



# IMPROVING LIVESTOCK PRODUCTIVITY, HOUSEHOLD NUTRITION, AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN BANGLADESH

*Results and Impacts of the Feed the Future Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition Activity*







**177,446** HHs  
benefitted from improved  
livestock production and  
better nutrition



**3,379** hectares of  
fallow land used for  
fodder cultivation by  
farmers



**271,631** cattle  
vaccinated during animal  
health campaigns



**620,569** people  
reached by nutrition  
messaging via events,  
private sector and digital

**T**he Feed the Future Bangladesh Livestock Production for Improved Nutrition Activity aimed to increase the livestock productivity for improved nutrition and income generation for rural households in the Southern Bangladesh.

The Activity consisted of three key components:

- livestock productivity and income;
- access of rural households to hygienic, diverse, and quality food and;
- nutrition awareness and practices.

The Activity engaged livestock service providers (LSPs) and networks, leading private animal health, feed, and dairy companies to make livestock services available around farming communities and to increase access to markets for meat and dairy products. The Activity promoted improved nutrition behaviors for rural households with proper nutrition education and practices on hygienic, diverse, and quality food for family nutrition.

*“This project is very beneficial to the community because it helps disseminate essential nutrition and production knowledge.”*

*- Rubia Khatun,  
Livestock farmer*

# Improving Livestock Productivity

The Activity facilitated increased productivity by building a livestock input system that increased the availability and adoption of critical livestock inputs and services. The Activity promoted improved fodder/forage, ready feed, timely use of animal health services, artificial insemination and improved farm management practices.

Seasonal fodder scarcity is one of the largest barriers to increasing milk and meat productivity and income among smallholder livestock farmers in Southern Bangladesh. The Activity promoted the production and sale of high-yielding, climate-smart forage and fodder varieties by producers, providing them with a source of income. The Activity also worked with the private sector to promote silage, a high-quality alternative to fodder, for smallholder farmers in Activity areas to address the ultimate low penetration of fodder technology and knowledge among producers.

The Activity developed the capacity of GOB agencies, including BLRI and DLS, through trainings and the co-implementation of activities to better reach farmers with improved services and inputs, develop capacity of LSPs, and assess, plan for, and respond to disease outbreaks.



Meat production increased by **204%** and milk production increased by **246%**



**2,002** LSPs developed to provide livestock related training and services



**64,235** farmers cultivated fodder on **3,379** hectares of fallow land



**419** fodder entrepreneurs developed, cultivating on **29** hectares of land and earning an average of **\$113** per month



Households receiving improved services from GOB increased from **15%** to **88%**

# Improving Livestock Services

The Activity facilitated and enabled local LSPs to deliver cascaded training to farmers to improve their knowledge on livestock management for increased production. The Activity worked with a range of community-based LSPs, including artificial inseminators (AI), fodder entrepreneurs, feed retailers, and milk collectors, to ensure livestock services for farmer groups. The Activity collaborated with academic and research institutes to cater specialized training to LSPs, and then facilitated linkages of LSPs with the private sector, government agencies and NGOs.



Partnering with on-the-ground LSPs was a smart **investment and sales strategy**. Companies collaborated with the LSPs to conduct animal health camps and saw increased sales as a result of this partnership.



LSPs could offer a **picture of demand** for products and services in a targeted geographic area. For companies that expanded or developed new markets, partnering with LSPs was an essential strategy.



LSPs provided advices and trainings to farmers on livestock management practices. By investing in LSPs and co-sponsoring health camps, private sector actors increased farmer awareness and **cultivated new markets**.



**Salma Akter,**  
Livestock Service  
Provider

*“When a woman can make her own decisions, when a women can fulfill her wishes, then she is empowered.”*



**Rafiqul Islam,**  
Livestock Service  
Provider

*“After receiving the training from the activity, I am able to provide more services now including artificial insemination. This has become my main source of income.”*



**Tuhina Khatun,**  
Livestock Service  
Provider

*“Even if (the activity) leaves, what I've learned, you can't take away from me.”*





## Developing Output Market

The Activity aimed to develop the milk and dairy output market in order to increase the availability and accessibility of nutritious livestock products and to provide livestock producers with a reliable and competitive end-market.

The Activity developed the processing and marketing capacities of households through trainings and connecting them to end market, thereby increasing income opportunities for producers.

The Activity encouraged leading and local dairy processors to improve their marketing strategies, such as implementing consumer marketing strategies in their chilling centers or shops or marketing to end-market retailers in rural and urban areas.

Livestock producers saw an increase in income from the sale of fattened beef after receiving Activity assistance. The Activity facilitated improved and innovative procurement processes to better connect producers with beef cattle buyers.



**9,612 MT** of milk sold, and  
**17,880 MT** of beef cattle sold by  
producers in FY21



**41 dairy processors** trained on  
hygienic processing, product  
diversification and marketing of  
dairy products



**248 milk collectors** trained  
on hygienic standards of  
milking, handling, collection  
and transport of milk



**46,556 farmers** set aside  
**2,608 MT** of milk for home  
consumption from the milk  
they produced in FY21

***“I have a dream of expanding and trying out newer sweets. There is no end to all that I can do, as long as I have the right spirit and I do not lose this confidence that I have acquired.”***

**- Reaz Uddin,  
Dairy Processor**



## Improving Household Nutrition

The Activity promoted the consumption of animal-source foods, particularly dairy and meat, through community mobilization, integration of nutrition messaging into private sector service delivery, and mass media.

In addition to increased consumption of dairy and meat products, the Activity observed an increase in total dietary diversity. The percentage of women consuming a minimally diverse diet increased from 38.6% in 2015 to 89.51% in 2021.

Through social behavior change strategies, the Activity improved the equitable allocation of animal-source foods between adult men and women, as well as between adults and children. The Activity also promoted hygienic behaviors through courtyard sessions and campaigns.



**3,457** animal health and household nutrition campaigns conducted, serving **131,971** farmers



Households consuming meat weekly went from **13%** to **49%**



Households consuming milk regularly increased from **29%** to **82%**



# Partnering for Progress

The private sector engagement of the Activity focused on connecting the private sector with rural farmers in order to create more incentives for the stakeholders involved, strengthen the livestock market systems, and build the private sector's business capacity, networking, and market understanding. Through the grants program, the Activity supported the private partners with access to information, inputs, finance, and markets to make informed business decisions that have a sustainable impact on the Activity participants and beyond.



**16** partnerships with private companies in four thematic areas



**\$1,343,089** of private funds catalyzed through grants



Over **3,000 MT** improved cattle feed sold to smallholders



**\$3,131,680** tailored credit made available to livestock farmers & SMEs

***“After receiving great responses for the new loan product, we have introduced the loan in 20 more branches of SDC to serve a wider farmer base. The amount and number of loans disbursed already helped us reduce the premium.”***

**- Khondakar Hamidul, SDC (MFI)**



Female worker at factory packing cattle feed bags for farmers



A female LSP uses tele-vet app to get advice and supervision from a certified veterinarian while providing treatment services



A farmer uses a bio-digester that converts livestock manure into biogas for cooking and high-quality organic fertilizer for crop farming



## Empowering Women and Youth

The Activity integrated women empowerment strategies to increase women farmers' livestock productivity, incomes, decision-making power, and influence over nutrition-related behaviors in the household. It facilitated the adoption of livestock technologies and services; improved decision-making regarding livestock production and use of income; access to and use of financial services; and participation in higher-income job opportunities.

The Activity engaged and built the capacity of youth as actors in the livestock value chain, particularly local LSPs. Over the life of the Activity, it enhanced the capacity of 23,339 youth farmers, 525 youth LSPs and 218 youth CAs.

Women's decision-making power about livestock production **improved** over the years



Livestock rearing  
(from **2%** to **80%**)



Buying inputs  
(from **3%** to **75%**)



Percentage of women who had direct input about the use of income increased from **9%** to **56%**





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