



Kalpana's Orchard of Hope: A Story of Resilience on the Tila River Basin

In the small market town, Kudari, nestled along the Tila River basin and Karnali Highway, 52-year-old Kalpana is sowing more than just seeds. She is growing resilience, independence, and hope for the future.

Kalpana lives with her husband, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter. Though their children live away, her daughter is studying at the Capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, and her son serves in the Nepal Army and is currently stationed in Pokhara. The farm remains the heart of the family. For over 15 years, horticulture has been their livelihood, yielding vegetables and fruits to nourish the family and provide income.

On a land of just 6 ropani and beyond the vegetable farm, she has an apple orchard, nurtures more than 80 Apple trees on 2 ropani of Land. (around 0.3 hectares), Kalpana and her husband have initiated a small agribusiness. Together, they grow green vegetables, adapting to market trends and price shifts. A modest iron frame tunnel, measuring 12 by 6 meters, allows them to produce off-season crops such as spinach, tomato, and cucumber, giving them an edge in the local market.



Kalpana is caring for her cucumber field planted in a 12 by 6-meter Tunnel.

Before, they invested their income into their children's education and development, and have recently out of the district for a job. In spite, their children being job-holding, they do not depend on them for their basic needs, and they self-manage their needs from the farming they used to do previously. But Kalpana's story is not just one of hard work. It is one of hope and resilience.

Seeds of change

Through support from “Enhancing resilience and empowerment in communities at risk of climate-induced migration,” implemented in coordination of FAO Nepal and KIRDARC, Kalpana received improved seeds -cauliflower, cabbage, cucumber, tomato, and beans - and planted them across the 3 ropani of land. Additionally, she has received a spinach seed, which she showed in April in the same tunnel. Already, she’s reaped rewards: 58 USD from selling the produce in Kudari market, and she expects over 1.5 Lakhs from the upcoming harvest. With this income, she funds her granddaughter’s education, meets daily household needs, and still manages to save a little for the future at the nearby cooperative.

As a member of the Climate-Smart Farmer Field School (FFS), Kalpana has become a community example. Alongside 24 other farmers in Tila Rural Municipality 3, Syalalumshera, she learned cutting-edge agroecological practices. She now tests soil for nutrients and pH, enriches her farm soil with organic compost, and uses natural pest control methods. She uses buffalo manure and supplements it with compost made from farm weeds, reducing dependency on external inputs and improving sustainability.

This knowledge extends beyond vegetables.

“Farming is my main occupation, and I will continue to do so as long as my health allows. Earlier, we used to do farming in a traditional way, which was unorganized, but now, through the Farmers Field school, we have learned about organic and environmental methods of fertilizer, water, and pest management, where these things are also easily available on market and do not impact on our health.”



The Apple Orchard on the Hill

High above her hillside village, Kalpana tends to nurture over 80 apple trees with quiet determination and deep care. Once a promising venture, apple farming in her community has faced growing uncertainty. Unpredictable weather patterns particularly declining snowfall and insufficient chilling temperatures have started to threaten the core of their livelihoods. The apple trees, once blanketed with snow in winter, now struggle to meet the chilling hours needed to bear fruit.

As if climate stress wasn’t enough, new pests like tent caterpillars and woolly aphids have emerged, damaging yields and disheartening farmers. But Kalpana didn’t give up. Through her participation in the Farmer Field School (FFS), she adopted improved and eco-friendly practices applying fortified manure, natural bio-pesticides, and microbial solutions that boost soil and plant health without harming the environment.

This season, her perseverance is set to pay off. Kalpana anticipates a harvest of 2.4 quintals an impressive average of 30 kilograms of high-quality apples per tree. With the market price at approximately 0.37 USD per kilo, she could earn over \$899 USD, a promising return from land that many had nearly lost hope in.

Kalpana’s story is not just about apples. It’s about adaptation, resilience, and how empowering farmers with knowledge can turn challenges into opportunity even at the top of the world.



Orchard above the hillside village.

Rooted in resilience

Kalpana has chosen to stay rooted, applying climate-smart techniques to adapt to a changing climate while inspiring others around her. Every harvest is not just food on the table; it's proof that rural livelihoods can thrive with the right tools and knowledge.

In a landscape often marked by migration and uncertainty, Kalpana's farm stands as a quiet revolution. Her story is a reminder that with the right support, climate resilience starts from the ground up and flourishes into something far greater than just a harvest.



Bio Pesticide (Jholmol 3) Preparation

Empowering Communities on Climate resilience and safe migration

Support provided to Kalpana and other 300 beneficiaries in the Tila River Basin is part of the activities implemented by the project “Enhancing resilience and empowerment in communities at risk of climate-induced migration” financed through the Flexible Voluntary Contribution mechanism.

The project, implemented in Uganda and Nepal, was launched in 2024 and aims to boost climate resilience in rural areas vulnerable to climate-induced migration. It focuses on empowering communities, especially women and youth, through the adoption of climate-adaptive agricultural practices, and improved access to information on safe migration and climate adaptation.

The project also seeks to leverage diaspora networks for climate action and strengthen government capacities to integrate human mobility into climate adaptation plans at national and local levels.



Group farming is practiced by the Farmers group of Tila Rural Municipality 1, Raralihi, where the seeds are