



Fund for Innovation and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation et la transformation



IDE CANADA

# Safer Farming for Nepali Women

## Context

In rural Nepal, roughly 80% of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. 70% of whom are women. Contamination of vegetables by pesticide residue is a widely publicized problem in Nepal, and a growing number of health-conscious, middle-class consumers are interested in purchasing vegetables produced with little or no pesticide.

## The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, iDE Canada and their local partners iDE Nepal tested an innovative solution aimed at increasing profits for women smallholders by marketing Intergrated Pest Management (IPM) vegetables as a differentiated product with a price premium in Kaski markets, Gandaki Province.

## Advancing Gender Equality

iDE's Gender Equality Strategy focused on overcoming barriers for women including control and limited decision-making power, limited access to markets, and opportunities to increase agricultural incomes. The innovation test targeted the vegetable sub-sector, a commodity that women control, and developed a profitable marketing channel for women vegetable farmers to sell IPM vegetables for a premium. In each of the sub-testing phases, the gender equality strategy built off the current context for women's engagement in IPM vegetables production. Women's equal participation was prioritized in all collection centres, with women making up 84% of members.

## Testing Framework

The testing methodology followed a phased iterative testing approach including research, piloting and scale-up. This included three sub-tests for each of the three vegetables (cucurbit, tomato, and cauliflower) and measured the demand for IPM vegetables, various marketing materials and price points. During each sub-testing round there were also one or two control stalls that were not directly connected to the project. Each sub-test measured the demand for IPM vegetables, which marketing materials are most effective, and if customers are willing to pay a premium for IPM vegetables.



COUNTRY	AMOUNT
Nepal	\$185,303

**TESTING PERIOD**  
13.5 months  
Ended December 2022



**GENDER RESPONSIVE (GE2)**

**THEME: AGRICULTURE**

# Results and Impact

iDE Nepal trained 1643 farmers, including 1268 women, on IPM while connecting women farmers and collection centres to farmer's markets.

Testing revealed the following:

- By endline, 95% of women and 100% of men farmers felt they had improved choices for how to grow their vegetables, and most farmers currently selling IPM vegetables plan to continue selling IPM vegetables. Stalls displaying information about IPM production and health benefits, as well as those stalls displaying story-based information about the farmers who grew the produce, sold more in terms of quantity (for cucurbits), and had had higher rates of sale in general (for tomatoes and cauliflower).
- There is high customer demand for IPM vegetables, and that people are willing and able to pay a premium price for IPM vegetables.
- The number of farmers using new IPM technologies has increased by 49% and the area of land under IPM vegetable production has increased by 30%. Farmers who use IPM technologies noted that the technologies are simple to use, effective, make the produce healthier, reduce labour requirements, and protect the environment.
- Since the project intervention, collection centres report that the number of households bringing vegetables to the collection centres for sales has increased by more than 100%, while women's involvement in committees and collection centres has increased significantly.

## Key Lessons

1. Location targeting must account for potential risks and barriers to testing. A pivot to move the testing location from the Birauta market to the Bazaar market was made due to inconsistent support from the local governments regarding the flexibility and freedom required to complete testing.
2. Early scale-up potential has been identified. Market focal points who purchase unsold produce are familiar with IPM practices and have started selling IPM vegetables separately.
3. IPM vegetables are now being priced higher than conventional vegetables (by 10–20%) at the Bazaar market. These premiums have been added outside of iDE testing rounds and indicate high interest and demand for IPM vegetables.

“The farmers’ market has offered me a better space to sell my vegetables in an efficient way and at a reasonable price. I can directly deal with the consumers and understand their needs and demands.”

- Woman participant, a mother of 4 who is seeing increased profits for her family

## PARTNER ORGANIZATION

iDE Nepal

## TARGET PARTICIPANTS

1643 (1268 women, 375 men)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[iDE Canada](#)

## ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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**iDE** Powering entrepreneurs to end poverty.