Best Self Help Dairy Group Awarded

On 6th July, 2019, The International Day of Co-operatives was observed by Ministry of Agriculture and Forest (MoAF) in collaboration with by Department of Agriculture Marketing Cooperative (DAMC) at Paro. The main theme was **"COOPS 4 DECENT WORK"** this year's International Day of Cooperative. This year's theme was linked to **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8** on "promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all".

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests had felt the very importance and the role of the Coop movements to bring the small producers in the rural Villages into limelight as one of the development approach. Annually, Ministry of Agriculture and Forest selects best performers from Farmer Groups and Co-operatives. The best selected are awarded and recognized as best performer in the country. Among the Famer Groups, Norbugang Zambala Dairy Group, Norbugang Geog, Pema Gatshel Dzongkhag was selected as best performing Group this year.

.Today, the group has 76 memberes comprising of four villages, Rinchenzor, Norbugang, Ningshingborang and Tahsingzor. The Group was formed in July, 2017 and the group produces more than 700-800 liters of fresh milk in day. The milk is processed (Butter and Cheese) and marketed mainly to Nagnaglam Town, Phuntsholing and Thimphu. As of now the produces 700-800 balls of cheese and 35-40 kg of Butter on daily basis. The Group has created employment for five village youths and is paid monthly 12000 per month as salary.

This Group has immensely played important role in creating decent jobs and economic empowerment of local communities sustaining themselves in short period of time period. However, the Group has also have lots of challenges like lack of good market linkages, quality of Milk, permanent infrastructures, good farming practices, credit facilities and etc. Despite all these the Group aims to achieve the target of 5000 liters of milk per day within the 2-3 years time period.

It also benefited in solving problem of immediate cash income at household level. The sustained amount of monthly income from the milk has only encouraged among the members but has build up trust and confidence in the own Group. These are all due to the continuous support from Dzongkhag, Dungkhag and Geog Administration. More so, this is also because of the collaboration and strong support from area development programs, CARLEP (IFAD), Wangkhar, Mongar.

(Thinley Rabten)

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