

# How Heifer Promotes Animal Well-Being



Since 1944, Heifer International has supported 52.6 million households, focusing on empowering smallholder farmers to sustainably address hunger and poverty in their communities while caring for the Earth. Heifer operates in 19 countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas, working with farmers to strengthen food systems that enable them to earn living incomes that cover household needs such as nutritious food, education, housing and unexpected costs.

## Improving Incomes and Access to Nutritious Food

An estimated 600 million of the world's low-income smallholder farming households earn their livelihoods primarily from raising animals, while the livestock sector employs more than 1.3 billion people worldwide.

Heifer International promotes approaches to livestock management that, when properly implemented can address nutritional deficiencies, boost local incomes, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, regenerate degraded landscapes and improve animal health and well-being.

## Promoting a One Health Approach

Heifer applies the [One Health](#) approach — a global, multidisciplinary concept recognizing the interconnectedness of human, animal and environmental health — to help smallholder farmers care for their animals and build productive food systems, while reducing the burden on people, animals and ecosystems.

We train farmers using Heifer's [Animal Well-Being Guidelines and Standards](#) — a rigorous set of well-being standards and biosecurity protocols that promote the humane and safe treatment of animals, while reducing the risk of disease.

## Promoting Technical Support and Sharing Best Practices

At the request of each community, we provide locally appropriate training and technical support to farmers, their communities and local stakeholders to meet and maintain high standards of animal care and well-being, relating to:



### Appropriate Housing

We support farmers in constructing low-cost animal housing, which reduces the risk of predation and disease.



### Climate-Smart Livestock Training

We provide climate-smart livestock training to help farmers improve animal management alongside production, including cultivating diverse crops and fodder that improve soil quality.



### Disease Prevention

We equip community members to provide affordable animal health services and technical training as community animal health workers, who deliver livestock vaccinations and address essential animal health needs while earning their own income.



### Earth-Friendly Practices

We prioritize practices that reduce waste by repurposing manure for composting and fertilizer or producing biofuels, growing sustainable feed (fodder crops) and conserving the land (cover crops) and improving access to renewable energy through solar-powered milk chilling facilities, among other innovations.



### Hygiene Standards

We partner with farmers, cooperatives and market actors to adopt humane handling and hygienic processing across value chains, promoting best practices for animal management activities including milking, cleaning and general care, to safeguard animal and human health.



### Nutritious Feed

We encourage the local production of nutrient-rich and climate-smart animal feed to ensure healthier and more productive animals. Heifer provides farmers with training on practices such as nursery management, fodder and silage preservation as well as rainwater harvesting techniques for fodder production.

## Role of Animals in Poverty Reduction

Agricultural development is up to 11 times more effective at reducing poverty than development initiatives in any other sector. With Heifer's support, communities are leveraging animal agriculture by:



### Accessing Nutritious Foods

The *Women Entrepreneurs 2* initiative in Mexico provides smallholder farmers in resource-poor communities access to critical nutrients through cage-free poultry rearing and consumption.



### Improving Incomes

The *Tanzania Milk Processing Project* trains networks of community animal health workers to provide veterinary services to local farmers, allowing for a higher standard of care for livestock animals and resulting in higher rates of financial stability and economic resilience.



### Empowering Women

The *Odisha Socio-Economic Development* project in India supports smallholder women farmers to increase their incomes by improving the quality and quantity of livestock production and building infrastructure and market connections so women-owned agribusiness can thrive.



For more information about Heifer's activities in promoting healthy and sustainable livestock practices, contact [info@heifer.org](mailto:info@heifer.org)

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