

# Marketing/Storage/Processing: Agriculture Sector Development Programme

In Nepal, the agriculture sector growth rate has fallen from 4.6 per cent to 1.9 per cent in recent years. The sector suffers from low investment and challenges in commercialization and modernization. Two thirds of the country's labour force is engaged in agricultural production, but the majority are unskilled and lack knowledge of updated cultivation practices. Farmers are also vulnerable to extreme climate events and climate change. Poverty remains a rural problem, strongly associated with gender, ethnicity, caste and region.

ASDP will scale-up the High Value Agriculture Project in Hill and Mountain Areas by continuing to use a market-driven approach to increase incomes and improve livelihoods. It aims to increase access to economic opportunities for poor farmers and small producers. It will also improve community infrastructure and services in hill and mountain areas and reduce gender, ethnic and caste-related disparities through greater inclusion of disadvantaged groups in development.

The programme will be implemented in all 10 districts of State 6 and will target smallholder producers and landless rural people interested in engaging in targeted value chain activities. Women will constitute two thirds of beneficiaries and disadvantaged households will be specifically targeted for inclusion. It is expected that ASDP will reach about 35,000 households directly and a further 40,000 households indirectly.

