

BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE EASTERN REGION

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Project Profile

The *Building Communities for Holistic Development in the Eastern Region Project* is assisting 8,900 Nepalese families. The 3,200 original families will receive 3,500 goats, 700 water buffalo and 1,500 pigs. All of the project participants will receive fodder and forage seeds and saplings. Additionally, 500 improved cooking stoves and 750 biogas units will be constructed. An additional 5,700 families will benefit through Heifer's Pass on the Gift (POG) model. All project participants will receive trainings on Heifer's 12 Cornerstones, self-help group management, improved animal management, gender justice, maternal and child healthcare awareness, human nutrition awareness, HIV/AIDS awareness, kitchen gardening, organic farming and fodder production and management. The project will also conduct the Values-Based Literacy Program and train 35 community animal health workers.

Project Story

Investing in Success: Heifer Salutes the Women It Empowers

Meet Mandira Bote of Sarlahi, Nepal. She and others in her community near the Bagmati River belong to a marginalized, nearly extinct caste of landless fishermen. Before Heifer came into the community in late 2006, the women there suffered greatly. This photo of her was taken at the beginning of the project by Heifer's partner, the Bagmati Welfare Society of Nepal. Make a note of what's missing or hiding: No goats, no smile, and just the tiniest hint of the confidence, determination and lifelong dream of learning that had yet to be realized.

The women in the Heifer group talked about how before they started the values training and joined the self-help group, their husbands drank away their earnings, forcing them to work crushing stones in a quarry to provide food for their families. Their huts were very small and leaked when it rained. They had tried to raise animals, but didn't know how, and their hard-earned money was lost when the animals died without the proper care.



Now I'd like you to meet the Mandira Bote of February 2011, several years into a Heifer goat project. She stands boldly in front of a community meeting, with visitors from Heifer headquarters in attendance, and beams with pride when it is announced she is the very first woman of her village to finish high school.

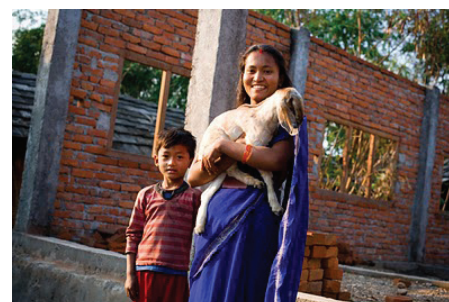
"Now with the goat project, I finally have the resources to educate my children and myself," Bote said. "I'm very proud and happy to be the first here to finish high school. Now I want to go to college; I have always wanted to. I would like to be a teacher."



After the meeting, she leads us to the construction site of her new brick home, being built directly in front of her old hut. She cradles a goat, but explains that it isn't just the animals and income from them that transformed her. It was also the values training that helped her and her fellow members see that they were strong enough and smart enough to achieve their dreams.

She holds the hand of her son, Sanam Bote, age 7, and talks excitedly about her plans for her own future as well as her children's. Daughter Basha, now just over 1 year old, will have every opportunity, she promises.

"I am more determined to send her to college than my son," she said. "Daughters are always looked down upon, seen as lesser than sons. I want to give my daughter the same chance as the boys."



Project Holder Comments

The original families have now had the privilege of becoming proud donors by passing on livestock, grass seed and vegetable saplings to a new generation of families in need. The sale of livestock and vegetables from their farm has earned project participant families an average of \$2,993. The increased income has also influenced the families' food consumption habits by incorporating milk and fresh vegetables into their diet.

Thirty-five families initiated vermiculture, and 40 families started using organic compost in their farms, reducing the amount of chemical fertilizer used in the community.

Project participants are very aware of the impact of applying healthy practices in their households and communities. The addition of 23 concrete toilets and 35 improved cooking stoves built during this period will have a positive impact on improving the quality of life for beneficiary families.

The communities involved in the project are enjoying a more harmonious life. Project activities emphasizing values-based development have resulted in the eradication of discriminatory behavior, disputes and domestic violence in participating groups. Many women have learned to read, write and have also become adept in basic numeracy skills, making their daily lives a lot easier.

Infrastructure improvements in participating communities were evident during this period. The Laligurans and Kopila Women's Group were awarded a grant for \$1,392 from the Municipality Office to black-top more than half a mile of a community road. They also received \$487 for controlling soil erosion on the riverbanks. Additionally, the Godavari Women's Group received a plot of land worth \$6,961 where a community building will be constructed. These are indicators of stronger group cohesion and long-term vision for sustainable changes made possible by leveraging community resources and Heifer's support.

Progress Toward Objectives

Objective 1: By the end of the project, 100 percent of the project families will have significantly increased their income levels.

- ◆ With an increase in income and confidence, as well as access to credit, many groups have started diversifying their income base through farming on bigger land either collectively or individually and increasing their large animal herds.
- ◆ The families have added more assets such as land and improved their housing conditions as well.
- ◆ For all families, owning livestock has translated into higher incomes, which in turn has created a more secure livelihood. Additionally, it is a source of higher quality and greater amounts of food for the family.
- ◆ New income sources have been secured. Families have been successful in Passing on the Gift over generations and securing adequate, nutritious food from the animals as well as from basic

staples, fruits and vegetables.

- ◆ Multiple activities such as collective farming, collective labor and cultural activities have been carried out to increase their group fund.
- ◆ Women of the groups have started reinvesting their income in other activities such as fruit shops, tea shops, dairy shops, etc. They have also taken loans from group funds for this purpose.

Objective 2: By the end of the project, 100 percent of the participating families will have improved their nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.

- ◆ The income raised from the different project activities has contributed to improved family nutrition and well-being. The livestock production enables families to consume high quality protein such as milk, meat and eggs. The vegetables grown in kitchen gardens are also part of family meals.
- ◆ Families have built toilets and improved cooking stoves in their homes for better sanitary habits and to decrease disease outbreaks in the area.
- ◆ Family members have quit alcohol and tobacco consumption, which has improved their health and enhanced the quality of life of those around them.
- ◆ Because of Heifer's emphasis on animal well-being, participants value livestock health, thus more families have invested in improving their animal shelters. Livestock feeding techniques have also improved through the use of tatno, a concept similar zero-grazing pens.

Objective 3: By the end of the project, the physical environment in the community will be improved through environmental protection and preservation and adoption of environmentally friendly practices by the participating families.

- ◆ Project families planted trees and forage in areas affected by deforestation. The synchronized row of green plants, bushes and shrubs has added lushness to the village.
- ◆ The landscape in the vicinity of the community has also improved through reforestation and fodder/forage plantation.
- ◆ Families carry out reforestation activities on riverbanks to control soil erosion. They have received training to prevent flooding.
- ◆ The increased use of improved cooking stoves and biogas has conserved the trees in the project areas.

- ◆ Farm productivity has increased by incorporating animal manure as organic fertilizer. The use of chemical fertilizers has decreased significantly.

Objective 4: By the end of the project, 100 percent of the women's groups and youth groups are empowered and contribute towards family and social harmony period.

- ◆ There is a feeling of mutual respect between men and women. Women now receive encouragement and cooperation from their spouses and children. All household members share responsibilities for the household chores and are able to enjoy a harmonious family life.
- ◆ Heifer's Cornerstones training has helped strengthen values among youth and reinforced the spirit of giving among families, which will ensure the POG process.
- ◆ Personal behaviors have changed with family members now being more caring and compassionate to one another. They have learned to think "we" instead of "I."
- ◆ Families sit together, share meals and help each other in time of need regardless of caste and class differences. As a result, social conflicts and anti-social activities have declined in the community.
- ◆ The self-help groups have established coordination and linkages with various stakeholders in the area, therefore becoming able to obtain financial resources for community development activities.

Quantitative Data

Families Assisted		
	Original	Pass on the Gift
Planned	2,900	5,200
New (this period)	2,074	44
Previous total	412	644
Total (all periods)	2,486	688

Original Placements of Livestock and Other Resources				
Resource type	Number planned	Number new	Previous total	Total (all periods)
Dairy cattle	-	67	6	73
Broiler chickens	-	0	900	900
Layer chickens	-	0	500	500
Meat goats	3,200	292	4,675	4,967
Improved toilets	-	208	296	504
Swine	1,400	68	174	242
Dairy water buffalo	600	267	293	560
Breeding goat bucks	-	11	75	86
Breeding bulls for buffalo	-	2	5	7
Biogas plants	750	0	3	3
Hand pumps	-	0	8	8
Electric motors for irrigation	-	0	0	0
Improved cooking stoves	500	9	94	103
POG fund support for grocery shop	-	13	0	13
POG fund support for pumping sets and garden pipes	-	0	4	4
POG fund support for hand pipe installation	-	0	0	0
Ducks	-	0	8	8
Oxen	-	14	10	24

Pass on the Gift Placements of Livestock and Other Resources				
Resource type	Number planned	Number new	Previous total	Total (all periods)
Dairy cattle	-	2	0	2
Broiler chickens	-	0	0	0
Layer chickens	-	0	0	0
Meat goats	6,400	1,178	22	1,200
Improved toilets	-	19	31	50
Swine	2,800	68	0	68
Dairy water buffalo	600	141	37	178
Breeding goat bucks	-	24	0	24
Breeding bulls for buffalo	-	3	0	3
Biogas plants	750	2	0	2
Hand pumps	-	0	0	0
Electric motors for irrigation	-	0	0	0
Improved cooking stoves	1,000	0	0	0
POG fund support for grocery shop	-	0	0	0
POG fund support for pumping sets and garden pipes	-	0	0	0
POG fund support for hand pipe installation	-	0	0	0
Ducks	-	0	0	0
Oxen	-	0	0	0

Training Information				
Training Topic/Theme	Hours	Number of Training Attendees		
		Project Participants		Visitors
		Male	Female	
Agroecology	832	8	1,256	25
Gender & Family Issues	3,408	685	2,822	10
Livestock Health	1,256	6	1,812	45
Organizational Strengthening	2,104	611	1,462	7