The VCC app is implemented by Heifer International Nepal whose field personnel assist cooperative members in downloading the app while providing training and monitoring in the initial stages. The app is designed to be intuitive, eliminating the need for intensive training. Within cooperatives, the app is accessed by “VCC managers”, who are members of cooperative self-help groups (subgroups within the cooperatives), and cooperative leaders. All data transmitted by the app are captured by a server housed at Heifer International Nepal offices. The VCC app is currently being evaluated through a randomized trial involving 92 producer cooperatives.

In Nepal, goats are an essential source of income and nearly every rural Nepali household owns at least a few goats. To buy goats, traders often travel over large areas characterized by rugged terrain and poor infrastructure, making multiple visits to individual households necessary to complete sales. The resulting high transaction costs can stifle the value chain. Cooperatives can reduce transaction costs by allowing for bulk purchases of animals. But cooperatives may struggle to coordinate sales by members spread out over large areas of rugged terrain, possibly failing to solve the transaction cost problem. Technologies that improve coordination of marketing activities could therefore strengthen cooperatives while raising farmer incomes and developing the goat value chain.

In Innovation Quick Facts

- **Category**: Marketing & Distribution
- **Applied in**: Nepal
- **Innovation Type**: Technology
- **New/Adapted**: New
- **Created for**: Mainly Women
- **Nutrition Linkage**: Dietary Quality

**THE PROBLEM & ITS IMPORTANCE**

In Nepal, goats are an essential source of income and nearly every rural Nepali household owns at least a few goats. To buy goats, traders often travel over large areas characterized by rugged terrain and poor infrastructure, making multiple visits to individual households necessary to complete sales. The resulting high transaction costs can stifle the value chain. Cooperatives can reduce transaction costs by allowing for bulk purchases of animals. But cooperatives may struggle to coordinate sales by members spread out over large areas of rugged terrain, possibly failing to solve the transaction cost problem. Technologies that improve coordination of marketing activities could therefore strengthen cooperatives while raising farmer incomes and developing the goat value chain.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS**

The VCC app replaces a marketing coordination system based on infrequent face-to-face meetings between cooperative members, leaders, and traders. The VCC app should reduce the time and uncertainty associated with goat marketing, thereby increasing goat sales and revenue. Inventory provided through the app lets cooperative leaders know instantly whether they can meet the demands of traders. By including agreed-upon prices, dates, and locations in sales event invitations, the VCC app will remove much of the uncertainty faced by cooperative producers when marketing goats. Traders will feel more confident that their quantity and quality needs will be met in advance of a sale.