

# MDFN Workshop – Samarth Learning Event

## Context

The Market Development Forum Nepal (MDFN) was formed to enable like-minded development practitioners to share knowledge and experiences, and to learn about new ideas for pro-poor market development. The forum is intended as a learning platform, which is informed by evidence-based and hands-on experiences. As the development industry continues to seek new ideas to achieve sustainable and scalable poverty reduction, there is increasing evidence – both worldwide and here in Nepal – of the need to take more collective and collegial approaches to build on these experiences and generate new ideas for pro-poor market development. As part of capacity building and knowledge sharing, Samarth NMDP utilized the MDFN platform to share the experiences and learnings on different interventions under pig, fish and vegetable sectors addressing respective systemic constraints faced by small holder farmers and entrepreneurs in rural areas of Nepal.

## MDFN – Samarth Learning Event

Samarth NMDP shared the experiences and learnings on different interventions under pig, fish and vegetable sectors in a half-day workshop organized by MDFN on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 at the premises of Department of International Development (DFID), Ekantakuna, Lalitpur, Nepal. The main objective of the workshop was to have different partners from both the government and private sector that Samarth has worked with share their experience and learnings. The workshop was chaired by Mr. Bharat Pokharel, chairperson of MDFN and country director of HELVETAS and co-chaired by Dr. Keshav Pd. Premy, Joint-Secretary, Ministry of Livestock Development (MoLD). The workshop was attended by more than 35 participants from different government agencies, donor agencies and private sectors.

The workshop was divided into different sessions where Samarth partners shared their experiences under different themes and group work exercises on four different topics. Mr. Bharat Pokharel opened the workshop by welcoming all the participants. He emphasized that these learning events have always been a vibrant learning forum for like - minded development practitioners to share information, identify opportunities for synergies, provide evidence based feedbacks and acquire best knowledge for pro poor sustainable development. He also pointed out that more engagement from Government and civil society is needed to unlock the issues of private sector development and facilitate its smoother operation. Ms. Rudriksha Rai Parajuli, Livelihood Adviser at DFID, thanked the MDFN and Samarth team for organizing the event. She said the experiences of application of M4P in fish, pig and vegetable sector will be useful in designing and implementing the current and future private sector led market development programmes. DFID was glad to host the event at its premises and were excited to have the opportunity to hear from various participants from Government, donors, MDFN member, farmers, entrepreneurs, and development programmes.

The workshop was formally opened by MS. Srijana, Agriculture Portfolio Manager at Samarth NMDP, where she presented a brief overview of the fish, pig and the vegetable sector. She explained about the constraints and the opportunities that Samarth has been working on for the last five years in these sectors. The second session of the event focused on hearing from the partners under different thematic topics. Partners from the fish and the pig sector shared their stories on how public-private dialogue (PPD) has helped unlock the private sector. Mr. Ramesh Shrestha, MD at DEVTEC<sup>1</sup>, briefed about the issues faced by the programme for coordinating and linking private sectors with government and Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC). With joint effort of Samarth and DEVTEC, it has been successful in bringing government, NARC and private sectors to work together for improvement of quality of fish seed and hatchery management to increase the income of small fish farmers. The programme also closely worked

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<sup>1</sup> DEVTEC is one of the partner of Samarth NMDP and is implementing the fish sector programme.

with the private and the government sector to develop feed reference standard, which is currently being translated in Nepali awaiting approval from the Government. Similarly, Mr. Umesh Rai, President at Pig Entrepreneurs Association Nepal (PEAN), explained that PEAN was formed to bridge the gap between the private sector and the public sector. Until few years back, there was no organized forum in the pig and pork sector and the sector itself was weak and neglected. With efforts from Samarth and CEAPRED<sup>2</sup>, it facilitated NARC and DLS to organize the first national workshop on pig and pork industry in Nepal which led to the formation of PEAN as well.

PEAN has played an instrumental role to unlock the pro-poor linkages among the public and the private sector to promote pig and pork market. As a result, the Government of Nepal (GoN) has announced pig improvement programmes that came into operation in the name of Pig Mission Programme, which covered 17 districts. PEAN has also expanded its activities in seven states and 26 districts by opening chapters at state level and district level. Similar learnings was shared by Mr. Nelson Shrestha, MD at N-Agro, where the role of the Government has been important for post-harvest quality improvement. N-Agro worked with the Plant Protection Directorate (PPD) to conduct workshops on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and maintaining the green book. The Green Book is a record keeping document developed by the PPD to monitor vegetable production as per the PPD guidelines on IPM. The Green Book will help endorse the authenticity of vegetables produced using IPM technology.

Partners from the pig and fish sectors shared their stories on how improved access to high quality seeds/breeds and inputs has made them change their business model. Mr. Sanjeep Rai, Proprietor at the Kulung Bangur Farm in Jhapa, was one the few private companies in Nepal to receive training on artificial insemination (AI) in pig using frozen semen technology. The breeding system has helped to introduce new genetics from the US. The improved capacity of Kulung Bangur farm has helped to lower dependency for improved pig seed stock from government farms. Private sectors, with support from the public sector are coming up with new technologies for establishment of laboratory for semen collection, processing, evaluation, packaging and distributing it to conduct AI at farm level. Mr. Rai claims that productivity has increased through use of frozen semen technology. The new improved pigs have given births to 10-17 piglets compared to 6-10 piglets from local pigs. Similar stories from the fish sector was shared by Mr. Suresh Wagle, Senior Scientist at Fisheries Research Division, NARC. Poor quality of fish seed stock is one of the major systemic constraints in the fish sector of Nepal. The existing fish stock had not been replaced for more than 60 years and Samarth supported NARC to replace few of the parent stock. Samarth further supported to build the capacity of government and private players through international training in India and Thailand. NARC with support from Samarth also introduced new line of fish seed, Pangasius (cat fish) in the country. The productivity of Pangasius is high compared to other fish and the government farms along with private hatcheries are working together to promote this breed. There were also concerns that the recent flood in the Terai region of Nepal has washed away most of the stocks. Mr. Wagle assured that though the fish sector was hit pretty hard, however, it does have enough stock to replenish the lost stocks.

Dr. Keshav Premy, Joint Secretary, MoLD, reflected on the discussions that were presented by different stakeholders. On behalf of the government, he appreciated all the work that Samarth has been doing with the public and private sector. He emphasized that the role of the government is crucial for sustainability or of the programme and was glad that Samarth involved relevant government agencies for effective coordination and implementation of the activities.

The third session of the workshop started with a group exercise where participants were grouped under four different groups. Each group were given a theme to discuss and then share it with the whole group. The four different themes were: Crowding-In, Public-Private Dialogue, Reaching the Small holder, and Learning and Adaptation. There were examples of crowding-in in the pig sector where entrepreneurs like Ms. Maili Danuwar had heard about the Samarth pig programme and participated in trainings to start her own slaughter house. She participated in a training organized by Samarth in Nepalgunj to know about the design, implementation and operation of small slaughterhouse for pig to produce hygienic pork. She

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<sup>2</sup> Center for Environmental and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) is one of the partner of Samarth NMDP and is implementing the pig sector programme.

was also successful in getting a grant from the Government to build the small slaughterhouse in Kavre and is currently slaughtering 10-12 pigs a day. She has developed linkages with the rural pig market like Kathmandu for consistent supply of pork. Mr. Sanjeep Rai of Kunlung Bangur Farm shared his experience on how new technologies like fresh boar semen has been beneficial to the farmers. Mr. Rai is providing pig breeding services through fresh boar semen AI to small pig herds as well as commercial pig herds and has expanded his services to 16 districts. The uptake of new technologies has increased the productivity of pigs to produce more piglets compared to local pigs. Mr. Rai also had concerns on the limitation of the programme, some of the areas related to pig farming were not addressed to a larger extent. He recommended that future programmes should work in areas of pig feed and marketing of hygienic pork at a wider scale. Ms. Ruby Karki, MD of Meatco Foods shared her concerns about lack of coordination between different government agencies for not being able to export meat to Bhutan. Her company is trying to export dry buffalo meat to Bhutan but has not been successful in doing so. She has been trying to get certification for the type of meat from the concerned authorities, but the whole process has been very challenging and frustrating. Once they are successful in exporting dry buffalo meat to Bhutan, Meatco wants to export pork meat to Bhutan in the near future.

The workshop ended with remarks from Dr. Keshav Premy and Mr. Bharat Pokhrel. Dr. Premy acknowledged that MDFN forum is a good platform to address the issues of sustainability and scaling up of successful interventions. The Government of Nepal is in favor of promoting public - private policy and has already increased investments in sectors like pig and fish. He stated that the public sector will continue to promote the best practices and interventions that Samarth has supported to increase the welfare of small holders farmers of Nepal. Dr. Pokhrel thanked all the participants for their contribution and encouraged other organizations to use the MDFN platform to share the best and effective approaches to market development.

*Samarth and MDFN has added value in identifying policy gaps, market system development and promotion of public partner dialogue for effective growth of market.*

**Dr. Keshav Pd. Premy**  
**Joint-Secretary**  
**Ministry of Livestock Development Nepal**

## What Next

Samarth NMDP will officially close in March 2018. In the meantime, it will continue to share the learnings from different sectors in different forums. The learnings and discussions will be useful in creating greater collaboration and coordination among organizations applying different market development approaches for projects with the ultimate goal of sustainable market system development and to achieve the overarching national goal of poverty reduction through more effective, synchronized and sustainable actions.

## Pictures



Figure 1: Participants at the MDFN workshop



Figure 2: Dr. Keshav Pd. Premy, Joint-Secretary, Ministry of Livestock Development, gives his remarks on the workshop.



Figure 3: Mr. Nelson Shrestha, MD at N-Agro, shares his experience on working in the vegetable sector

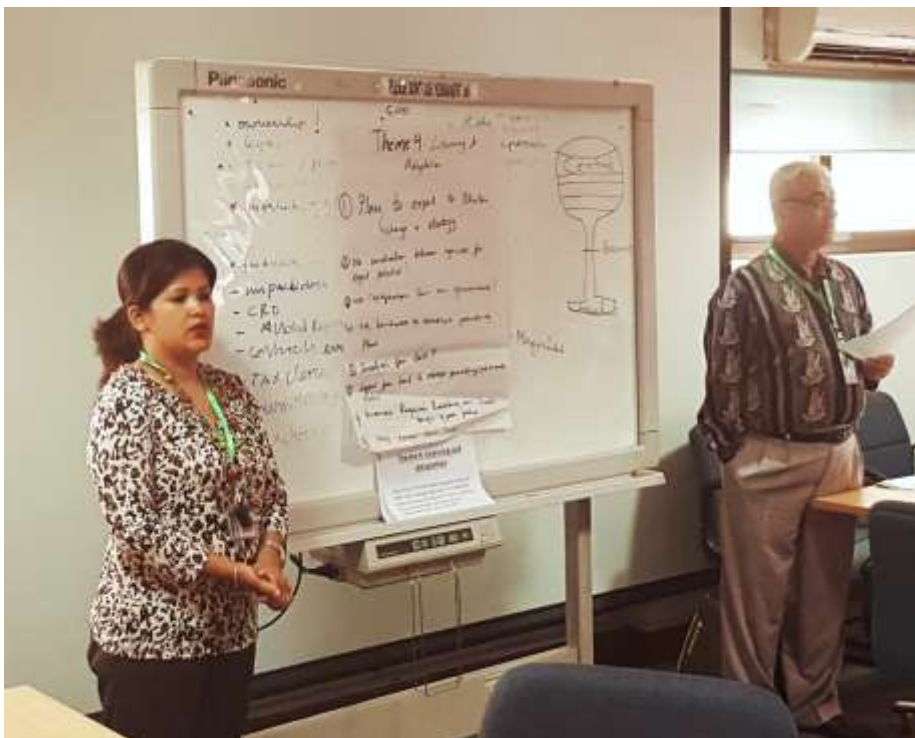


Figure 4: Ms. Ruby Karki, MD at Meatco Foods, shares her experience on working in the pig sector