শেকড়ের টানে

Feeding the Future of Bangladesh

Transforming Dairy, Nourishing Generations



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK
Danida

Solidaridad

Arla

SEGES INNOVATION

PRAN

DGBP DANIDA GREEN BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Feeding the Future of Bangladesh

Transforming Dairy, Nourishing Generations

Feeding the Future of Bangladesh: Transforming Dairy, Nourishing Generations documents how systemic modernization, climate-resilient practices, and multi-stakeholder collaboration are reshaping Bangladesh's dairy landscape. Launched in 2024 through the Danida Green Business Partnerships (DGBP), the initiative moves beyond simple volumetric milk targets to establish an inclusive, commercially viable, and low-carbon dairy value chain across Southwest Bangladesh—spanning Khulna, Satkhira, and Jashore. Aligned with the United Nations' designation of 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer, this publication captures the transformative journey of rural women progressing from unpaid farm labor into commercial agri-entrepreneurs, peer trainers, and independent household decision-makers.

At the heart of this vision is Feed Life™, Arla's commitment to creating value beyond its business by strengthening food systems, supporting farmers, and contributing to healthier communities. In Bangladesh, Arla Foods Bangladesh aims to bring this commitment to life by transforming the dairy sector and empowering farming communities to become stronger contributors to the nation's nutrition journey. By supporting a more productive, responsible, and competitive dairy ecosystem, Arla seeks to strengthen livelihoods, enhance local dairy production, and build a resilient food system that can deliver quality, affordable nutrition every day for all. Through Feed Life™, Arla aspires to make healthier food choices more accessible today while helping secure better nutrition for future generations.

The Green Dairy Partnership in Bangladesh brings this vision to life through a collaboration that connects global dairy expertise with Bangladesh's long-term nutrition and food security priorities. Solidaridad Network Asia leads field implementation, mobilizing 10,000 smallholder farmers, 86% of whom are women, into operational clusters while scaling circular-economy solutions such as biogas generation and commercial fodder enterprises. PRAN Dairy strengthens market access through 34 Village Milk Collection Centers (VMCCs), transparent quality testing, and guaranteed weekly digital payments. SEGES Innovation and the Danish Agriculture & Food Council (DAFC) provide technical leadership, adapting Danish cooperative models, Life Cycle Assessments (LCA), and farm advisory tools to the local context.

Guided by the science-based Arla Big 5 framework, which focuses on feed efficiency, feed balance, animal robustness, manure management, and land use, the partnership equips farmers to increase productivity, improve incomes, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions per litre of milk. Beyond the farm, initiatives such as the Bangladesh Dairy Value Chain Forum and community-level Pushti Kotha sessions promote policy dialogue and nutrition awareness.

The stories in this collection demonstrate what is possible when knowledge, sustainable infrastructure, and market access come together around a common purpose. Feeding the Future of Bangladesh is ultimately a celebration of the smallholder farmers driving this transformation, showing how investments in resilient dairy systems today can build healthier communities, stronger livelihoods, and a more sustainable future for generations to come.



Bangladesh’s dairy sector has significant potential to contribute to rural livelihoods, nutrition and food security. The progress of the sector depends on strong partnerships, innovation, and the dedication of our farmers. The Danida Green Dairy Partnership is a positive example of how international cooperation and local engagement can foster sustainable and inclusive growth while strengthening the long-term resilience of our dairy industry.

Mr. Sultan Salauddin Tuku MP
Honorable State Minister,
Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock,
Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh



Building the skills and knowledge of farmers is essential to improving productivity and sustainability across Bangladesh’s dairy sector. Through training, hands-on demonstration, and knowledge exchange, the Danida Green Dairy Partnership is supporting farmers in adopting improved practices, making informed decisions, and strengthening the commercial viability of their dairy enterprises. Such investments in human capital are fundamental to the long-term development of the sector.

Md Delwar Hossain
Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock,
Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh



The Danish Green Business Partnership demonstrates how knowledge sharing and cross-sector collaboration can transform Bangladesh's dairy sector. The tools, training modules, and practical approaches introduced through the project are enhancing the capacity of our extension officers and bringing improved dairy management directly to farming communities. We look forward to building on these learnings and scaling their application across the region.



Md. Shahzaman Khan
Director General (In-charge),
Department of Livestock Services

Applied research, technological innovation, and climate-smart practices are vital to unlocking the productive potential and environmental sustainability of Bangladesh's dairy sector. The Danida Green Dairy Partnership exemplifies how multi-stakeholder collaboration can effectively bridge scientific research with field practice—translating improved animal nutrition and resource efficiency into viable, farm-level solutions. Strengthening such evidence-based approaches is key to building a resilient and sustainable livestock economy.



Dr. Shakila Faruque
Director General,
Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute



MESSAGE

From the Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh



For more than five decades, Denmark and Bangladesh have built a relationship grounded in trust, cooperation and shared ambition. Today, our partnership spans development cooperation, trade and investment, health, water, food systems and the green transition. Its purpose is not growth alone, but sustainable prosperity that creates opportunities, strengthens communities and improves lives.

Our shared commitment is especially relevant to agriculture, which sustains livelihoods across Bangladesh while facing pressures from climate change and changing market demands. Dairy can contribute to nutrition, rural incomes and local enterprise. Yet progress requires more than higher production. It depends on efficient farming, accessible knowledge, reliable market connections and investment in a system that works for farmers and businesses alike.

The Green Dairy Partnership puts this approach into practice. Supported by Danida Green Business Partnerships, it brings Danish and Bangladeshi expertise together to build a greener, more resilient and commercially viable dairy value chain. By promoting climate-smart farming and strengthening formal market links, the partnership aims to expand economic opportunities while reducing dairy's environmental footprint.

Farmers are at the heart of this industry-wide transformation. By improving access to training and market opportunities, the partnership seeks to help them strengthen their skills, adapt to future challenges and create a more prosperous future for their communities. Particular attention is also given to recognising and strengthening the role of women, whose contributions to smallholder dairy farming have long been essential. Greater access to technical skills and leadership opportunities can help women gain wider recognition, strengthen their economic independence and inspire others around them. The impact of these efforts extends beyond individual farms, supporting stronger families, communities and local economies.

I hope these pages bring to life not only the project's milestones, but also the determination and aspirations of the farmers behind them. May their stories inspire continued cooperation between our countries and demonstrate how practical partnerships can create lasting progress for people, communities and the dairy sector as a whole.

H. E. Christian Brix Møller
Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh

The United Nations has designated 2026 as the International Year of the Woman dairy farmersFarmer, making it especially meaningful during a time when our Danida Green Business Partnership in Bangladesh project is actively working to empower women dairy farmers. This book brings together seven inspiring stories that highlight the transformative journeys of dairy farmers across Bangladesh, including five remarkable women farmers.

Total
10,000
farmers mobilized

Women represent
85.5%
of mobilized farmers

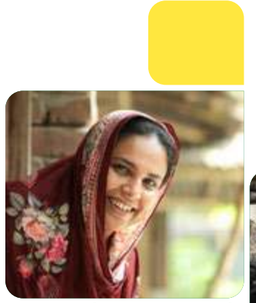
55%
of Lead Farmers are women

40 out of 93
Innovation Farm participants are women

41.7%
women farmers are independent decisionmakers



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DANIDA GREEN BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

Strengthening Bangladesh's Dairy Future

Bangladesh is making steady progress toward greater food self-sufficiency, with the dairy sector playing an increasingly important role in meeting the country's growing nutritional needs. Milk consumption is increasing steadily, yet demand still outpaces domestic supply. At the same time, average milk yields per cow remain below their full potential, creating opportunities to improve productivity and strengthen the dairy value chain.

Across rural Bangladesh, dairy farming remains a vital source of livelihood and income. However, farmers often face challenges including limited access to modern farming knowledge, rising production costs, changing climatic conditions, and uncertain market opportunities.

Launched in 2024, Danida Green Business Partnership was created to address these challenges through a collaborative approach that combines local experience with international expertise. Focusing on Southwest Bangladesh, the initiative aims to build a climate-resilient, commercially viable, and environmentally responsible dairy value chain. Through improved farming practices, innovative technologies, farmer training, and stronger market connections, the partnership is helping create new opportunities for farming communities and supporting the future growth of Bangladesh's dairy sector.

Different Strengths, One Shared Vision

Meaningful change is rarely the work of one. It takes a shared vision, collective knowledge, and the willingness to turn ambition into action.

The Green Dairy Partnership reflects the strength of collaboration, bringing together organizations with different expertise but a common purpose.

Supported by Danida Green Business Partnerships, under Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the initiative unites Arla Foods, PRAN Dairy, Solidaridad Network Asia, SEGES Innovation, and the Danish Agriculture & Food Council.

Each partner brings something essential to the journey.

Arla Foods contributes its global dairy expertise, including the Arla Big 5 framework to improve farm productivity, profitability, and sustainability. PRAN Dairy strengthens commercial market connections and opportunities for local milk producers.

Solidaridad connects sustainability ambitions with farming communities and local implementation. SEGES Innovation and the Danish Agriculture & Food Council bring technical knowledge and industry experience.

Together, they are combining global innovation with local understanding, turning shared knowledge into practical solutions.

This is more than a collaboration between organizations. It is a partnership between people, ideas, and possibilities, united by the ambition to build a stronger and greener dairy sector for Bangladesh.



For the People Behind Every Drop

The Danida Green Business Partnership in Bangladesh is designed to support the people at the centre of Bangladesh's dairy sector. Working across the southwestern districts of Khulna, Satkhira, and Jashore, the initiative aims to directly benefit 10,000 dairy farming households, with a strong focus on women's participation and economic empowerment.

The partnership helps farmers improve productivity and farm performance through practical training, improved farming practices, better access to services, and stronger market connections. It also supports women in taking on expanded roles as entrepreneurs, trainers, and decision-makers within the dairy value chain.

By strengthening dairy farming systems and improving market participation, the initiative seeks to create broader benefits for farming families, local businesses, and rural communities. At the same time, it contributes to a more reliable supply of safe and nutritious dairy products for consumers across Bangladesh.

Through knowledge, innovation, and collaboration, the partnership is helping build a more resilient and inclusive dairy sector that creates long-term opportunities for farmers and rural communities.

To bring this vision closer to reality, the partnership has set out clear objectives:

Stronger farmer livelihoods

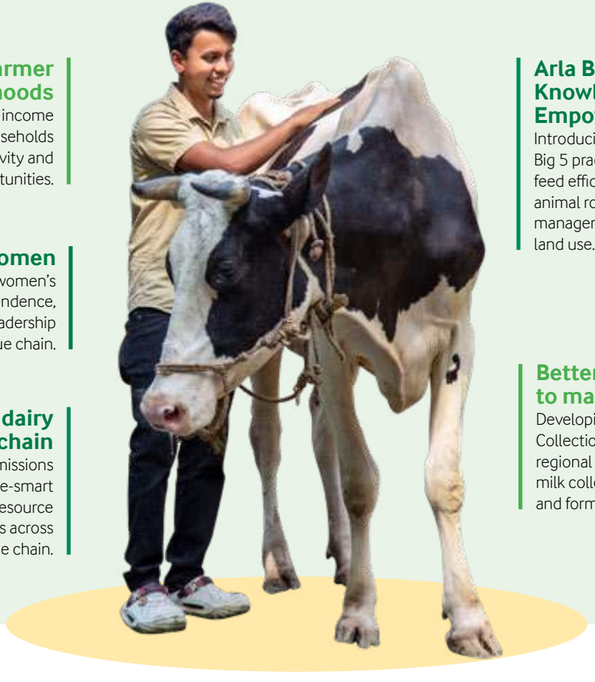
Supporting a 30% increase in income for 10,000 dairy farming households through improved productivity and commercial opportunities.

Opportunities for women

Strengthening women's participation, financial independence, entrepreneurship, and leadership throughout the dairy value chain.

A greener dairy value chain

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% through climate-smart farming practices, improved resource efficiency, and reduced losses across the value chain.



Arla Big 5: Knowledge That Empowers

Introducing farmers to Arla Big 5 practices, covering feed efficiency, feed balance, animal robustness, manure management and efficient land use.

Better connections to markets

Developing 34 Village Milk Collection Centers and three regional dairy hubs to improve milk collection, quality control, and formal market access.

Beyond these targets lies a larger ambition: developing a model with the potential to reach 50,000 farming households, with strong women's participation, and inspiring wider adoption across Bangladesh's dairy sector.

The goal is not simply to introduce better farming practices today, but to create a foundation for lasting progress tomorrow. A future where better dairy means stronger livelihoods, thriving communities, and a more resilient future for generations to come



Measuring the Momentum

Behind every story of change lies a measurable shift.

Across communities in Southwest Bangladesh, the Green Dairy Partnership is building momentum through stronger farmer networks, greater inclusion, improved market systems and climate-smart innovation.



Women at the Heart of Change

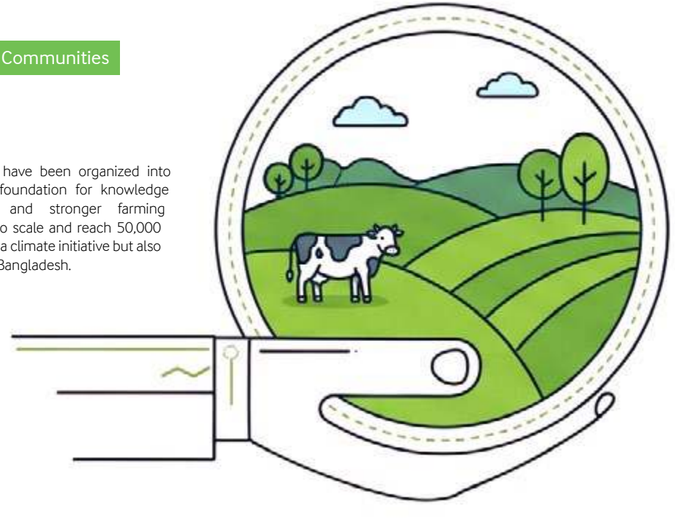
8,600
women farmers actively participating

With 8,600 women dairy farmers actively participating, the partnership has surpassed its gender participation target. Representing 86% of mobilized farmers, their involvement reflects an important step towards greater inclusion, economic opportunity and women's empowerment across the dairy value chain.

Building Stronger Farmer Communities

10,000
farmers mobilized

A total of 10,000 dairy farmers have been organized into operational clusters, creating a foundation for knowledge sharing, coordinated support, and stronger farming communities. With the potential to scale and reach 50,000 households, the project is not only a climate initiative but also a socioeconomic catalyst for rural Bangladesh.



Connecting Farms to Markets

34
Village Milk Collection Centers operational

In collaboration with PRAN Dairy, 34 Village Milk Collection Centers (VMCCs) are now fully operational, strengthening the connection between smallholder farmers and formal dairy markets. This expanding infrastructure supports more organized milk collection, improved handling practices and a more efficient dairy value chain.



Bringing Voices Together

02
platforms for wider sector engagement

The partnership has advanced the institutionalization of the Bangladesh Dairy Value Chain Forum and the community-level Pushti Kotha nutrition platform.





Partners in Action



The future of Bangladesh's dairy sector lies in demonstrating that productivity, profitability, and climate resilience can grow together. Through strong partnerships and farmer-centered innovation, we are helping create a dairy ecosystem where economic opportunity and sustainable development go hand in hand.

Selim Reza Hasan
Country Manager-Bangladesh
Solidaridad Network Asia

Solidaridad: Empowering Communities

At Solidaridad, we believe lasting transformation happens when innovation, partnership, and local ambition come together. Since 2024, Solidaridad has been anchoring the Green Dairy Partnership, bringing together Arla Foods, PRAN Dairy, SEGES Innovation, and the Danish Agriculture & Food Council (DAFC) to advance a more productive, climate-resilient, and inclusive dairy sector in Bangladesh.

Drawing on decades of global experience in sustainable value chains and more than ten years of engagement with Bangladeshi farming communities, Solidaridad serves as the partnership's strategic and implementation lead. The initiative demonstrates that climate-smart farming practices can strengthen business performance while improving livelihoods and environmental outcomes.

Working across the dairy value chain, the partnership has mobilized 10,000 smallholder farmers, enabling greater market access, knowledge sharing, and collective action. At the same time, 8,600 women dairy farmers have received training in herd management, feed practices, and financial literacy, strengthening their role as decision-makers in their households and communities.

A key milestone has been the establishment of 34 Village Milk Collection Centers in partnership with PRAN Dairy, helping improve milk quality, reduce losses, and provide farmers with more reliable market opportunities. On farms, climate-smart innovations and the implementation of the Arla Big Five principles have improved feed efficiency, animal health, productivity, and resource management while reducing the carbon footprint of milk production.

The partnership has also promoted circular economy solutions through biogas systems, commercial fodder production, and local service providers, creating new income opportunities within rural communities. Beyond farm-level interventions, collaborative platforms such as the Bangladesh Dairy Value Chain Forum and Pushti Kotha are strengthening stakeholder engagement and advancing nutrition awareness nationwide.

Looking ahead, Solidaridad aims to scale this model nationally by expanding women-led agri-enterprises, supporting the development of innovative dairy products, and contributing to policy frameworks that enable long-term sector growth. Together with its partners, Solidaridad is helping build a dairy sector that is greener, more competitive, and better equipped to create lasting value for farmers, businesses, and consumers across Bangladesh.

Arla Big 5: Bringing Global Dairy Expertise to the Farm

At the heart of Arla's dairy farming approach is the Arla Big 5: a data-driven framework focused on feed efficiency, feed balance, animal robustness, fertiliser use, and land use. Through the Green Dairy Partnership, Arla Foods and its partners are bringing this knowledge to life in Bangladesh, adapting global expertise to local farming realities. By equipping farmers with practical skills and encouraging peer-to-peer learning, the partnership supports improved farm performance, stronger livelihoods, and a more resilient dairy sector.

Women are pivotal to the future of dairy in Bangladesh. As key contributors to milk production, household nutrition, and farm management, they play an important role in strengthening the dairy sector. Through Arla Big 5 dairy farming practices, women farmers are gaining knowledge, confidence, and recognition as trainers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders. By adopting these practices and empowering women to lead change, Bangladesh can improve productivity, strengthen livelihoods, enhance nutrition, and build a more resilient food system for future generations.

Irene Quist Mortensen
International Head of Sustainability
Arla Foods



Arla Feed Life™ is an expression of the greater impact that Arla has on the world around us all. Every product we make and action we take has the power to have a positive impact in people's lives. While Arla Big 5 provides a framework for improving productivity, Arla Feed Life™ reflects Arla's broader purpose to create positive impact throughout the society. For Arla Bangladesh, this means connecting access to quality dairy nutrition with the long-term development of the local dairy sector. Through the Green Dairy Partnership, Arla and its partners are working to strengthen farming practices and market linkages, helping build a more organized dairy value chain that creates long-term benefits for farmers, consumers and the wider economy.



I believe a more structured and transparent dairy value chain is fundamental to the future of Bangladesh's dairy sector. It can help raise industry standards, attract investment and strengthen the foundations needed for long-term growth. For me, this is what Feed Life™ means in practice: delivering affordable nutrition through our DANO products while creating value beyond our business by helping build a stronger and more resilient dairy sector. By supporting farmers through Arla Big 5 and working closely with partners across the value chain, we contribute to healthier lives, stronger rural economies, and the continued progress of Bangladesh. Together,we can unlock opportunities that benefit farmers, communities, and consumers alike.

Laurent Ponty
Managing Director
Arla Foods Bangladesh

Arla Big 5

The Arla Big 5 is an evidence-based farm improvement model developed through Arla's Climate Check work with dairy farmers. It identifies the five areas of farm management that matter most for both productivity and climate impact, helping farmers improve everyday practices in practical, measurable ways. In Bangladesh, the model has been adapted to local farming realities through the Green Dairy Partnership, turning global knowledge into simple actions that farmers can apply on their own farms.

Five areas, grounded in science: Each principle builds on well-established links between animal biology, farm management and environmental performance.



Feed Efficiency

Considers how much milk a cow produces from the feed they eat. When more energy and nutrients in the feed become milk, less is lost, and fewer resources are needed for each litre.

Feed Balance

Reflects that the rumen works best when a cow's diet meets their needs for energy, protein, fibre and minerals. A balanced diet supports good digestion, milk production and animal health.

Animal Health and Robustness

Recognises that healthy, fertile and long-lived cows use resources more productively over their lifetime. This reduces the share of feed and emissions linked to unproductive animals.

Manure and Nutrient Management

Matters because manure contains valuable nutrients and is also a source of methane and nitrous oxide emissions. Good management keeps more nutrients in the farming system and reduces losses to the environment.

Land Use

It is about producing more fodder from each area of land, which is especially important where land is scarce.

PRAN Dairy: Connecting Farmers to a Stronger Dairy Future

PRAN Dairy, the country's largest milk processor and a key market and value chain partner of the project, plays a vital role in connecting smallholder farmers to commercial dairy markets through its extensive milk collection, processing, and distribution network. The company supports farmer capacity building through its Dairy Academy, strengthens quality assurance systems, and promotes climate-smart production practices. By ensuring reliable market access, sharing industry expertise, and encouraging sustainable farming practices, PRAN Dairy helps improve farmer livelihoods, strengthen rural economies, and transform farming improvements into long-term economic opportunities for households.

The true potential of Bangladesh's dairy sector can only be unlocked through meaningful collaboration across the entire value chain. By uniting industry players, policymakers, and local communities, we can build a resilient ecosystem that prioritizes the economic empowerment and betterment of our dairy farmers, who remain the very backbone of this industry.

Uzma Chowdhury
Director, Finance, PRAN-RFL Group





Milk is fundamental to the nutritional development of people of all ages, yet in Bangladesh, its consumption is often considered an expensive habit due to high retail prices. To make this vital source of nutrition accessible to everyone, targeted government support is crucial to drive down the cost of milk production at the farm level. By developing a robust local feed market that provides high-quality, affordable cattle nutrition, and by ensuring our farmers have access to finance, we can significantly lower these expenses. Ultimately, we can pass those savings on and offer a much better, affordable price to the end consumer.

Md. Maksudur Rahman
Chief Operating Officer (COO), PRAN Dairy

SEGES Innovation: From Technical Knowledge to Farm-Level Change

At the heart of Arla's dairy farming approach is the Arla Big 5: a data-driven framework focused on feed efficiency, feed balance, animal robustness, fertiliser use, and land use. Through the Green Dairy Partnership, Arla Foods and its partners are bringing this knowledge to life in Bangladesh, adapting global expertise to local farming realities. By equipping farmers with practical skills and encouraging peer-to-peer learning, the partnership supports improved farm performance, stronger livelihoods, and a more resilient dairy sector.



Real change happens when farmers can see, test and adapt new practices within their own farming systems. Our role is to help turn knowledge into practical solutions that work under local conditions.

Birgitte Wiedemann Daabeck
Senior Specialist, Production, Cattle
SEGES Innovation

Denmark has a long history of developing its dairy sector through cooperation between farmers, researchers and businesses. One of the most valuable lessons from that experience is that progress happens when people work together and share what they know. Through the Green Dairy Partnership, we have the opportunity to bring this expertise to Bangladesh, working with local partners to explore solutions that fit the needs of Bangladeshi farmers. From improving farm practices to making better use of resources, small, practical changes can make a real difference over time. We are glad to be part of this exchange and to support a partnership that creates opportunities for farmers and the wider dairy industry.

Jeppe Søndergaard Pedersen
Chief Consultant, Market & Geopolitics
Danish Aggriculture & Food Council





Mukta Begum

Khamari Bouma: From A Housewife to A Businesswoman



Long before Mukta owned a single cow, she owned a dream.

Growing up around domestic animals, she learned to feed and care for cattle as a young girl. To her, it never felt like a chore. It felt like a glimpse of a future where she would run a farm of her own, with animals that belonged to her and a life she built with her own hands.

Marriage in 2014 did not close that door. She carried the ambition into her new home, and in 2016 her mother-in-law placed a heifer calf in her care. The gift was small, but its meaning was not. For the first time, Mukta's dream had something living to grow from. By 2018, she was selling milk.

She is quick to name what made that beginning possible. Her husband and parents-in-law stood behind her, and their encouragement gave her the courage to speak her ambitions aloud. "You can express your own aspirations when your family supports you," she says.

But a supportive home did not quiet the world outside it. As her farm grew and she became an increasingly important contributor to her household, some neighbors questioned why a woman should earn her living through dairy farming. The comments came steadily, and they stung.

Mukta refused to let them set her course. "People will always have different things to say," she says. "Some will appreciate you, while others will criticize you. If you pay attention to everything they say, you will never be able to move forward." She held on to her grandmother's words that no honest job is small, and she kept working.





People will always have different things to say. Some will appreciate you, while others will criticize you. If you pay attention to everything they say, you will never be able to move forward.

Mukta produces approximately
47-48 litres
of milk every day

Cow dung now feeds a
biogas system
that meets her household's cooking-energy needs

Mukta owns
BDT **8-9 lakh**
worth of cattle

As a lead farmer in the project, she has helped train approximately
220 women



THE TURNING POINT: KNOWLEDGE THAT FITS THE FARM

Determination had carried Mukta a long way, but she knew it could not carry her all the way. The next chapter began when a community consultation by Solidaridad Network Asia introduced her to Danida Green Business Partnership.

For the first time, She learned about Arla Big 5. More importantly, she began to see her farm differently, not as a collection of daily tasks, but as a business she could improve through informed decisions.

Mukta wasted little time putting those lessons into practice. She started growing high-quality grass on two bighas of land to feed her cattle and upgraded her cowshed using locally available materials. Simple changes made a meaningful difference, helping her create a healthier environment for her animals and a stronger foundation for her farm.



From Small Beginnings to Steady Income

The results soon became visible.

Today, Mukta sells approximately 47 litres of milk each day through PRAN Dairy's collection network. Every Sunday, payments arrive directly in her bank account, providing a reliable income she can count on.

That stability changed her outlook. With confidence in her earnings, she reinvested in the farm, purchasing goats and expanding her assets. She now owns nine goats, while the value of her cattle is estimated at BDT 8-9 lakh.

Mukta also found opportunity where others might see waste. Cow dung from her farm now powers a biogas system that supplies cooking fuel for her household, turning an everyday by-product into a valuable resource.

From Criticism to Respect

The transformation was not only visible on the farm. It was visible in the way people saw her. An uncle-in-law who once refused to let her store cow dung on family land now proudly calls her "Amar Khamari Bou Ma" or "our farmer daughter-in-law."

For Mukta, those words carry special meaning. They reflect years of persistence, hard work, and quiet determination. Through her success, she has challenged assumptions about what women can achieve and earned the respect of those around her.



Lifting Others As She Rises

Mukta's success did not stop at her own farm. As a lead farmer in the project, she has helped train approximately 220 women and community members across seven groups, sharing practical knowledge on cattle rearing and farm management.

Every lesson she passes on has the potential to strengthen another family, improve another farm, and build confidence in another woman who wants to create opportunities of her own.

A Future Built for Her Children

Mukta's ambitions continue to grow. She hopes to expand her herd to ten milking cows and build a larger enterprise that can support her children's education and future opportunities.

From a single heifer calf to becoming a respected farmer, trainer, and community leader, her journey is a powerful example of what can happen when determination is matched with knowledge, opportunity, and support.

Today, the impact of that journey can be seen not only in her farm, but also in the women she has trained, the family she supports, and the future she is working to build for the next generation.



Harufa Khatun

One Cow, Two Generations of Ambition: Harufa & Her Son's Dairy Journey



A Passion Before a Plan

In 2015, Harufa Khatun bought a Friesian cow, not because she had a business plan, but because she loved cattle. Five years later, she added a Jersey cow with a black calf. The Jersey cow went on to give birth to eight calves, and what began as a personal interest gradually grew into a family enterprise.



THE LESSON BEHIND SEVEN KILOGRAMS

Harufa soon learned that owning cattle and running a dairy business are different things. She struggled to identify the right feeding practices and nutritional needs for her animals. A cow old enough to give more milk was yielding only about seven kilograms a day.

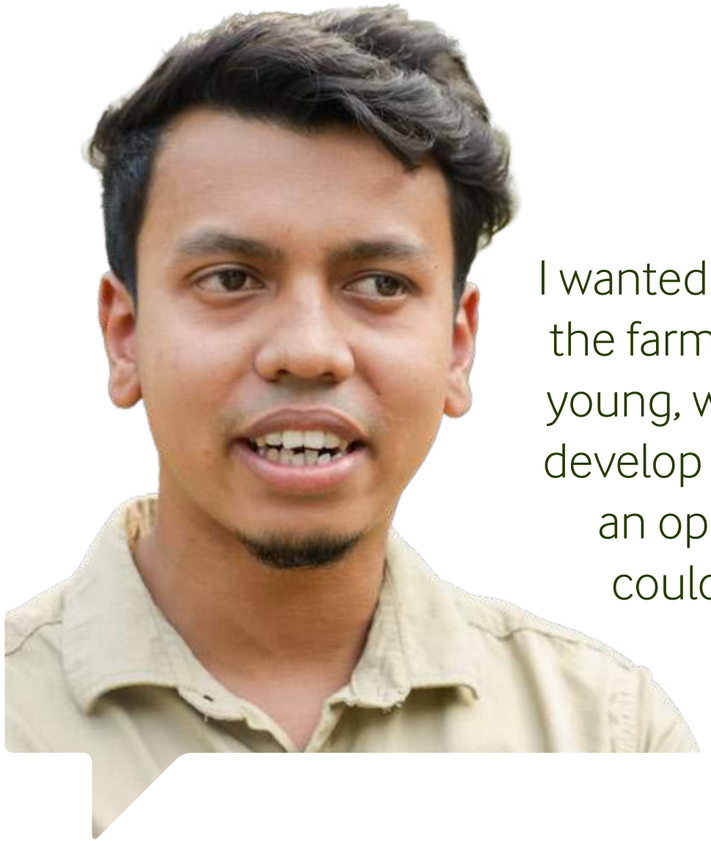
As the herd grew, so did the pressure. The family did not always recognise when an animal was ill or know how best to treat it. Much of the work was manual, and much of the decision-making was trial and error, with real costs to animal welfare, milk production, time and money.

A TURNING POINT FOR THE FARM

In those early years, the family learned largely through trial and error. They struggled with feeding, animal nutrition and recognising illness. One cow, old enough to produce more, gave only about seven kilograms of milk a day. As the herd expanded, these gaps in knowledge cost them time, money and milk.

Harufa first heard about Arla's dairy-farming initiatives and the Green Dairy Partnership at an animal resources fair. The family had around 22 cattle by then. They contacted the project team, who visited their farm. Through training under the partnership, with the involvement of Solidaridad Network Asia, they learned to manage feeding, identify health problems and seek appropriate treatment. According to Harufa, the same cow now produces roughly 12 kilograms of milk a day.





I wanted to focus on the farm while I was young, work hard to develop it, and build an operation that could eventually run more efficiently

Hasib's next goal is a herd of around 30 milking cows, higher milk production and packaged milk as a new product line. The family's priorities are clear: protect animal health, strengthen farm management, develop value-added products and make better use of the resources the farm generates.



Two Generations, One Shared Ambition

Harufa laid the foundation, but her son, Hasib Hasan, is now helping shape what comes next.

“I wanted to focus on the farm while I was young, work hard to develop it, and build an operation that could eventually run more efficiently,” he says. Harufa brings years of experience caring for cattle, while Hasib oversees daily operations and the farm’s development. His elder brother, who works outside the farm, has also contributed financially. With three to four labourers helping out, what began as a family activity has become a more organised business.



Making Better Use of What They Have

The family now grows grass on about 8.5 bighas of land, giving them greater control over the fodder their cattle need and an important part of their operating costs. A larger herd also brought more manure, which became difficult to manage and created problems for neighbours. After learning about biogas through the project, the family began turning cow dung into energy for cooking and other needs at home and on the farm. It has reduced spending on other fuels and eased a problem that once affected the surrounding community.

More Than Raw Milk

Today, the farm produces about 250 litres of milk a day, supplied through PRAN Dairy’s collection and distribution channel. Having a regular market means the family no longer has to depend entirely on individual buyers. They also make around two kilograms of ghee daily, have started producing cup yoghurt and are exploring packaged milk as their next product.

Knowledge That Travels

Their experience is reaching other farmers, too. Neighbours have shown interest in dairy farming, and Harufa and Hasib share basic cattle-care advice through their veterinary medicine shop. For more serious animal health problems, they encourage proper veterinary assessment.

Looking Ahead

Hasib hopes to expand to around 30 milking cows, increase production and develop packaged milk. Better animal care, sound farm management and wise use of resources remain central to the plan. Harufa bought her first cow simply because she loved cattle. Today, that interest has become a business Hasib hopes to build his future around. It supports their family, employs local workers and encourages neighbours to explore dairy farming themselves.





Dipa Ghosh

From Faith to Farming



When Kumarish Ghosh married Dipa in 2018, he already had a livelihood in the gold business. Dairy farming was something different, driven by both personal conviction and curiosity.

“In our faith, serving living beings is a way of serving God,” he says. “For me, caring for cows has both religious significance and economic value.”The couple wondered whether dairy farming could also help strengthen the family’s finances. They decided to find out.



TWO COWS AND A LOT TO LEARN

They started with two cows, one purchased by Kumarish and the other gifted by his father. While they had family support, they lacked experience in managing cattle health, feeding, and milk production.

Their cows produced less milk than expected, and illness was a recurring challenge. Like many new farmers, they quickly realized that success depended not only on the number of animals they owned but also on how well they cared for them.

By 2025, their herd had grown to five cows, but they knew there was still room for improvement.





What we learned through the Arla Big 5 made a real difference on our farm. Healthier cows, better practices, and higher milk production helped turn dairy farming into a more reliable source of income.

For Kumarish and Dipa, success has not meant choosing between their values and their ambitions. Care for animals, a willingness to learn, and the wish to build a stronger financial future for their family have turned out to be the same project.



Training that went straight to the cowshed

A turning point came when the couple joined Danida Green Business Partnership (DGBP). Through practical training supported by Arla Big 5, they learned about animal health, feeding practices, and farm management. Most importantly, the lessons could be applied immediately.

The impact soon became visible. Healthier animals produced more milk, and the farm began to deliver stronger returns. What had started as an experiment gradually became a reliable source of income. Their herd has since grown to around ten animals.

Making the farm pay for itself

The Ghoshs focused on reinvesting in the farm. Income from selling male calves helped fund improvements, including leasing land to grow fodder and ensure a more reliable feed supply.

They also learned how to convert cow dung into biogas, which now provides cooking energy for their household. What was once considered waste has become a useful resource that reduces household expenses.

Over time, the farm evolved into a connected system where cattle, fodder production, and biogas generation support one another.



A change in priorities

Dairy farming began as a modest addition to the family's income and a reflection of Kumarish's beliefs. Over time, it has become an increasingly important part of their future plans.

Improved milk production, healthier animals, and growing confidence in the business have encouraged the couple to invest more attention in the farm. Their commitment to animal care remains unchanged, but they now see greater opportunities for growth and income through dairy farming.



The Danish Green Business Partnership is demonstrating how knowledge-sharing and collaboration can strengthen Bangladesh's dairy sector. I'm glad that the Danish government is investing to build the relevant tool kit (Feed Efficiency, Feed Balance, Animal Robustness, Manure Management and Land Use) for the extension officers, who are on the ground, especially the promotion of silage production & use for reduction of feed cost in a sustainable manner, and we hope we can escalate this up going forward.

Dr. Md. Abdur Rahim
Director, Divisional Livestock Office, Khulna

The next herd

Kumarish and Dipa hope to expand their herd to between 15 and 20 cows in the coming years. They plan to continue improving animal care, strengthening farm management practices, and increasing the contribution dairy makes to household income.

From two cows and limited technical knowledge to a growing dairy enterprise, their journey reflects the value of learning, reinvestment, and long-term commitment. For the couple, faith, care for animals, and the desire to build a stronger future for their family have gone hand in hand.



Munzurul Islam

Farmer Turned Entrepreneur



When Munzurul Islam visited a cattle market in late 2020, a seller asked whether he wanted a daanta (with teeth) or adaanta (without teeth) cow. He had no idea what the terms meant.

A graduate in Media Studies and Journalism, Munzurul grew up in Dhaka in a family of doctors with no farming background. But he had inherited land in Keshobpur and was determined to make productive use of it.

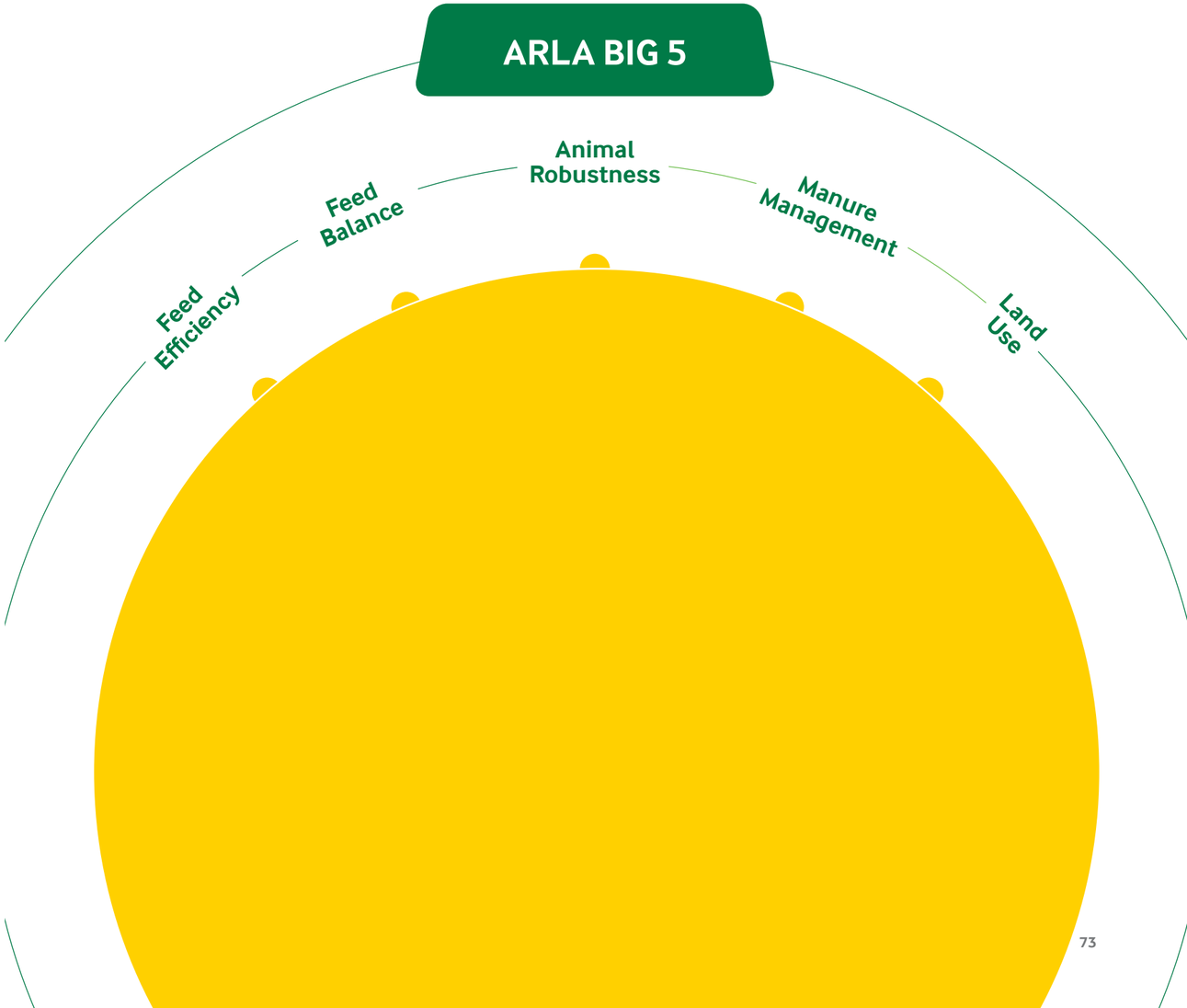
"I did not start farming simply as a hobby," he says. "We had land, and I wanted to make productive use of it. I had been interested in business from an early age."

He began with 12 cows producing around 72 litres of milk per day. Challenges emerged quickly. Cattle health problems, limited knowledge of nutrition, and difficulty securing fair milk prices soon tested his confidence.





Initially, people criticised the things I was doing. Now, those same people come to learn from me and ask for advice on improving their own farms.



A DECISION TO LEARN

Rather than giving up, Munzurul focused on learning. He researched cattle nutrition, sought advice from livestock officers, and eventually connected with Danida Green Business Partnership (DGBP) through Solidaridad Network Asia.

Through the project, he was introduced to Arla's Big 5 Principles: Feed Efficiency, Protein Efficiency, Animal Robustness, Manure Management, and Land Use.

"Things that might have taken me five years to figure out on my own, I could learn much earlier through their guidance," he says.



Putting Knowledge to Work

Munzurul applied the lessons across his farm. He cultivated high-quality fodder grass on three bighas of land, introduced milking machines, and installed a biogas plant that converts manure into energy.

These improvements helped strengthen farm productivity while making better use of available resources. Better feed supported animal performance, while improved manure management contributed to the farm's energy needs.

Finding More Than One Market

Access to reliable markets was another challenge. To reduce reliance on a single income source, Munzurul expanded beyond raw milk sales.

Today, the farm has 21 cows producing up to 165 litres of milk per day. Milk is sold through both BMCC and PRAN Dairy's collection network, while more than 100 litres are processed into value-added products such as kulfi, ghee, and packaged milk.

The diversified business model has helped create greater stability and new opportunities for growth.

From "Crazy" to Adviser

Not everyone understood his approach at first. Neighbours were sceptical of technologies such as mechanised milking and biogas production, and some considered him pagol.

Over time, results changed perceptions.

"Initially, people criticised the things I was doing," Munzurul says. "Now, those same people come to learn from me and ask for advice on improving their own farms."

His experience demonstrates how visible success can encourage wider adoption of improved farming practices.





What the Partnership Made Possible

Munzurul credits his progress to his own willingness to learn, together with the structure around him: technical training through DGBP, an established milk channel through PRAN Dairy, and project monitoring and support from SNA. He describes the project's contribution as both technical and financial, supporting the upgrade of his farm and better farming practices in his area.

His story suggests what donors and partners can achieve when they combine practical training, reliable market links and opportunities for value addition. Training alone would not have solved his pricing problem, and a market channel alone would not have fixed his feeding practices. Together they gave a motivated newcomer the means to build something durable.

Looking Ahead

Munzurul credits his progress to a combination of determination, technical training through DGBP, market access through PRAN Dairy, and ongoing support from Solidaridad Network Asia.

Today, he runs an enterprise that combines milk production, value-added processing, mechanised milking, and biogas generation. More importantly, he has become a resource for other farmers seeking to improve their own operations.

His journey shows how practical knowledge, market connections, and a willingness to adapt can help transform a newcomer into a successful dairy entrepreneur.



Beauty Begum

One Cow, One Shared Dream: How a Couple Is Building a Dairy Farm



A Shared Beginning

In 2021, Beauty Begum's father gave her a cow. For Beauty and her husband, Habibur Rahman, it was the beginning of something they both wanted to pursue. Habibur had grown up watching his mother care for indigenous cattle and had long hoped to raise cows himself. Beauty shared that interest, and together they decided to start a small dairy farm.



LEARNING ALONG THE WAY

Beauty took the lead, while Habibur helped with the daily work alongside his other job. But affection for their animals could only take them so far. Neither knew enough about feeding, nutrition or preventing illness. When the cows fell sick, they had to learn by trial and error. From 2021 to August 2025, they continued with two cows, making slow progress.





Progress here is not only a matter of counting cattle. It is about learning to look after them better and making the farm more productive. Each lesson changes small daily decisions, and small decisions add up.

It is not a story of sudden change. It is a story of a gifted cow, a mother's example remembered, a husband's steady help, and a woman learning to run her own enterprise.

Knowledge That Made a Difference

Things began to change when Beauty received training through Danida Green Business Partnership (DGBP), supported by Arla. She learned how to feed cattle properly, care for their health and keep them comfortable. There was no cash assistance. Instead, she gained something she could use straight away: practical knowledge that helped her make better decisions in the cowshed.





A Small Farm, Growing Steadily

Today, Beauty and Habibur have four cows, three of them pregnant. The farm produces about 12 to 13 litres of milk a day, giving the household a regular source of income. Beauty says the improvements in how she looks after her animals are making a difference. She hopes to expand the herd, earn more and contribute more to her family's needs. With three cows expecting, there is room for growth, provided they can maintain good animal health and secure the resources needed. For now, the couple is concentrating on putting their learning into practice and building a more productive farm. What started with a cow from her father has become an enterprise Beauty runs herself, with Habibur's steady support. The farm is still small, but it is growing through the work and care they put into it every day.



Omol Krishno Mondol

Transforming bi-products into opportunities



In 2015, Omol Krishno Mondol visited a relative's dairy farm and saw something that stayed with him. The family was selling milk through local markets and PRAN Dairy's collection network, creating a steady source of income.

"I saw someone else doing well in dairy farming, and that inspired me to start," he recalls. "Over time, I worked to improve my own farm and do better."

Born in 1964, Omol did not begin with much. His first heifer was purchased with savings from his daughter, supported by a contribution from his mother. It was a small investment, but a meaningful one. Their trust gave him the confidence to take his first step into dairy farming.

A Family's Trust as Seed Capital

Like many new farmers, Omol soon discovered that hard work alone was not enough.

Although he was committed to making the farm succeed, he did not always know the best way to feed or care for his animals. When cattle became sick, expenses increased and milk production suffered. The farm was moving forward, but more slowly than he had hoped.

Those early challenges taught him an important lesson: success in dairy farming depends as much on knowledge as it does on effort.



AMBITION AHEAD OF KNOWLEDGE

Plenty of smallholders will recognise what came next: ambition ran ahead of knowledge. Omol did not fully understand what good cattle management demanded. Animals are expensive to keep, and without a clear idea of how to feed and care for them, his cattle sometimes fell ill. Sickness pushed his costs up and held milk production back, squeezing the very income he had set out to build.

The lesson was hard-won but plain. Owning more animals wasn't enough. He had to learn how to look after them properly.

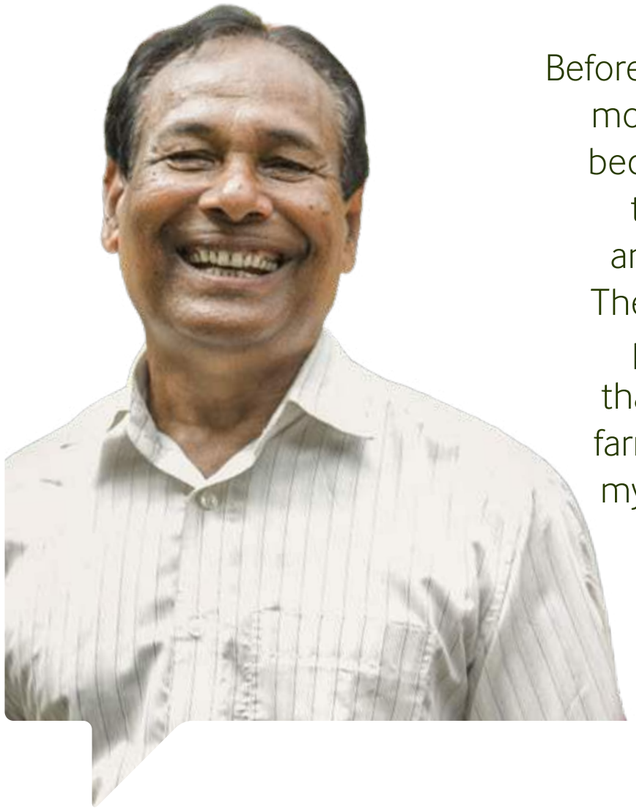
TRAINING THAT CHANGED EVERYDAY DECISIONS

A turning point came in 2025 when Omol joined Danida Green Business Partnership (DGBP) after a community consultation organized by Solidaridad Network Asia. Through the project, he received practical training on feeding management, cattle health, composting, open grazing, urea-molasses supplementation, machine milking practices, and the productive use of livestock manure.

"Through the project, I have learned how to raise cattle properly and what to feed them," says Omol. "Previously, I spent more money because I did not know the right practices. Now, my cows stay healthier, produce more milk, and help me earn more."

The training helped him make better decisions every day, from feeding cattle to managing farm resources more efficiently.





Before, I often spent more money than necessary because I did not know the best way to feed and care for my cows. The Arla Big 5 gave me practical knowledge that I could use on my farm right away. Today, my cows are healthier, produce more milk, and help me earn a better income for my family

Omol Attended DGBP Project Training That Covered:

- Feeding Management
- Open Grazing
- Composting
- Urea-Molasses Supplementation
- Teat Cups in Machine Milking
- Biogas Production
- Livestock Manure Management



Results in the Milking Shed

The improvements soon became visible. Today, Omol's five cows produce around 70 kilograms of milk each day. Better feeding and management practices have helped improve productivity while reducing unnecessary costs.

For Omol, the biggest change has not been a single investment or technology. It has been understanding how small improvements in daily farm management can add up over time.

From Waste to A Second Income

One lesson stood out in particular: cow dung could be more than just waste. After learning about biogas production, Omol began converting manure into energy and supplying biogas to neighbouring households. What started as a way to make use of farm waste soon became an additional source of income.

He later invested part of those earnings in fish farming, creating another way to support his family. Today, dairy, biogas, and fish farming work together, helping him make better use of available resources while reducing reliance on a single income source.



Local Foundations, Shared Benefits

Omol's journey has been shaped by the people around him. A relative's success sparked the idea. His daughter and mother helped him get started. Training provided the knowledge, and neighbours now benefit from the biogas produced on his farm. Each has played a role in helping him move forward.

The Next Stage

Omol hopes to introduce machine milking and begin supplying milk through PRAN Dairy's collection network, following the same path that first inspired him to enter dairy farming.

He also plans to expand his biogas activities and continue improving the farm.

More than a decade after he first entered the dairy sector, Omol is still looking ahead. His story shows how family support, practical knowledge, and a willingness to learn can turn a simple idea into a growing enterprise and create new opportunities along the way.

Why It Matters

Omol is past sixty, and his story is a reminder that entrepreneurial momentum has no age limit. It began with a relative's example, a daughter's savings and a mother's contribution. Practical training turned that start into healthier cattle, higher yields and lower costs. Biogas and fish farming turned a single income into several. The return is visible in his own words and in his farm's results: a farmer who once learned by trial and error now works with confidence, and he is building something meant to last.



Rupa Khatun

From Fighting Alone to Standing Proud



Building Something of Her Own

Rupa Khatun did not need to start a dairy farm to keep her household afloat. Her husband, Halim Gazi, managed three fish ponds, and the family had an income. But at 30, she wanted to earn and save money herself and build something she could call her own.



STARTING WITH LITTLE, AND ALMOST NO BACKING

She had kept cattle before, selling a cow as the herd grew. In 2020, she began again with two cows, determined this time to build a lasting business. Her husband offered little encouragement, and others questioned her plans. Rupa went ahead, using her savings and earnings from calf sales to pay for the work. As the farm developed, she leased land and built a cowshed.

LEARNING ALONG THE WAY

At first, she learned by watching other farmers. That experience helped her begin, but managing a growing herd demanded more knowledge.

A milk collector introduced her to Danida Green Business Partnership (DGBP), which she joined in November 2025. Training in cattle feeding, treatment and farm management helped her make more informed decisions. The project also supported a biogas system to manage manure and reduce energy costs. Rupa paid part of the installation cost herself and is repaying the remaining amount.





Dairy farming was never just about raising cattle or earning money for Rupa Khatun. It was about standing on her own feet.

For Rupa, that change matters beyond the practical help. It is knowing that she kept believing when others did not.

Training, and a biogas system she helped pay for

The programme gave her practical knowledge of cattle feeding, treatment and farm management, helping her make better-informed decisions about her animals. For someone who had built everything on observation and experience, structured learning was a real step up.

It also supported a biogas system at her farm, which helps manage farm waste and cut energy costs. Rupa paid part of the installation herself and is repaying the remainder. Take responsibility, invest in improvement: it is the same approach she has followed from the start.



Through DGBP, farmers are gaining practical knowledge that can help improve farm management and long-term resilience. The adoption of Arla Big 5 principles is creating greater awareness of efficient and climate-conscious dairy farming. Through this project farmers are getting hands on experience that is increasing both their productivity and livelihood.

Dr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman
District Livestock Officer, Jashore

The land in her name

Today, her herd includes five cattle: four cows, all expected to calve, and one calf. She has continued investing her own savings and farm earnings, without relying on outside financial support for the business.

Her proudest achievement is buying land in her own name with money earned from dairy farming. For Rupa, that land represents the security and independence she set out to create.

Doubt turns to pride

As the farm expanded and dairy began offering a more dependable return than fish cultivation, attitudes at home changed. The family who once doubted her now encourages her plans.

Rupa continues to buy land with the hope of raising more cattle. What began with two cows and little support has become a business she can shape herself, and one her family now takes pride in.



Conclusion

Looking Ahead

The Danida Green Business Partnership has established a practical foundation for the next chapter of Bangladesh's dairy sector by demonstrating that productivity, commercial viability, and climate resilience can go hand in hand. Rooted in the realities of smallholder farming and strengthened by global expertise, the initiative has translated proven approaches, from the Arla Big 5 framework to circular biogas systems, into a scalable model for sustainable dairy development. In doing so, it offers development practitioners, policymakers, and agribusinesses a practical blueprint for advancing climate-smart and gender-inclusive dairy farming.

By capturing field-tested lessons in practical toolkits and training resources, the project enables government extension services and industry stakeholders to adapt and replicate successful models across the country. This contributes to a dairy value chain that is more resilient, productive, and connected.

At the same time, the initiative is expanding economic opportunities by linking farmers to structured milk collection networks, formal processing channels, and emerging markets for value-added dairy products. With women playing a central role in business decisions and sustainable resource management, the partnership goes beyond increasing milk production. It is helping strengthen rural livelihoods, support environmental sustainability, and build a more inclusive and resilient food system capable of nourishing generations to come.