

Building capacity of plant protection officers to promote judicious use of crop protection inputs

Context

Smallholder farmers have very limited knowledge on crop diseases, pest problems, and its treatment. These farmers either rely heavily on products offered by retailers or do not apply any treatment at all. In most instances, it results in up to 30% loss in overall crop yield. The limited information they get on disease infestation on crops and its treatment is provided by agro-vets and plant protection officers (PPOs). An initial research conducted by Samarth revealed that the technical knowledge of plant protection officers (PPOs) and agro-vets regarding crop protection inputs (CPIs) are not up-to-date.

To deal with this market constraint, Samarth developed a seven-day training course in coordination with Plant Protection Directorate (PPD) to train PPOs who are stationed in DADO offices all across Nepal. The aim is to ultimately transfer the necessary skills and knowledge on CPI management and application to agro-vets through the PPOs in their respective districts so that the agro-vets can provide proper knowledge to the farmers on the availability and judicious use of CPIs throughout Nepal.

ToT on plant protection inputs

Seven-day training was organized to capacitate plant protection officers (PPOs) in Lalitpur from 1st to 7th February, 2016. Nineteen PPOs from all across Nepal participated in the training program. The sessions were delivered by resource persons with extensive knowledge and experience in pesticide management and application including the Director General of the Department of Agriculture (DOA), Pesticide Registrar and PPOs from Plant Protection Directorate. The main agenda of the training was to provide latest information & data on pesticide, pesticide management & application, and information on prevailing acts, regulations, & rules set by the Government of Nepal regarding pesticide uses and misuses.

Key takeaway from the Event

An action plan to conduct agro-vets training in their respective districts, totalling sixteen training events, was developed in a participatory approach with participants showing high interest and enthusiasm to conduct the agro-vets training.

Seeing the relevance and importance of the training, the high-level officials from Department of Agriculture's Plant Protection Directorate (DoA/PPD) decided to train another batch of PPOs by April 2016

Next Step

The next step for Samarth-NMDP is to plan the agro-vet training events in sixteen different districts, in collaboration with Plant Protection Directorate. The sixteen districts are; Bara, Dhanusha, Jhapa, Dhading, Lamjung, Tanahu, Dang, Rukum, Rupendehi, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Dadheldhura, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur.



Pesticide Registrar Mr. Bed Prasad Chaulagain with the participants and Samarth officials at the final day of the program.



Dr Yubak Dhoj GC, DG/DoA delivering a session on judicious use of CPIs.



A participant taking notes on unsafe practices and health hazards, during a field trip in a pesticide store in Kalimati.



Demonstration Materials for the participants