

FOREWORD

A realistic need-based and demand-led agricultural research and development is crucial for sustainable agriculture in Nepal. In realizing this, the technological and knowledge gap among Nepalese farmers with respect to various dimensions of agriculture should be filled. Taking it optimistically, owing to our huge agro-ecological diversity, the potentialities in developing agricultural sector is tremendous provided we could overcome the constraints. The opportunities and challenges for global agricultural trade also exist after Nepal's membership in WTO. Therefore, in this present scenario and context, "The National Agricultural Research and Development Fund" [NARDF] could undoubtedly play a prominent role in the fight against poverty and in improving the competitiveness of agricultural sector by implementing research and development projects through competitive grant system.

The main function of NARDF is to seek or demand proposals from governmental and non-governmental organization, academic/educational institutions, private sector, civil society and community based organizations who are interested in contributing to the agricultural research and development of Nepal. NARDF focuses on output oriented work aiming to deliver measurable results within a maximum of three years period in support of national objectives and priorities defined in government policy documents.

Since its establishment in the year 2001, NARDF has so far provided financial support for the implementation of 83 Research & Development Projects through various implementing organizations and/or development partners upto the fourth call. Out of these, 15 projects have been completed under the first call and 2 projects under the 2nd call. However, their impact is yet to be measured. The remaining 66 projects are still ongoing, and some projects are nearing completion. From the fifth call onwards, NARDF has also introduced the Small Grants and Thesis Grants Programme under its funding umbrella mainly targeting the grassroots level local institutions and Post-Graduate level research students respectively. During this fiscal year, 24 Small Grants and 12 Thesis Grants projects are awarded. Therefore, an attempt has been made in this report to provide some introductory notes, summary and progress of those projects that are already under implementation.

I believe this publication will provide useful information related to various NARDF funded projects and their ongoing status. It will also provide the reader with an insight as to what could be achieved, within our overall aim of contributing to the improvement of the livelihoods of the rural communities.

I wish to thank all the Project Coordinators who have timely submitted their progress reports for incorporating in this publication. I would like to thank all the Officers of NARDF, especially Mr. Udaya Kumar Nepal, and Mr. Suresh Sharma, who were fully involved in the compilation and publication of this report. I would also like to thank all those who have been enthusiastically involved in its preparation and publication.

Ganesh Raj Joshi, PhD
Member Secretary
NARDF
June 2008