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Rolex advocates for Nepali women's ice climbing in new content

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New videos and accompanying editorial content comprise of the latest segments of the watchmaker's established Perpetual Planet initiative. Image credit: Rolex

By ZACH JAMES

Swiss watchmaker **Rolex** is looking toward the horizon with a new environmentally-centric content series.

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Titled "Dawa Yangzum Sherpa: Learning the Ropes," the episodes cover the training of an all-woman ice climbing class taught by the titular ice climbing trailblazer. The videos and accompanying editorial content are the latest segments of the watchmaker's established Perpetual Planet initiative.

Top of the world

Born in a village without running water or electricity, Dawa Yangzum's entry into the ice-climbing world was no easy feat. Guided and mentored by other ice climbers throughout her early life and into the start of her career at the age of 13, when she climbed the steps of Kathmandu.

Having conquered Everest by the age of 21 in 2012, the trailblazer cemented herself as a powerhouse in the male-dominated athletic pursuit. In 2017, she gained the prestigious International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA) certification after working towards it for five years, becoming the first Asian woman to ever accomplish the feat and metamorphosing into a legend within the ice climbing community.

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa: Learning the Ropes Ep.1

Since gaining IFMGA certification, Ms. Yangzum has scaled eight of the planet's 14 peaks that measure at least 8,000 meters above sea level.

These mountains, known as "eight-thousanders," are among the most unforgiving and feared in the world.

One of the "eight-thousanders" she scaled was K2, better known as "Savage Mountain" in Nepal. She was part of an all-woman expedition that bested the range, which is seen as the most deadly in the world.

In 2019, Ms. Yangzum decided to be the guiding force for a small group of women in a similar Nepali village to where she started her journey.

Establishing annual two-week introductory and advanced courses at the Khumbu Climbing Center, the pioneer is creating a new generation of women ice climbers that simply did not exist to mentor her through her early years on the ice.

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa: Learning the Ropes Ep. 2

"I too want to be a mentor who can help people, especially women, take their first steps towards their dreams," said Dawa Yangzum, in a statement.

Rolex sponsors Ms. Yangzum's training courses through its Perpetual Planet initiative.

Looking down on creation

Ms. Yangzum's story is just the tip of the iceberg for Rolex's efforts toward a better tomorrow.

The Perpetual Planet initiative has partnered with more than 20 organizations since its inception in 2019. These partners cover many areas of environmental sustainability, from exploring the depths of the ocean to inspiring women to follow their dreams of climbing the most dangerous peaks known to humanity.



Ms. Yangzum and her class walking across a mountain. Image credit: Rolex

One of the recent high-profile partnerships the watchmaker has made in relation to the initiative was its quite literal "green room" at the 95th annual Academy Awards in March 2023. The annual sponsored backstage hang-out spot for the stars was transformed into a rainforest-inspired, green-laden chamber of relaxation ([see story](#)).

The Oscars partnership was made to give the drive a much larger platform but it did not fulfill the usual objective of providing funding to organizations that push boundaries in sustaining the planet, or, perpetuating it.

In another partnership, the brand provided support to National Geographic Explorer Dr. Steve Boyes on a project studying the Lungwevungu River, a tributary of the giant Zambezi River, in South Africa ([see story](#)).