs participated in the training. The training focused on providing nutrition messages as cross-cutting themes in different thematic areas while conducting program activities. During the training, the district team also prepared an action plan on how these messages could be integrated in the BHAKARI components using the different available community platforms such as Farmers' Group (FG), Water Users' Group (WUG), Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC). For example: a small session on key nutrition messages will be ensured while conducting capacity building activities of the FG, WUG and CDMC.

Table 3: Total Number of Unique Individuals Reached with Essential Complementary Activities (Agriculture, Livelihoods)

	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	Unique Participants
Participants (Male)	101	74	571	746
Participants (Female)	97	148	765	1010
Total	198	222	1336	1756

Purpose 2: Increased availability of reliable water resources.

During the reporting period, BHAKARI was able to identify vulnerable communities and prioritize productive water project demands based on ICAAP review and set community ranking criteria for year II. As per the demand, the team finalized a detailed project report of 13 water schemes. Among 13 water schemes, two schemes are canal irrigation, five schemes are plastic ponds, four schemes are irrigation tanks and two schemes are snow harvesting ponds. To finalize the 13 schemes, the engineering team conducted a feasibility study of 34 communities to identify potential water schemes. Among which, 21 potential schemes were deemed feasible and hence the detailed project report (DPR) for 13 schemes has been finalized and the remaining eight are under process. Coordination with the local government and other stakeholders is ongoing for the leverage purpose and to identify other potential productive water projects to implement together. After preparatory work such as procurement, development of community action plans, capacity building of water users groups, implementation/construction activities will be initiated in the following quarter. In this quarter the BHAKARI team worked with the WUGs to strengthen the post sustainability of year one activities.

To expedite the implementation of water schemes, a five-day training on survey, design, costing, use of design software, implementation and monitoring was conducted from 21 to 25 December, 2021 to the Engineering team of district implementing partners. 15 participants were oriented on preparing detailed project reports from the feasibility studies carried out at the field level. Program coordinators from implementing partners and district coordinators from BHAKARI also participated in the training and were oriented on the process of implementation and areas of intervention/input required from their side to execute the component activities.

Purpose 3: Reduce the impacts of natural disasters.

The Integrated Community Assessment and Action Planning (ICAAP) refresher training to the implementing partners team in all six working districts had a total of 124 partner staff including 28 female staff. The implementing partners teams were trained on an integrated community assessment process, tools and action planning forms and formats. After the ICAAP refresher training, the implementing partners team completed the ICAAP review and update process in 251 communities with the total participation of 6,880 (M:2,646;F:4234) community members. The ICAAP review and update process revisited the key natural hazards and climate change risks identified in year 1 ICAAP processes and updated it based on the current scenario and priorities. ICCAP processes have also accommodated information on local markets and financial service providers (FSP) to support cash and voucher assistance (CVA). Based on the selection and prioritization by the community, all sectoral interventions will be implemented in year 2.

Aiming to strengthen the capacity of District Emergency Operation Centers (DEOCs) in Jumla and Kalikot districts, the BHAKARI program has provided tools and equipment (basic furniture, solar backup systems, inverter, information display systems) to upgrade the function of DEOCs in both districts based on the needs identified and requested by the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC).

A Community Action for Disaster Response (CADRE) training was conducted for 22 (F:13, M:9) Task Force members during this quarter plan to develop them as first responders in emergency situations. The training was facilitated by the trainers who were trained under the Program for Enhancement of Emergency Response program (PEER). The training focused on understanding common hazards,

development of community response groups and incident command systems, household response plans, Basic Life Support (BLS), Basic First Aid and Triage, Dead Body Management, Fire and Water Emergencies, Basic Search, and Rescue techniques etc. The pre and post tests showed significant improvement as the average score of 18.36 marks increased to 48.90 in the post-test. On average, the participants' scores increased by 30.54.

Table 5: Total Number of Unique Individuals Reached with Essential Complementary Activities (DRR & NRM)

	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	Unique Participants
Participants (Male)	22	1121	4268	5411
Participants (Female)	26	1641	5258	6925
Total	48	2762	9526	12336

3.0 Programming Performance

A central level year 2 kick off workshop was conducted from 15-17 November with the participation of all BHAKARI staff including staff from the national partners. The objective of the workshop was to orient the second year Detail Implementation Plan (DIP) and guidelines of each component and platform for staff to get clarification on the intervention from the technical leads. The kickoff was also intended to discuss the major findings and issues found during the district Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) session that was done in September 2021. Also, some major discussion agendas included reporting timelines, plans and discussion for joint monitoring, effectiveness and efficiency of the program for the second year. Apart from that sessions on Sequencing Layering and Integration, CARM, Governance, Localization, Procurement, Finance, Compliance Partnership was also conducted.

Regarding the Community Accountability and Feedback Mechanism, both virtual and on the spot coaching has been provided to Partners' staff and Community Ambassadors on CARM. A total of 32 Billboards with accountability messages were installed at strategic locations of public places in each working district. Sensitization on feedback mechanisms is one of the built-in agendas for each distribution event, meeting, orientation and training.

The Annual Results Report was submitted to USAID at the end of October. A summary report of the ARR has been developed in both English and Nepali with the objective to share it with the wider audience including government stakeholders. The report has been finalized which will now be shared with wider audiences - including all Local Governments during year 2 endorsement, peer USAID agencies, MC Global, etc. Additionally, BHAKARI Management Information System (MIS) dashboard has also been updated and has been widely shared with the implementing partners with proper orientation.

Furthermore, the program is collaborating with local governments and partners to further leverage its resources for optimal impact of the program water schemes.

4.0 Challenges

The need for staff capacity building for partner staff on technical knowledge on different components as well as on the use of CommCare, Power-Bi came through very strongly in the previous two CLAs. Thus the first quarter of year 2 focused on providing refresher training, including an orientation on the Detailed Activity Implementation Guideline for year 2 to partner staff and frontliners; refresher training on all components were conducted this quarter. With this training, the partner staff are expected to have better clarity on activities for year 2 and how their activities support BHAKARI's ToC which will help them improve their performance in the coming year. However, this led to delays in field level activity implementation as most of the staff, including frontline workers were engaged in these capacity building trainings, but BHAKARI's Senior Program Team was very clear on prioritizing the different refresher trainings and orientations to partner staff and frontliners to ensure quality implementation in year 2.

Staff turnover in the Water component resulted in delays in conducting the pre-feasibility, detail assessment and preparing the Detailed Project Report as it took a while to hire and induct a new person who is expected to lead the water component.

Early snowfall affected road access to many communities in Mugu which delayed input voucher delivery and exchange and also impacted conducting planned training on Kitchen gardens and other on site technical support activities. Post monsoon rain during October caused massive flooding and landslides. It was during the harvest time of the paddy crops which is the major staple crop in Nepal. The rain has extensively damaged paddy crops in many parts of the country including in at least two districts: Jumla and Surkhet. It is anticipated to have a negative impact on the food security of the households adding more stress for poor and vulnerable households. The event has provided a number of lessons learned for the program such as (i) effective flow of Early Warning messages in the communities, and (ii) risk transfer through crop insurance etc.

One of the challenges during deployment of value vouchers observed was that the households that were registered and which migrated to India for labor were excluded from receiving assistance from the program, which led to the cancellation of their electronic cards. However, a substantial number of household migrations also indicated a coping mechanism of the vulnerable households. In our observations, we noted women from about 80% of the households with a member who migrated collected the vouchers as the next kin. This has provided us the lesson to issue cards in women's names.

The local market capacity in the remote locations to supply the commodities remained a challenge along with meeting the government compliance requirements. The program connected the identified vendors to other suppliers to smoothen the commodity supply chain. In addition the program plans to interact with the vendors and support them in government compliance.

The value voucher was deployed in the nearest market of the communities. However, in some cases the participants had to walk for hours or spend a good amount of money commuting to the market. This has provided lessons to the program to consider these factors and contextual issues and address them through practical approaches such as the provision of transportation topups to ease access for the vulnerable households.

5.0 Market Analysis

BHAKARI conducted a market and vendors assessment during the month of October in 93 local markets with 650 vendors including groceries, clothes stores, fruit and vegetable shops in the program areas to identify the feasibility for cash based response as an emergency response modality. The assessment informed the team that 75% of the surveyed vendors in Surkhet had a warehouse facility to stock the essential supplies followed by 64% in Dailekh and Mugu, 62% in Achham, 55% in Kalikot and 38% in Jumla. Likewise, over 90% of the vendors stated to have supply capacity for up to 200 customers a day in Surkhet, Achham and Dailekh; while 65% of vendors had supply capacity from Kalikot and 82% from Jumla and Mugu. Regarding restocking capacity, within two days, over 95% vendors from Surkhet, Achham and Dailekh could restock supplies whereas 82%, 85% and 54% of vendors from Kalikot, Jumla and Mugu respectively could restock supplies within two days.

According to the [mVAM Household Survey](#) conducted by WFP in October-November 2021, an upward trend in reliance on market purchases for household-level food sourcing was found, with more than 67 percent of households purchasing food from the market, while nearly 33 percent of food sources for household consumption was from their own production. Food stocks seem to be more common in provinces where the major source of household food consumption is their own production, such as Sudurpashim and Province 1. On the other hand, provinces where the majority of the population relies on market purchases for their household food consumption had comparatively lower food stocks.

6.0 Cross-Cutting Elements

GESI Training with District Partners: A GESI training was delivered to the three remaining district implementing partners in Achham, Dailekh, and Mugu. This two-day participatory training included all BHAKARI staff from the respective district partner and executive board and focused on foundational GESI concepts, the program's GESI First approach, and integration with the program's thematic components. Key concepts include gender, social inclusion, drivers of exclusion, vulnerability factors, masculinity, gender-based violence, protection and safeguarding, and common GESI terminology. Additionally, the findings from the partner's GESI assessment were presented, along with key recommendations to strengthen GESI policies and practices. 78 participants were part of these three trainings (44 women, 34 men), with 71% of participants demonstrating increased knowledge of GESI. This training is a key part of the program's GESI First approach, ensuring a common understanding of the importance of GESI as well as building shared ownership for GESI integration across the program.

16 Days of Activism against GBV: *"I will support applying an equitable approach in the case of women staff in my organization,"* shared Nira Kadayat, board Secretary/GESI focal person with WAC Nepal (Achham partner) during the annual 16 days of Activism campaign. As the 16 Days campaign is one of the program's selected "Celebration Days," the GESI team conducted awareness-raising activities within the BHAKARI team and supported district partners in leading activities at the community level. Internal activities included orientation sessions on the campaign and related issues, a poem competition, signature campaign, staff discussions, and quiz contests. External activities included a rally, street dramas, interaction program with GBV survivors, and speech competitions. The GESI team also collaborated with SBCC to design and deliver messaging related to GBV and

BHAKARI, such as the impact of GBV on food security and importance of inclusion in DRR practices, ensuring integrated messaging and awareness-raising.

Capacity building with social mobilizers: In order to support social mobilizers, BHAKARI's frontline staff, the GESI team developed a four-day training on GESI and community mobilization. The curriculum revisits several topics from the partner GESI training including the program's GESI First approach and integration with other program components, providing specific guidance for social mobilizers. Additionally, the training provides participants with relevant social mobilization, advocacy, and training skills, which were reinforced through practical exercises. The training was delivered to the 16 Surkhet cluster social mobilizers in December 2021 and will be delivered to the Jumla cluster social mobilizers as COVID restrictions permit. The training has proven effective, with more than 80% of participants from the December training scoring an 85% or above on the post-test. Anecdotally, social mobilizers shared that they feel more confident and empowered as a result of the training, and better equipped to work with program communities.

"GESI training is good for us to mainstreaming GESI in the community level. It's really helps us to integrate the GESI in the planning, implementation, and monitoring stages. I now know that GESI is not only female and male, but it relates to those persons who are out of government facility they can be like female, male, dalit, person with disability, Janajati, single women, children, elderly persons, and gender minorities as well. We felt that our program should have provided support to those persons who were vulnerable."

Santoshi Chaulagain,
Social Mobilizer, RCDC, Mugu

Safeguarding and Protection

training: The Safeguarding & Protection Officer delivered a safeguarding training to all program focal points designed to build the capacity of safeguarding focal points, develop a shared understanding of survivor-centered approaches, and strengthen safeguarding systems at all levels of the program. Following this training, focal points will conduct regular safeguarding refreshers and orientations for new hires, provide reporting resources to team members, and regularly update the community resource mapping.

Safeguarding referral booklets: A total of 7,500 booklets on referral mechanisms, including district-level emergency contact information, were printed and distributed to Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs), Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs), and community groups, as well as local government. Social mobilizers have since shared that this booklet has been a useful resource when working with communities, with community members referencing the booklets and expressing increased comfort and clarity on reporting channels.

ICAAP - GESI Tools: As part of the ICAAP process review in preparation for year two, the team provided review and feedback, including adding additional tools to capture key GESI considerations. Specific recommendations included: adding age and types of roles (productive, household, community) to the 24-hour workload, adding additional resource types to the analysis of access to and control of resources, and incorporating referral mechanisms into the GBV tool. The team also supported the refresher workshops and rollout of the process in program communities as a part of GESI integration.

Social Behavior Change Communications

Wanji game design workshop: Preparations for the Wanji game design workshop, communication/invitation to participants, preparation/sharing of agenda, etc. was done during this quarter as preparatory work for the workshop. The workshop will be completed during the first half of January 2022 based on which two Wanji games (nutrition and GESI) will be designed and deployed in the next quarter.

Radio PSAs: PSAs with messages regarding gender-based violence and its relation to food security were prepared and deployed as per the national themes and slogan for the 16 days of activism against GBV 2021. Moreover, PSAs with messages regarding weather advisories for winter were also disseminated through local FM stations in all the six program districts. Government approved messages were adapted for the program for the purpose of preparing all these PSAs. These adapted messages were approved by USAID prior to its dissemination.

Following the three day weather forecast of the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM) weather information advisory/messages were aired through the local FM Radios aimed to mitigate the risk of a Cold Wave in high mountain and hilly communities.

Automated phone calls:

Three automated phone calls were disseminated to all phone numbers collected from the program areas: 1) messages regarding COVID safety during festivals (deployed during Dashin and Tihar holidays), 2) messages regarding GESI to commemorate the 16 days of activism against Gender Based Violence, and 3) messages regarding weather advisories for winter were deployed through these phone calls. Government approved messages were adapted for the program for the purpose of preparing these phone calls. These adapted messages were approved by USAID prior to its dissemination. The reach details of all of these calls are as follows:

Table: Reach details of automated phone calls for this quarter:

S.N	Type of message	Total listeners (People who answered the phone calls)	Total people who listened to more than 50% of the messages
1)	COVID safety during festivals	9,661	6,679
2)	Messages for 16 days of activism against gender based violence	9,342	6,754
3)	Weather advisory message for winter	5,271	3,749

**Source: Viamo's automated call system database for Bhakari*

MEL Activities

BHAKARI has formed/supported more than 720 groups and hundreds of participants from the group will be benefited during the project period. These groups and individuals will be supported in several ways as part of empowering them with required knowledge, skills, and resources to enable them to

carry on BHAKARI’s recommended good practices and technologies. Since the pace of acquiring knowledge and skills by groups and individuals in adopting the good practices differ due to several factors such as literacy and numeracy skills, economic status, interest and motivation, and access to inputs and services, MEL together with the program team, developed and rolled out the capacity assessment tool by adopting and customizing Tufts¹ four factor framework for program sustainability. The findings will be used for setting the baseline score for all BHAKARI working communities as well as the finding will be further used to inform programs about gaps in the following factors: a)sustained resources b)sustained capacity c)sustained motivation d) sustained linkage. Currently the team is working on finalization of the report.

A MEL Refresher training was provided to social mobilizers, district M&E and technical supervisors of Surkhet cluster. The objective of the refresher training was to reorient the staff on technical difficulties of Commcare, have clarity on the functioning of Commcare and have a clear idea on the roles and responsibilities on the data entry of different tools. The other objective of the training was to orient them on PIRS, MEL Plan, BHAKARI quality monitoring checklists, Year 2 MEL operational plan and BHAKARI MIS. There were a total of 29 participants.

Table 6 – Total Number of Unique Individuals Reached with Essential Complementary Activities (Crosscutting)

	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	Unique Participants
Participants (Male)	0	0	3915	3915
Participants (Female)	0	0	2869	2869
Total	0	0	6784	6784

7.0 Planned Activities

GESI

- Implementation of HH dialogue tool at the community-level;
- Dedicated two-day workshop with community “change makers”;
- Capacity building on leadership and proposal writing with women members of BHAKARI-supported committees;

¹ The Tufts four factor framework for program sustainability is adopted from ‘Sustaining Development: A Synthesis of Results from a Four-Country Study of Sustainability and Exit Strategies among Development Food Assistance Projects’ published by FANTA FHI 360 in December 2015. Using the framework, there are four preconditions to successful sustainability. These include: i) Sustained sources of resources; ii) Sustained technical and managerial capacity; iii) Sustained motivation of participants and partners; and, iv) Sustained linkage to government organizations/other entities. <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1866/sustaining-development-synthesis-results-4-country-study>

- Observation of International Women's Day and related awareness-raising of GESI issues in the context of program components and objectives;
- Community-level safeguarding orientations and activity risk assessments;
- GESI support during agro input voucher distribution in partnership with the agriculture team.

Integrated Agriculture

- Training on permagarden method to partner staffs
- Input support to the selected 1400 farmers
- Kitchen garden training to farmer groups
- Small livestock production and management training.

At Water component

- Preparation of 53 Detail Project Reports (44 reports planned for Q2 and 9 reports pending from Q1)
- Formation/Reformation of Users committee
- MoU with Water Users group
- Preparation of community action plan for initiating construction activities
- Procurement and execution of Construction activities of 13 Water Schemes
- Capacity Building training to WUGs to support managing construction activities
- Supervision support and monitoring of construction activities
- Capacity building training to caretaker/Village maintenance Workers

DRR

- Capacity building trainings (CADRE, DRM, IRA and BIPAD portal) to the Task Force members and Disaster Management Committees
- Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP) preparation and updating
- Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) establishment and strengthening Mock Drills/Simulation Exercises
- Implementation of structural mitigation measures and bio-engineering works

Emergency

- Continuation of value voucher
- Cash for work (CfW) integrated into other program components
- Detailing of shock responsive social protection
- Capacity need assessment of 21 palikas
- Technical guideline for After Action Review
- Market Price Monitoring and dashboard

MEL

- Data Quality Assurance of 4 indicators
- Rapid Assessment on the current Food Security Situation
- Capacity building on MEL system to PNGO staff for Mugu
- Data management orientation to SMT and technical leads
- Carry out baseline capacity assessment for additional Water User Group
- PDM of 187 sample for 3843 Value Voucher Recipients
- Carry out Joint Monitoring field visit
- Update and improve data management system as per end user feedback

- BHAKARI ToC explainer video
- CARM explainer Video

Annexes (also attached)

- Annex A. [Thapadera MUS](#): Story about access to water in Thapadera community after six years
- Annex B. [BHAKARI Faces and Places](#): Brief description of the program impact on its participants
- Annex C. [Value Voucher Assistance](#): A picture story of Value Voucher Assistance
- Annex D. [Collaboration points between BHAKARI and Karnali Water Activities](#)

Loss Reporting (As applicable)

Not applicable.

Commodity Quality and Safety (As applicable)

Not applicable.