

NEWSLETTER

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Birth of the First Pure-Bred Holstein Calf

On February 6, 2024, Nepal celebrated a historic milestone with the birth of its first pure-bred Holstein calf, a significant advancement in the Milky Way Initiative - a collaboration between South Korea and Nepal, facilitated by Heifer International. This initiative, supported by the donation of 100 purebred Holstein heifers, 8 breeding bulls, and high-quality frozen semen from Korea, is transforming Nepal's dairy landscape.

Named Gamsa, meaning 'thank you' in Korean and 'Dhanyabaad' in Nepali, the calf's birth coincides with the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Nepal. The inauguration of the Korea-Nepal Model Dairy Village in Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli, commemorates this milestone, serving as a pivotal hub for enhancing dairy productivity and quality, benefiting half a million smallholder farming households.

Gamsa belongs to one of 51 recipient households raising Holstein heifers. These families express gratitude not only for the calf but also for the specialized training and ongoing support provided by Korean dairy experts and veterinarians in modern livestock management.

The success in Kamalamai Municipality, where 71 other heifers are pregnant, brings optimism for boosting quality milk production across Nepal. Dairy products currently contribute 8 percent to Nepal's GDP, and high-yielding Holstein cows can significantly bolster food security and stimulate robust agricultural growth.

Launch of Korea-Nepal Model Dairy Village & Passing on the Gift Ceremony in Sindhuli



The Korea-Nepal Model Dairy Village was officially launched in Kamalamai Municipality-5, Sindhuli, on February 13, 2024, along with the Passing on the Gift® ceremony to commemorate the birth of Nepal's first pure-bred Holstein calf, named 'Gamsa' (meaning 'thank you' in Korean and 'Dhanyabaad' in Nepali), from cows gifted by South Korea in December 2022. Attendees included the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to Nepal, Park Tae Yong, Dr. Rewati Raman Poudel, Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and Upendra Kumar Pokhrel, Mayor of Kamalamai Municipality. This inauguration marks Korea's first attempt to build a dairy village overseas, aiming to bolster Nepal's dairy industry with Korea's genetically improved dairy cows and advanced agricultural technology.

The initiative envisions making Sindhuli an economically advanced model dairy village and replicating its success across Nepal.

During the event, Gamsa was presented to a local farmer, Uma Subedi. Currently, fifty-one households in Kamalamai Municipality have been raising the Holstein heifers. Passing on the Gift® is an important cornerstone of Heifer's Values-Based Holistic Community Development model, which strives to foster sustainable locally-led development and empowers farmers to become donors themselves. The initiative includes a condition encouraging recipients to pass on their firstborn female calf as a gift to another family in need.

The event also marked the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Nepal and South Korea.



Ms. Neena Joshi Participated in the “Investing in Outcomes with One Health: Connecting People, Animals, and Environment” Session at the AVPN Global Conference 2024

Our Senior Vice President of Asia Programs, Ms. Neena Joshi, participated in a panel titled "Investing in Outcomes with 'One Health': Connecting People, Animals, and Environment" at the AVPN Global Conference on April 24, 2024. She highlighted how the One Health approach can address disparities for inclusive well-being and promote equity by uniting humans, animals, and the environment. Ms. Joshi underscored the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration between civil society, government, philanthropists, and the private sector to empower local communities, promote 'One Health' awareness, foster sustainable practices, and develop effective solutions within holistic health ecosystems.



Palpa to Europe!

The Galdha Social Entrepreneur Women’s Cooperative (SEWC) of Nisdi, Palpa has begun exporting dried ginger to Europe, marking a significant achievement. Certified organic last year, the cooperative shipped 4,460 kg of processed ginger rice to Europe in May, following the successful export of 850 kg of ginger samples the previous year. This year’s export to Germany was in partnership with aQysta Nepal.

Heifer Nepal supported Galda SEWC by assisting in the production, promotion, processing, and value addition of ginger. They also provided the cooperative with equipment for washing, grinding, drying, and packaging the ginger. The cooperative comprises 272 female members who actively collect, sell, and process ginger. The cooperative has set ambitious targets for next year: exporting 20,000 kg of raw ginger and 10,000 kg of dried ginger rice. The cooperative in collaboration with the government and Heifer Nepal aim to enhance the processing industry. Plans are underway to extend organic certification to ginger from Jamire, Mityal, Jhiruwas and Sahalkot. Historically, Nisdi-produced ginger was sold locally and only exported to India, leading years of high production without corresponding demand but entering the European market has offered new avenues and encouragement for farmers. It has also reduced dependence on the Indian market.

Despite past challenges, such as market fluctuations, unstable prices, and disease management issues, recent investments have aimed to stabilize and grow the industry. Physical structures for processing have been constructed, but progress has been hampered by a lack of machinery and tools. Coordinated state efforts, new facilities, effective market management could significantly boost production and profitability, improving the economic well-being of local ginger producers.



Global Communications Team Along with the Nepal Team Visited Milky Way Project Sites

In May 2024, key representatives from Heifer International including Peter Goldstein, Vice President of Global Communications at Heifer International, Dr Keshav Sah, Program Director Milky Way at Heifer International Nepal, Gurpreet Kaur Bhatia, Regional Communications Director- Asia at Heifer International, and Charlie Pye-Smith, UK based freelance writer along with the dedicated Heifer Nepal Communications team visited Kamalamai, Sindhuli to witness the transformative impact of full-bred Holstein cows donated by Korea on local Nepali farmers. The team observed farmers, particularly women, are embracing the higher maintenance needs of Holstein cows in exchange for significantly increased milk production. This shift has led to an increasing interest in dairy farming as a viable business, empowering farmers to improve their incomes and invest in their families and communities.



Heifer Nepal Hosted the First Session of the Forum for Attracting and Fostering Impact Investments



On June 28, 2024, Heifer International Nepal hosted the first session of the "Forum for Attracting and Fostering Impact Investments in Small and Growing Businesses of Nepal" in the Kathmandu office. The event brought together a notable and diverse group of attendees, including development agencies and contractors, banks, impact investors, and the key speaker, Joseph Silvanus, the Managing Director at Dolma Consultancy & Dolma Himalayan Energy. The forum marked a significant step toward enhancing impactful investment opportunities and supporting the growth of small businesses in Nepal. The participants discussed the latest developments in Impact Investment, addressed investment issues in Nepal, identified hurdles in finance, examined major

challenges faced by businesses led by women, and explored ways to make access to finance more inclusive, accessible, and suitable for youth and women to thrive in agri-business. Joseph and the participants also explored key concepts like Blended Finance, Balance Scorecard, Deposit & Credit Guarantee Fund (DCGF), and Waterfall in Blended Finance together.

Dr. Tirtha Raj Regmi Attended the Cheque Distribution Ceremony in Dolakha Organized by Heifer Nepal and Himalayan Bank Limited



An impressive lineup of dignitaries, including our Country Director, Dr. Tirtha Raj Regmi, CEO of Himalayan Bank Limited, Ashok Shamsher Rana, Chairperson of Melung Rural Municipality, Hira Kumar Tamang (Thokar), and Chairperson of Tamakoshi Rural Municipality, Prona Pratap KC, attended the Cheque Distribution Ceremony in Dolakha district. This event, hosted by Heifer International Nepal in partnership with The Himalayan Bank Limited marked a significant step in distributing subsidized loans to youth, women entrepreneurs, and smallholder farmers, all aimed at business development and expansion under the Access to Finance initiative.

So far, we have provided subsidized loans worth Rs 60.6 million to 130 individuals, with an additional 18 files prepared for investment. Looking ahead, Himalayan Bank aims to support over 852 entrepreneurs in the agriculture and animal husbandry sectors within Heifer International's project districts, including Dolakha. By leveraging local government leadership, the initiative will identify and recommend entrepreneurs through projects run in partnership with Heifer Nepal and local organizations. This collaboration will connect entrepreneurs with banks, providing accessible, high-level banking services to drive economic development and empowerment across these communities.

GCE Scholarship Distribution

With support from Yonsei University Dairy, LG Electronics, PRGATE, Speedmark, Paju Dairy Clinic, and Heifer International Korea, Heifer International Nepal was able to award scholarships to 210 girls from 23 municipalities across 15 districts, including Sindhuli, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Baglung, Parbat, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchok, Dolakha, Dhading, Palpa, Syangja, Dang, Bardiya, Pyuthan, and Rolpa this year. So far, GCE has benefited a total of 2,851 girls. The event brought together teachers, parents, partner NGOs, Heifer representatives, and local leaders of the respective districts. Attendees learned about the project's details from Heifer representatives.



The project received positive feedback across the board. Government officials and leaders were inspired and motivated to support GCE and similar initiatives, while parents recognized the importance of educating their daughters and felt encouraged to continue their support after the event.

Employee Spotlight

Bal Gopal Sigdel

1. Can you tell us a bit about your background, how you came to join heifer, and your current roles and responsibilities?

I transitioned from a temporary government job with the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture, and Cooperatives in Bagmati Province to working as an Agricultural Engineer consultant for various government offices. My focus was on preparing specifications, bidding, and evaluating agricultural machinery. During this period, I came across a job vacancy for an Agricultural Engineer consultant at Heifer, which perfectly matched my experience, so I confidently applied and joined Heifer.

Initially, I served as an Agricultural Engineer consultant with a focus on agricultural machinery, but my role quickly expanded. I became involved in construction projects, including vegetable and turmeric processing plants, jaggery processing plants, slaughter slabs, and cattle/goat shed construction. Currently, I am a Program Officer for the Model Dairy Village under the KOICA project and also support the AGCO and Sub Award Milky Way projects. My responsibilities include designing, estimating, supervising, and evaluating construction and supply activities.

2. What's a fun fact about you that most people at work wouldn't know?

This is no secret to the people working with me in the field, but I enjoy arranging different kinds of fruits. That's why sometimes they call me the "fruit arranger". I love all native fruits.

3. If you could switch roles with anyone at heifer for a day, who would it be and why ?

Haha, I would love to be someone who travels a lot, like Bishnu Kandel or Rabin Niraula. In my previous role as a consultant, I traveled from the eastern part of Nepal to the western part. But for the past year, I've been confined to just 109 households within the same municipality.



I aim to grow my career by enhancing my skills, education, dedication, and hard work to advance professionally in a timely manner.

5. How has working at heifer contributed to your personal and professional growth? Are there any skills, knowledge, lessons, advice you've gained since joining Heifer you're particularly proud of?

Overall, I have learned many things at an organizational level from my superiors, supervisors, and colleagues. I have specialized in building processing centers, conducting group sessions, and working with Holstein cattle, which will be valuable assets for me in the future. Additionally, my skills in photography and videography have improved. Heifer Cornerstones has helped me set priorities and create a clear vision. Additionally, working with the Korean team has introduced me to their working style "pali pali" (quickly), which I have adopted.

6. How do you see yourself developing and growing in your role?

I want to improve my working style by fully replicating the Korean approach, which is quick and hardworking. I aim to grow my career by enhancing my skills, education, dedication, and hard work to advance professionally in a timely manner.

Heifer Nepal Scores Big with “Inclusive Team” Award at AIN Futsal Cup



The Heifer Nepal team won the “Inclusive Team” award at the 10th AIN Futsal Cup, organized by the Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN). This prestigious event, a futsal tournament among development agencies, is dedicated to promoting inclusion and equity. The tournament brought together diverse voices from Heifer Nepal’s country

office staff and other development agencies, allowing them to connect, network, and showcase their collaborative spirit. The Heifer Nepal team’s recognition with the “Inclusive Team” award underscores their dedication to these values and highlights their exemplary teamwork and inclusive approach.

Testimonials

My journey at Heifer has been a rewarding roller coaster. I started as an intern and advanced to a finance specialist over ten years, marking the best learning period of my life. The team’s unwavering support and inclusiveness make every achievement and challenge feel deeply personal.

 **BANDANA BANIYA,
FINANCE SPECIALIST**

I am proud to work with Heifer. During my visits to various government organizations, Heifer’s contributions and effective program implementations are consistently recognized. Heifer’s brand value stands out as one of the top among development organizations in Nepal.

 **RAJAN NYAUPANE, SENIOR OFFICER -
PROCUREMENT AND COMPLIANCE**

Heifer’s impact on the sustainable development of smallholder female farmers in Nepal is remarkable, and I’m honored to be part of such a prestigious organization. Personally, Heifer has given me opportunities to grow and learn, with recognition of my contributions continually motivating me to excel.

 **NIRMALA RAI,
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

I joined Heifer on June 14, 2018. One of the most memorable moments was the implementation of the Government Partnership project in 2019. Despite the COVID-19 lockdown, we were able to launch agriculture ambulances, ensuring farmers in Tansen Municipality could still deliver their produce to the market. Seeing cooperatives like Sakladevi and Lahar flourish and witnessing the positive impact on local families has been truly rewarding.

 **BISHNU PANDEY, SENIOR PROGRAM
OFFICER (BUTWAL CLUSTER OFFICE)**