

# **Rebuilding The Himalayan Rabbit Farm hit by the severe earthquake in Nepal**

## **Background**

The Himalayan Rabbit Farm was established in 2012 registered under the Department of Cottage and Small Industries, Nepal. It is the first of its kind to introduce rabbit farming into a production scale and promote it among various small farmers in different areas of Nepal and develop its meat market. The farm has been working with a social enterprise model and have already developed rabbit farming in more than 100 households in some districts of Nepal namely- Myagdi, Rasuwa, Dolkha, Sindhuli, Nawalparasi and Kathmandu. We have been producing and providing rabbit breeds to those small family farmers, providing them training regarding its management, creating awareness about its nutritional benefits and promoting them to consume rabbit meat and assuring market of their produces. In the rural areas of Nepal, malnutrition is a major problem with the cases of protein and iron related deficiency as stated in the government statistics. 24% of women are malnourished as defined by BMI <18.5. The status of Protein Energy Malnutrition (PEM) below 5 years of age shows 13% are wasting, 39% are underweight and 49% are stunting. Iron deficiency in 6-11 months infant shows 82%, preschool children (below 5) shows 48%, pregnant women shows 42% and in women shows 36%. (Source: <http://www.npcs.org.np/nutrition.html>). With the occurrence of earthquake, there is more chances that the situation gets exacerbated in those areas.

## **Rationale of the project:**

### Brief about the earthquake disaster

Just before the earthquake, we had a very good response from the existing restaurants where the demand was highly increased and it showed that we have to struggle hard to increase our supply base. Also different hotels and restaurants and major touristic hotels and restaurants were interested to introduce rabbit meat. After the earthquake, like every sectors have been affected rabbit meat market has also been affected. The Himalayan Rabbit Farm has also been severely affected due to which the shed has to be rebuilt and operations has to be managed.

Because of the devastating earthquake occurred on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 of the magnitude 7.6 rector scale, more than 8000 lives have been lost till the date, many houses have been destroyed and historical places have been destroyed. Government, national and international organizations are putting their joint efforts to support the affected to provide the immediate relief supports. We also put on our individual and group efforts to support in relief. After the relief it comes the rehabilitation where, people in some of the affected areas have started constructing temporary shelter (a house made up of galvanized iron sheets, bamboo, or tree logs in a low cost utilizing locally available resources) and some are in the way to do so. People need healthy food, clean water and environment in such scenario. We have been planning to work towards addressing the nutritional issue during the rehabilitation by our own efforts and also collaborating with relevant institutions working in the sector.

Since the farm is not an independent business only and works closely with the producers and market, we are more concerned about our small family farmers because of this great loss.

Therefore, we have come-up with following plans which are briefly highlighted below:

Plan 1

Reconstruct The Himalayan Rabbit Farm, revive its smooth operations

Plan 2

Introduce small scale rabbit farms in the affected areas which will be a major source of nutrient within a short period of time by utilizing the locally available resources for fodder in the resource scarce scenario.

Plan 3

Develop rabbit meat market by organizing meat tasting programs, recipe competitions, cook shows and workshop targeting the hotel and restaurant chefs about the ideas to cook best rabbit dishes.

Plan 4

Identify the international markets, which supports small family farmers and to those products which are naturally produced. Our colleagues from Thunderbird University, USA are exploring marketing opportunities to introduce rabbit meat as jerky and rabbit skin products in US and abroad.

**Main Objective**

To rebuild the rabbit farm severely damaged by the earthquake.

**Specific objectives**

- To maintain the roofing structure so as to prevent the inflow of water during monsoon as its near.
- To construct cages that can support the housing of rabbits for the breeding and fattening ones.
- To ensure supply of safe and clean drinking water to the farm rabbits.

**Activities planned to upgrade the farm**

- Design and construction of appropriate housing materials:  
Based on reviews of various literatures related to rabbit farming and recommendation of experts, we have developed appropriate design for rabbit cage construction. The cage constructed will ensure the safety of the rabbits from rodents, will be durable and no frequent damages due to the rabbit droppings. It will be made so as to provide proper spacing to keep healthy rabbits and allocate equipment in places ensuring easy access to water and feed supply.
- Provide regular supply of water for rabbit keeping by allocating automated water supply:  
To provide the regular supply of water, properly designed and demonstrated system of water supply through tilted bottle into the cage.

- Installation of water purification facility inside the farm ensuring safe water to rabbits:  
Water from the raw source will be purified through the water purification unit before it is supplied to rabbits. Water being a major source of disease transmission, provision of safe drinking water will be done through this system.
- Record keeping of regular operations:  
Raising rabbits without proper record keeping cannot provide information to investors regarding the regular operations, management guideline and performance. Record keeping will be easy in operations with rabbits allocated in specialized cages, bucks, does and weaned rabbits will be kept in separate cages. This will help in proper identification of the rabbits, their performance and prevents inbreeding that ultimately supports healthy rabbit production. The information documented will be a reference and guidelines for many farmers, researchers and academicians regarding the rabbit farming.

### Total Budget required

S.N.	Particulars	Unit (Nos.)	Rate (In Euro)	Amount (In Euro)
1	Semi-automated cages for rabbit keeping	144	50.70	7300.20
2	Roofing	1	434.78	434.80
2	Feeding Equipment	144	2.61	375.70
3	Watering Equipment	144	2.61	375.70
4	Water treatment plant (for small scale plant)	1	304.35	304.30
5	Slaughter center establishment	1	1304.3	1304.30
	<b>Total</b>			<b>10095.00</b>

### Requested (heading-wise description)

S.N.	Particulars	Unit (Nos.)	Rate (In Euro)	Amount (In Euro)
1	Semi-automated cages for rabbit keeping	50	50.70	2534.78
2	Feeding Equipment	50	2.61	130.43
3	Watering Equipment	50	2.61	130.43
4	Water treatment plant (for small scale plant)	1	304.35	304.35
	<b>Total</b>			<b>3100.00</b>