

## FOREWORD

Nepal being an agriculture-based economy, it is imperative that the government gives more priority in developing this sector. Owing to the diverse climatic variability and rich agrobiodiversity, Nepal offers tremendous potential to boost its economic growth and ensure food security to its citizens provided appropriate policies are laid out, constraints are overcome and resources are channeled appropriately. 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 and mandate of NARDF is to seek or demand proposals from governmental and nongovernmental 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 100 Research & Development Projects through various implementing organizations and/or development partners upto the fifth call. Out of these, 47 projects have been completed so far under the first, second and third calls. However, their impact is yet to be measured. The remaining projects are still ongoing. For the 6<sup>th</sup> Call, 28 Projects were recently approved for funding and are following the process of agreement and initiation. 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 the last fiscal year, 24 Small Grants and 12 Thesis Grants projects are awarded. In this current fiscal year, 7 Small Grants and 18 Thesis Grants 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 would like to thank all the Project Coordinators who have timely submitted their progress reports for incorporating their project-related information in this publication. I would like to thank all the Officers of NARDF, especially Mr. Udaya Kumar Nepal, Tara Kumar Shrestha and Mr. Suresh Sharma, who were fully involved in the compilation, editing and publication of this report. I would also like to thank all those who have a direct or indirect role in the preparation of this report during the various stages of its preparation and publication.

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