

# Regional Food Program



**Bring Tourist to where the agro and handicraft production is.  
Bring the local products where the tourism is.**

The second Regional Food Program (RFP) was held from 24<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022, in cooperation with the hotels and restaurants in Thimphu, registered in the SHINE project. The main objective of the program was to create a linkage between producers and the tourism establishments in the city. The program also aims at promoting regional crops and forest products growing in the eastern and southern parts of Bhutan, such as papaya flowers and banana flowers.

The program not only demonstrates the feasibility of the processes of identifying availability of seasonal products, ordering and delivery, but also presents the charm of regional food.

On 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022, the chef at **Hotel A.V** in main town made 4 types of dishes such as **Pokara with papaya flower, papaya curry with gravy, banana leaf ezay and banana flower curry**. The dishes were served to the customers for tasting and a survey. Feedback was all good. In the evening, the program continued at **Bhutanese Authentic** restaurant. The chef came up with her own signature recipes and showcased 3 items in Bhutanese cuisine style, namely **Moduphala metho datshi (papaya flower datshi), Moduphala meto datshi with sikam (explain) and fried banana flower**. They served the dish to the SHINE team and their guests. One of the guests, Lopen Thinley, who is a Bhutanese monk expressed his view, that elderly people and those who like bitterness would love the papaya dishes and he also highlighted the health benefit of papaya flower.



On 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August, SHINE team in collaboration with **The Ramen Bhutan** restaurant introduced **Fried papaya flower and banana flower** at catering services for two events held at National Biodiversity Center and Inauguration of the new park at Isuna on the way to Paro, respectively. The Chef of Ramen Bhutan prepared the dishes in Southern-Bhutanese (Fried Banana flower) style by adding different spices.

All participants of the events appreciated and enjoyed the food very much. A few participants said they had never tasted papaya flowers and did not know that it can be made into such delicious dishes. Some of them really enjoyed the bitter taste of the dishes and Mr. Namgay, Chief of the Department of Agriculture recommended that the RFP should be presented at the flower exhibition, which will be held soon in Thimphu.



Other hotels, namely **Tara Phendeyling** and **Ramadha**, also came up with their own signature dishes - **Stir-fried banana flower, banana flower roll, papaya ghee sabji and soup**. One of the guests from Bangladesh appraised the benefit of RFP for rural farmers to expand their marketing channel. He believes the elegant way of introducing the crops will encourage the farmers to work harder with better feeling of reward and appreciation. He also mentioned the health benefits of the crops, especially banana flowers.

# Pictures of the program



Modhuphala Datsi



Fried Papaya Flower

Papaya Flower Soup



Banana Flower Pakora



Banana Flower Stir Fry

