

Unilever Nepal, RAP3 CONNECT and Prabhu Bank investing to promote Women Entrepreneurs

Three organizations from the development, banking and private sectors are joining hands to launch a Programme in partnership to enable 100 high potential women in the Mid Western and Far Western Development Regions of Nepal to set-up small businesses.

More than 50% of the population in the Mid and Far West of Nepal are women and over 70% of households are headed by women. Yet, women are poorly represented on the entrepreneurial landscape. RAP3 CONNECT, a component of UK aid funded Rural Access Programme 3, hopes to redress this balance by working with private sector partners such as Unilever Nepal Limited and Prabhu Bank.

Unilever Nepal Limited is investing to create women entrepreneurs through its rural direct-to-consumer 'Hamri Didi' initiative aimed to empower underprivileged women as change agents within their communities by providing them with knowledge on health and sanitation and sustainable income generating opportunities.

RAP3 CONNECT selected 100 women from RAP3 core districts who attended necessary training organized by Unilever this week in Kathmandu, receiving a certificate of completion from [NAME, Chief Guest] at a ceremony on 19 September. The Hamri Didis are eligible to trade and deal in consumer products.

Prabhu Bank Limited will provide loans of NRs 15,000 to all 100 Hamri Didis for start-up capital and can offer efficiencies in the delivery and management of these loans due to their strong network of agents across the country.

Speaking at the Unilever Hamri Didi graduation ceremony Dr Chiranjibi Nepal, Governor, Nepal Rastra Bank said – **to be added following the ceremony.**

Notes to editors:

- RAP3 CONNECT is funded by UK aid
- RAP3 is a comprehensive poverty alleviation programme, which uses the construction of transport infrastructure as an entry point for delivering development through access to the poorest and most marginalized in remote parts of Nepal.
- Unilever Nepal is one of Nepal's largest businesses and their mission includes promoting access to health and sanitation solutions for Nepalis.
- Prabhu Bank Limited is one of the fastest growing private sector banks in Nepal with deep rural market penetration, extensive direct and subsidiary products and services portfolios, entrepreneurial spirit and a commitment to improving Access to Finance for the poor, especially farmers and women.

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