

Socioeconomic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Dairy Value Chain in Western Nepal

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Cows and buffaloes in a local dairy farm

Why this research project matters

- Dairy livestock is an essential component of Nepal's integrated crop-livestock farming system and has played a crucial role in retaining a circular bioeconomy within small-holder farming communities. It provides a significant contribution to household nutrition and also plays a crucial role in Nepal's predominantly agriculture-based livelihood.
- The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the dairy industry in Nepal. Information on the effects of the pandemic on the dairy value chain in Nepal is rare because it is a completely new circumstance.
- The nature and extent of the impacts of COVID-19 on the dairy value chain actors, the demands and needs of various stakeholders, and adaptation strategies are largely unknown.



Cleaning udders and preparation for milking

Overarching goal

It is unknown how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected different actors across the dairy value chain in Nepal, including the socioeconomic effects on vulnerable groups. By understanding how this sector adapted or failed to adapt during COVID-19, improved intervention strategies can be designed to help this sector recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for similar future challenges.

Assess the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the dairy value chain in Nepal.

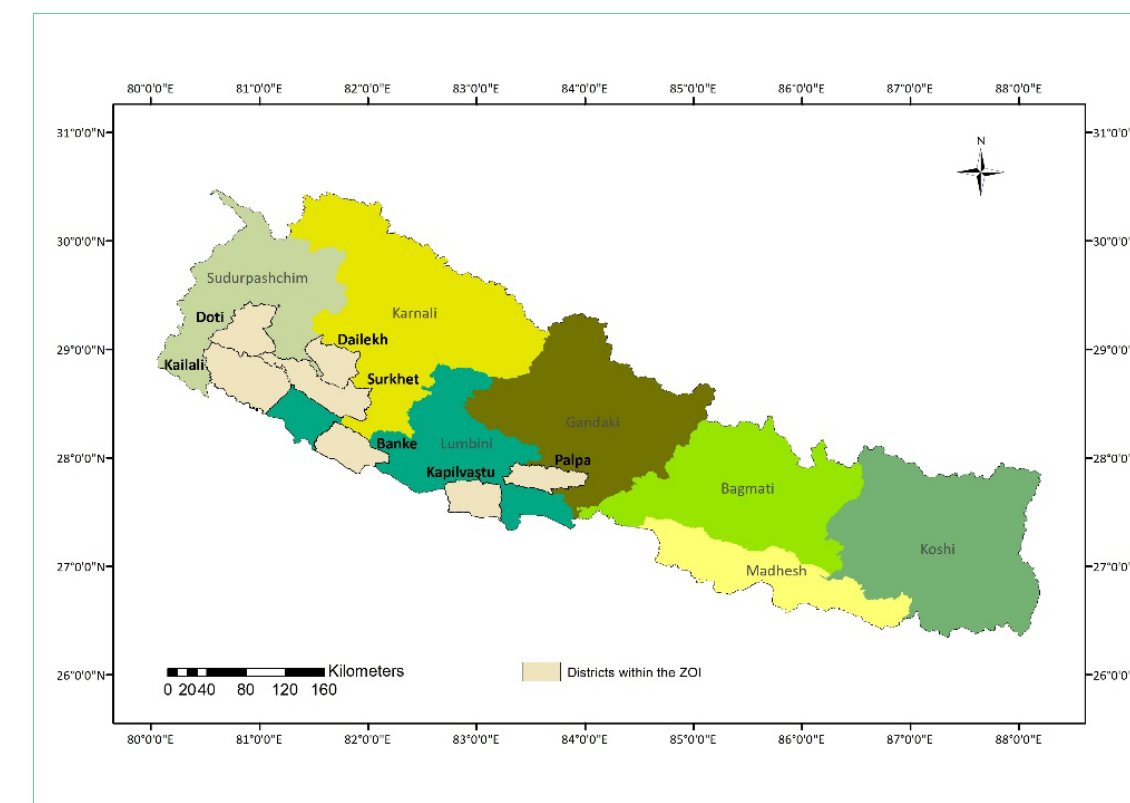
Our work is based in

7 districts in Nepal

Districts within the Zone of Interest:

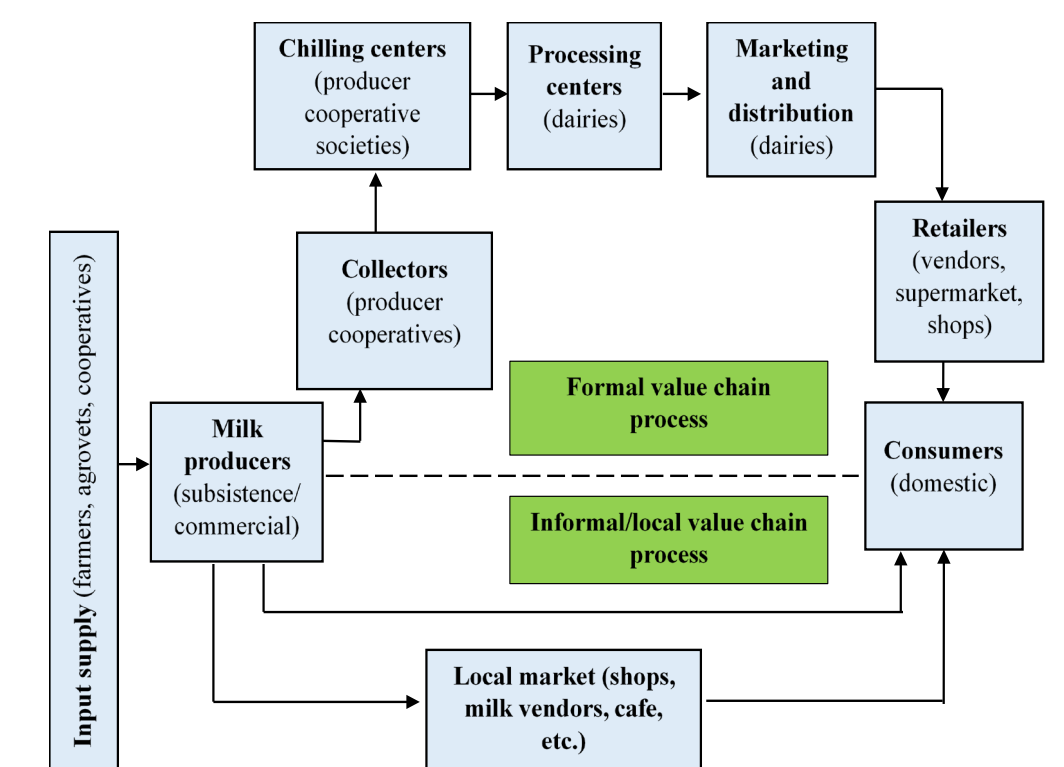
- Doti and Kailali (Far-west)
- Dailekh, Surkhet, and Banke (Mid-west)
- Palpa and Kapilvastu (West)

These districts are selected on purpose based on the mid-hills and the terai to represent the dairy sector from each of the ecological divisions of Nepal.



What we aim to do

- Understand the differential impacts of the pandemic on each node of the dairy value chain in different districts and farm categories, such as smallholder vs. commercial farmers and short vs. long value chains.
- Determine the appropriate intervention strategies to cope with the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the dairy value chain.
- Capacitate the main actors of the dairy value chain, including youths and women.



Formal and informal dairy value chains in Nepal

Our work encompasses

- Survey research - a system approach underlying technological, economic, social, institutional, and environmental sub-systems to understand the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on each node of the dairy value chain.
- Quantitative assessment of the important determinants of the adoption of suitable coping strategies by the core value chain actors.
- Collection of the primary data: household survey, consumer survey, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, virtual meetings, and participatory field observations.
- Research support for MSc students (2)
- Capacity development trainings for dairy farmers, dairy cooperative members, university faculty, and private sector actors



Rice straw is a major source of fodder for dairy animals