



**Gopal Bhat**, a former police officer and karate instructor, is the biggest trader of meat in Doti.

Gopal started his second career with an initial investment of NPR 12.5 lakh with which he bought land, built a home and started a fresh meat cutting centre, **Shoba Trader and Order Suppliers (STOS)**. During an initial expansion phase he invested NPR 1,376,215 in new equipment and facilities.

The RAP3 team first met Gopal in February 2016 while in Doti looking for business partners for CONNECT. A partnership was agreed with the idea to expand his business by producing dried poultry meat - sukuti. A solution that would expand his business and address both over supply from India undercutting his business and reducing demand for his product and the difficulty of storing fresh meat due to an unreliable electricity supply.

Producing sukuti would also add value and generate a higher profit margin compared to fresh meat sales.

RAP3 CONNECT supported Gopal by connecting him to an importer who could get him the equipment he needed to produce dried meat and a food technology expert who has guided him in the process of getting a license for his dried poultry.

To deliver benefits to farmers in his supply chain RAP3 CONNECT worked with Gopal to secure long-term agreements with downstream farmers. The agreements committed STOS to supply famers with poultry feed, on credit at discounted rates<sup>1</sup>, and to buy-back all the poultry meat they produced. Within the first year of partnership 89.4MT of chicken feed was supplied at subsidised rates, growing to 160MT in the second year.

<sup>1</sup> NPR 3 / kg lower than prevailing market rate

Initially, STOS entered long term agreements with 10 poultry farmers but the supply chain has quadrupled and 41 farmers currently hold agreements.

STOS sold 35kgs of chicken sukuti in the same time period and successfully applied for certification with the Department of Food and Quality Control Office, Dhangadhi. STOS view sukuti as a conversion solution when the price of fresh meat dips and, despite positive local market response, produce small batches and have not committed to regular production of sukuti.

Instead, STOS has expanded geographically, co-investing with CONNECT in a generator to power the freezer, allowing for increased collection and sales. STOS has also increased turnover from sale of chicken feed. Both, feed and meat trade has been expanded into neighbouring districts Bajura, Achham and Dadeldhura. And, STOS is now providing employment for 16 young people in Doti.

Mr Bhatt remains committed to building STOS' supply chain by offering buy-back agreements and feed on credit and has a vision to scale the fresh meat trade further.

