

## Vegetable farming improves living standards in Nepal



Photo: Ralph Hodgson/Tearfund

He is 64 years old and literate. Harka Bahadur, specifically, grows vegetable and sells them for his living.

No doubt he is a leading vegetable farmer in this area, but he is also a regular participant of agricultural training programmes by Share and Care Nepal. He grows both seasonal and off seasonal vegetables which yields him a profit of about 50,000-60,000 Rupees (£420-£500) every year. People from all around come to his place for fresh vegetables. He is known as "Tarkari Baje", "Vegetable Grandpa".

Harka Bahadur is a true community member, as he wants all the members of his community to follow him and prosper. He has been an ideal example to farmers in nearby areas. Some farmers are commercial while some grow vegetables just for their own consumption. According to Harka Bahadur, he has been economically stable enough to afford his families requirements, and even to pay for his daughter's education. His daughter, Suman Gurung, is now studying in the first year of an MA at university.

In this way, despite the old age that he has reached, Harka Bahadur doesn't give up the idea and his job as a vegetable farmer. He really has set an example, proving that by way of courage, and hard work, any profession is a flourishing profession, which in turn can give us both name and fame.

Ram Krishna Gurung is a resident of Lapsephedi Village Development Community-8, Dharapani and an active farmer. He is a member of the Dharapani Farmers' Group which was formed with the help of the project.

Ram is a regular participant of training organized by **Tearfund's partner, Share and Care**, on vegetable farming, domestic fertilizer and crops storing. Before he gained employment, he and his family were desperate for fresh vegetables, says Ram. He further adds that he is now selling about 150,000 Rupees (£1260) worth of vegetables per year. He is also happy that he doesn't need to take them to the market because they completely sell out locally. He is much relieved to fulfil his own and his family's demands and basic needs. He is now capable of providing enough to bring up his children properly and pay for education for them.

Ram is also equally interested in passing his experiences and talent on to other farmers. He is very active in market management in his ward. Moreover, he is assisting in the "pest and insect management" training programs every Saturday. He is also directly involved in tomato farming. Gurung says he hopes to continue his work as a farmer throughout his life. He is indeed a role model for all new farmers.

Harka Bahadur Gurung is the first ever successful farmer in his area. He is a member of a farmers' group formed by Tearfund's partner, Share & Care Nepal as part of the Community Based Health and Development Project.