## FIELD VISIT BY POLITICAL LEADERS TO SRI FIELD IN KAILALI DISTRICT

A high-level mission from two major political parties in Nepal with members of the Constituent Assembly made a visit to Kailali District in the far west of the country on July 9-10 to view System of Rice Intensification (SRI) fields. The delegation included Devendra Poudel, a Politburo member of the United Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), and Garima Shaha, a Central Committee Member of the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxism and Leninism) as well as Rabindra Adhikari, Lila Bhandari, Ramesh Lekhak, and Hari Roka, members of Constituent Assembly.

The mission visited SRI fields and discussed with farmers at Darakh, Ramsikharjhala and Khailad Village Development Committees (VDCs) on the first day, and delegation members participated in a district-level interaction programme at Dhangadhi on the second day. The delegation leaders pledged to the stakeholders and farmers participating in the meeting to have a national policy for disseminating SRI methods all-round the country. Devendra Poudel said: "I am very impressed by seeing the long and attractive panicle of early rice in farmers' fields, and it should be necessary to include this technology in the national priorities." He further added: "I feel that with high-level interaction in Kathmandu among researchers, academics and extension agencies, an effective policy could be formulated."

Similarly, Ramesh Lekhak from the Nepali Congress party said: "Day by day, food security condition of the country is becoming worse, and it could only be addressed by increasing the productivity of our land. SRI is seen as the best alternative for this." He proposed Rabindra Adhikari as the focal person for organizing high-level interaction in Kathmandu.Further, he shared what he had learned from interaction with Xaviour Boun, senior programme manager of the European Union Food Facility (EUFF) project working in the region, expressing interest to extend this project which is delivering a highly effective technology in western Nepal.

Rabindra Adhikari, a member of the Constituent Assembly, said: "The technology should be disseminated around the country which is seen to be very effective in increasing productivity among the smallholder farmers. I am ready to take a responsibility as a focal person for organizing high-level interaction." The interaction programme was chaired by Dhanapati Dhungel, FAYA-Nepal, and a paper on SRI activities and achievements in the western Terai was presented by Ram Bahadur Khadka, programme coordinator of EUFF project, coming from the NGO FAYA-Nepal.

The welcome speech was given by Saroj Pokhrel, team leader, FAYA-Nepal, and the vote of thanks was given by Ikshan Sulaiman from FAO. The programme was conducted by Ser Bahadur Basnet. Taralal Lama, national training specialist of FAO, reported on the efforts of FAO to disseminate the SRI in Nepal. SRI farmers Lalku Kathariya from Lalbojhi and Bed Psd Upadhya from Ramsikharjhala shared their experiences with SRI practice and inaugurated the book written on "System of Crop Intensification: Experience and Practice," written by Ram Bahadur Khadka based on experience to date.



Photo 1: Interaction programme at Dhangadhi



Photo2: Leaders observing SRI field at Khailad



Photo 3: Group photograph with SRI farmers.



Photo 5: Observing SRI field

## **News Reports:**

1. SRI is highly effective rice production system: Members of Constituent Assembly (Anumodan national daily)



## 2. Government will take initiative for SRI: Leaders



## 3. Issue of SRI will be raised in cabinet

