



Scaling up Market accessibility for Rural Farmers in Nepal

Uniterra is a Canadian volunteer cooperation and international development program that is jointly operated by WUSC (World University Service of Canada) and CECI (the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation). The program supports inclusive economic development to benefit women and youth in 14 countries across Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Uniterra works with key private, public, and civil society partners to facilitate growth and change in markets that have the greatest impact on the marginalized.

Farmers' Baskets

The Farmers' Baskets Project, known as *Kisan Ko Poko* (KKP), works to facilitate market access for disadvantaged farmers. KKP connects small scale farmers of rural Nepal directly with consumers from the Kathmandu Valley, allowing them to earn a fair wage for their products and sustainably improve their livelihoods and quality of life. 80% of farmers who supply products to KKP are women.

Market Challenges for Farmers

Prior to KKP, rural farmers of the Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd. (NACCFL) sold their products to intermediaries in the agriculture value chain, often at low and unstable prices. Farmers from remote parts of Nepal do not have direct access to markets, preventing them from increasing their production for commercialization and making it difficult for them to reap the economic benefits of their labour.

Country Nepal

Program

Volunteer Cooperation Program 2015-2020

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Implementing partner

Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd.'s (NACCFL), Uniterra Program

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Key themes of the story

Access to markets, farmers' baskets, organic and sustainable agriculture

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KKP not only provides us with better prices, they also train us to use new agriculture techniques, produce organic products and pest free products.

Ms. Kalpana, Maize Producer from Makwanpur district



Uniterra volunteer **Courtney Lang**, a student at the University of Waterloo, worked as a documentation officer at NACCFL in 2016. Through helping to assess the needs of small scale farmers by conducting interviews, she learned that they faced difficult challenges with marketing and selling their products. Courtney came up with the idea for KKP through her direct knowledge of food baskets in Canada from her experience working at farmers markets. She presented the concept for KKP to NACCFL. The Uniterra program then supported her in developing a business plan, launching KKP products, and promoting the products on the market.

Building on local and responsible agriculture

Operating under the theme “Think Global and Eat Local”, KKP is an online food subscription service and store showcasing the wide range of goods produced by small scale farmers belonging to NACCFL’s network that spans 69 districts across Nepal. KKP provides rural farmers with a link to markets where they benefit from direct sales and receive higher prices for their products. KKP promotes Integrated Pest Management (IPM) based agricultural production and only collects products from farmers who cultivate using this approach. IPM lessens the damage to produce caused by pests through using pesticide-free methods to minimize risks to consumer health and the environment. Typical customers who are attracted to KKP are from middle income households who want to support small scale Nepali farmers that grow produce in a sustainable way.

Impact on Farmers

When KKP was launched in 2017, it supported 500 member farmers from 50 small farmer cooperatives across Nepal. The development of a business plan led to the opening of the first KKP outlet in Pulchowk, Lalitpur, which provided jobs to 10 staff. The growth of KKP has accelerated in a short period of time to support 3000 farmers from 150 small farm member cooperative suppliers and a second, larger KKP outlet has been opened in Lagankhel, Lalitpur. KKP reports that farmers have increased their yields by 30% because they are secure in accessing the market and higher product prices.

Compared to private traders, farmers receive a 20% increase in the price of the products after selling to KKP. KKP also indirectly increases farmer’s access to credit facilities as micro-finance institutions are willing to provide loans to farmers without collateral who supply products to KKP because of its reputation.

KKP plans to replicate the model to other organizations that are doing similar work, such as the Federation of Women Entrepreneurs’ Associations of Nepal and Women Entrepreneur and Consumer Cooperative Society Limited.

This project contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals: 1 – No poverty, 2 – Zero Hunger, 5 – Gender Equality, 8 – Decent work and Economic Growth, and 12 – Responsible consumption and production.

Sustaining Operations

NACCFL’s understanding of the potential for local markets in Nepal has helped them to expand KKP through their market relationships. While KKP has received some assistance for the procurement of equipment, their business model and the underlying market demand for their produce has been and will continue to allow for greater scale and sustainability of their services to farmers and consumers. KKP has expanded its operations by hiring a marketing officer and 8 new staff for selling products in KKP stores and inventory management. NACCFL is working toward the goal of opening KKP outlets in all 7 provinces of Nepal.