Heifer International CEO Pierre Ferrari visits EADD Tanzania

Increasing demand and consumption of milk and other dairy products is key to achieving EADD II objective of doubling income of smallholder dairy farmers in East Africa, and specifically those of 35,000 smallholder farmers in Tanzania. Pierre Ferrari, President and CEO of Heifer International is leading efforts towards innovatively building the demand side of the dairy value chain in Tanzania even as the project continues to work with farmers in increasing milk production.

The CEO together with Dr. Mahendra Lohani, Senior Vice President of Programs at Heifer International, Rakesh Kapoor, EADD Regional Director and other senior EADD and Heifer leadership recently visited the project in Tanzania to deliberate on Heifer’s contribution towards improving the dairy value chain in the country. For about eight days from March 20th 2016, the team led by the CEO visited three farmers (two in Rungwe district and one in Mbozi), Mbozi Maziwa Limited, Ndoledzi Pre-primary Cooperative as well as held sessions to discuss sustainable solutions to increase uptake of milk in Tanzania.

Hilda Mulungu (51), a farmer living in Mbozi was one of the three farmers visited by the team. A cheerful and smiling Hilda warmly welcomed them into her home and happily narrated her story, how dairy farming has transformed her life.

Hilda is a member of the VVWAHA Dairy Cooperative, one of the 17 member groups forming the MVIWAMBO (Mtandao wa Vikundi Vya Wafugaji Mbozi) Producer Organization. She started dairy farming, when she received a heifer on credit from her neighbor. Initially she ignored cross bred livestock believing they were easily prone to ailment therefore only kept local cattle. Through seminar classes given by the chairman of the Vwawa Dairy Cooperative, she got motivated and started dairy farming of cross bred animals in 1998. Depending mainly on crop cultivation, and with the coffee prices dropping drastically, Hilda decided to start dairy farming to increase her family income.

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Currently Hilda has two acres of pasture plot and four cattle: one bull, one calf and two cows which are being milked with an average of 34 liters per day for both cows. She sells 30 litres of the milk per day. Three of her children are now teachers by profession, two are university students and two are in secondary school - all this being made possible by selling the milk she got from her dairy farming. Mrs. Mulungu has also managed to buy a motorbike which she uses for transport.

From Hilda's farm, the team visited the milk processing factory -Mbozi Maziwa Limited, which is owned by MVIWAMBO.

The team sought clarity on who funds the cooperative, where they source raw milk from and what their market for the milk is. It was explained that the factory is financed by the farmers (members) through deductions from the milk they sell and with some contribution from the Local Government Authority. The factory whose capacity is 3000 litres per day can be extended to 8,000 litres. With support from EADD Tanzania and the Mbozi Farmers Livelihood initiative project a Heifer Tanzania project the production and productivity is expected to double within the next three years.

The factory’s targeted market for the processed milk is the Tunduma boarder, Vwawa town, Mlowo town, institutions in the hub catchment and outside the hub catchment and Mbeya city. The Mbozi Maziwa will highly depend on the cooperative structure for the milk bulking and service delivery to farmers.

At the Ndolezi Pre- primary cooperative, the CEO inaugurated the official launch of the cooperative, where he handed over the legal cooperative documents; complimenting them for taking the first steps towards doing dairy farming as a business and urging them to look into milk markets and work towards seeing the cooperative grow.

Speaking to the EADD / Heifer staff later on in a staff meeting, the CEO encouraged the team to push hard on demand for milk and endure to make the milk business a living income for the farmers. He urged the staff to be more helpful to the farmers, “let us be a demand driven organization and stop being a supply driven organization. Train your mind to think about demand, think like a business farmer. Be people who have a real heart for the farmers” He said. The CEO emphasized to the project team to get hands on in getting project activities done, because any success will come not from waiting for people to do things, but by being proactive and getting things done.

It is amazing to see how just across the border, dairy farmers like us are different in many ways. The farmers in Kenya do dairy farming as a business, they do not just farm for the sake of farming. They have specialized in dairy farming only. Most of us here are jacks of all trade – we touch slightly on coffee, want to do maize, we try rice farming and at the same time call ourselves dairy farmers. We need to change and put our full concentration on dairy farming” says Mr. Sojo a smallholder dairy farmer from Ndolezi Village.

In Tanzania Ndolezi Village, is widely known for the Mbozi Meteorite - one of the largest meteorites in the world. Ndolezi village is also home to more than 110 dairy farmers who are members of the Mviwambo dairy.
More farmers to be reached through social capital development integration as project begins third year of implementation

The EADD project has been implementing Social Capital Development as one of the key farmer mobilization strategy with all the structures in place. With the recruitment of 487 community facilitators in all the 47 Producer Organizations (PO), a reported 1,247 groups have been formed. Each Dairy Interest Group has an average of 20-25 members. Community facilitators (CFs) have made it easier for the PO to reach out to the farmers. The POs have begun reporting an increase in milk volumes, as members of the DIGs are more committed to supplying milk to the POs. The increase in milk volumes and turnovers at the agrovet have increased and this is due to the positive influence the CFs are causing within the PO catchment area.

The manager of Lelchego Dairy Cooperative Society reported that Social Capital has begun to transform the attitudes of youth towards the PO due to trainings offered by CFs. He also mentioned that perceptions towards involving men, women and youth in the PO and community has changed and farmers are seeing the importance of having everyone participating in activities. Community facilitators and Community Agrovet Entrepreneurs have played an important role in mobilizing farmers and offering technical trainings. Services offered by the PO have been disseminated to the dairy smallholder farmers by the CFs and CAVES. This has also resulted to a tremendous change in attitude attitudes of farmers towards the POs.

Mr. Asangalwisy Sojo (55), who lives with his seven children and two wives Joyce and Eddah depends on dairy farming for his family’s income, food security, healthcare and upkeep. He has managed to send all his children to secondary school from the money he received from selling milk.

Mr. Sojo is one of the 78 EADD Tanzania farmers who participated in the farmers’ learning visits to Kenya and Northern part of Tanzania last month; 6-9 March 2016. In Kenya Sojo visited two Producer Organizations namely Mweiga in Laikipia County and Ngorika in Nyandarua County. He was able to visit the farms of three farmers of different production scales. Mr. Sojo could not imagine the level of development the POs have reached in terms of milk collection, transportation from the farmers to the hub, milk marketing and importantly the high quality extension service delivery and check off system.

“These dairy hubs are on another level – they are really developed, farmers do not have to struggle on access of farm inputs and transportation for their milk. For sure they have ample time to take care of their cows” exclaimed Sojo.

He had the opportunity of visiting three different farmers with varied production scale ranging from 3 to 40 cows and productivity ranging from 10 litres to 35 per cow per day. Sojo affirms that he gained more knowledge on dairy farming - much more than he expected.

Like Mr. Sojo most of the farmers attending the learning visit admired the diverse and rich knowledge farmers in Laikipia and Nyeri had on animal husbandry. All the farmers they visited had a store for feed conservation and pasture plots comprising different types of fodders: a key component in reducing the cost of production for dairy farmers and ensuring good quality feed for the dairy cows. The farmers were inspired and promised themselves to concentrate on dairy farming, particularly proper use of productivity enhancing technologies.

With the knowledge, insight and best practices learnt in his visit to Kenya, Sojo envisages to milk 30 liters per cow per day in 3 to 5 years to come. He called upon EADD’s technical support on his journey towards being a big scale milk business man. Sojo started dairy farming through a ‘pass on the gift’ heifer that he received in 1995 which later died. However, he did not give up. He later went on and sold coffee from his three acres of land and bought a cow in the year 2000. Currently he has three cross bred cows, four local breed cows and two bulls.

His passion for dairy farming led him to organize other farmers in his village to form a dairy group for the purpose of collecting milk together and finding a collective market for the milk. Sojo is the chairman of the UWANDO group (Umoja wa Wafugaji Ndolezi) – The Ndolezi dairy farmers group, one of the dairy interest groups that form the Mviwambo Dairy Hub in Vwawa district.

From his learning visit, Mr. Sojo has started construction of an improved cow shed for his cows, he has a vision of improving his cows’ genetic potential by using Artificial Insemination. He uses every platform from church to farmers meeting to narrate his learning and encourage farmers to improve dairy farming practices.

Members of a DIG in Njombe district Tanzania undergo a cornerstone training

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POSA results show marked improvement of POs in Kenya and Uganda

The 2015 Producer Organization Sustainability Assessment (POSA) results have shown that Kenya and Uganda PO performance continues to be on an upward trend, with Tanzania’s performance increasing marginally between 2014 and 2015.

POSA is a sustainability tracking tool comprised of seven priority sustainability dimensions (financial health; engagement with the output market; access to inputs and services; relationship with the external environment; farmer loyalty; effective and transparent Producer Organization (PO) leadership and management; on-farm impact). Under each dimension, respective indicators are assigned weighted scores based on their importance in contributing to PO sustainability.

Five Kenya POs were in stage IV (i.e. achieving 60% score) denoting that the Hubs are ready to be graduated. The other three Kenyan POs have been experiencing difficulties emanating from governance issues and this affected their performance. The majority (8) of POs in Tanzania were in stage I. This is expected given most of Tanzania POs were engaged in 2015, and registration of the cooperatives took till the end of the year for most. In Uganda, the majority of the POs (15) were in stage IV while 13 were in stage III. The increase in stage IV POs in Uganda can be attributed to the new EADD II POs in the Southwest Cluster, which were pre-existing and have business structures. Country PO distribution by stage and type (Source: 2015 POSA report)

Graduation/exit of 11 POs planned for December 2015 was put on hold to provide time for implementation of the Social Capital Development (SCD) initiatives with the objective to reach greater number of households for targeted impact. The project is planning to support these POs to close key gaps identified during the 2015 POSA assessment which include strengthening relationships between POs and buyers through contracting, increasing member loyalty and enhancing governance.

A total of 57 POs were assessed in 2015 (Uganda-37, Tanzania-12 and Kenya-8). POSA assessment is conducted on an annual basis.

Farmer knowledge on dairy farming to be enhanced through bite-sized learning

More than 100,000 farmers in East Africa are set to benefit from useful bite-sized chunks of information on dairy farming. The project has sifted out information on dairy farming from manuals and books on dairy farming to posters and fliers; using illustrations to boost farmer learning. Content has been split into small manageable sections to make it easier to digest and remember critical information.

Key areas that are being targeted by the simplified information, education and communication (IEC) material include animal health, feeds as well as animal husbandry. The project is also exploring ways to take advantage of mobile platforms and pocket sized communication tools to avail valuable information on dairy farming at the farmers’ fingertips.

Dissemination of the material will be through Community Facilitators (CFs) and Community Agrovet Entrepreneurs (CAVES).
The green thumb finds white gold

Written by Rachael Singo

Jeremiah Nyangwe (58), was once a passionate home gardening farmer. However, he found it difficult to manage his family's basic needs by just depending on selling vegetables from his one and half acre piece of land where he also grew maize. He is a member of the Dabaga dairy Hub in Tanzania, one of the EADD hubs in Tanzania. He sells milk to the hub and also benefits from training and other services on how to improve his dairy farming.

As a crop farmer Jeremiah was a green thumb; he did his vegetable farming to his best, he was so good at it that he was nominated by the District Administration to represent Kilolo District in regional and national competitions. In 2005 he emerged winner in the agricultural trade fair (Nane Nane) competitions, but it is during this year that he decided to change his path.

During the Nane Nane week long celebrations – he stumbled upon the Sokoine University of Agriculture Pavilion. “I was captivated by the breed of cows I saw and the volumes of milk the cows produced. It is then that I realized dairy farming was my way out of abject poverty” said Jeremiah.

At this time a heifer was going for 300,000 Tanzania shillings (150 USD). Jeremiah sold maize from his farm and bought a bull which he kept and looked after for a few months and was able to sell the bull at 200,000 Tanzania shillings, with which he bought his first heifer after his neighbor gave him a loan of 100,000 shillings to top up on the money he had.

The cow which is now in-calf and is going to calve-down for the twelfth time, has given Jeremiah an opportunity to send his children to school. He has been able to sell 9 cattle. Jeremiah has been able to educate his 7 children from the income earned from his dairy farm. Three of his children are now attending college, one is in university, two in secondary school and the last one in lower primary.

His ambition and enthusiasm in dairy farming is admirable. He did not know anything on dairy farming but is now an exemplary dairy farmer in his village. It is through articles and farmer to farmer discussions that Jeremiah has been able to improve his animal husbandry knowledge and skills. The Nyangwe family are now embarking on extending their pasture plot, where they can easily access more feeds for their cattle.

Awakening sleeping dairy giants in Eastern Uganda: The case of Balawoli and Buyende dairy cooperative societies

Written by Joseph Ndwiga

Dairy cooperative societies in Eastern Uganda are awakening after a long slumber. Areas characterized by indigenous dairy cattle, low milk productivity, limited milk market as well as limited availability of dairy production inputs and services are beginning to experience changes in the dairy value chain. This is mainly attributed to activities carried out by the East Africa Dairy Development (EADD) project in Uganda aimed at doubling dairy incomes of 43,000 smallholder dairy farmers. This was to be realized through working with 37 dairy Producer Organizations (POs) among them Balawoli and Buyende dairy cooperative societies located in Kamulu district, Eastern Uganda.

Formed and registered in 1968, Balawoli Kyebaja Tobona Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society was forced to bring down its curtains and halt services in 1985 due to difficulties in dairy farming. The cooperative fortunes have however changed since 2014 and activities steered by EADD have injected fresh momentum into it. The cooperative is now involved in collective marketing of raw and processed milk, promotion of improved methods of livestock husbandry and promotion of a savings culture among members; contributing towards improving living standards of the members.

The cooperative is run by a board supported by management staff who include a general manager, marketing...
manager and three extension workers who double up as Artificial Insemination Technicians (AITs). It currently has 242 registered members, of which 130 have completed paying registration fee of UGX5,000 each and the minimum share capital of UGX10,000. However, less than a quarter of the registered members are active milk suppliers. The main reason is that most of the members are located far away from the bulking centre and are served by very poor road infrastructure making it difficult and expensive for them to deliver their milk. The cooperative currently collects an average of 100 litres of milk per day from the farmers located near the bulking centre against a potential of 1,000 litres if members had access. To address this, the cooperative plans to design milk collection routes and engage bicycle transporters.

Dairy productivity in the area is a challenge given that most farmers own indigenous cattle. The cooperative will continue to address this challenge through promotion of artificial insemination services - so far the cooperative AIT has conducted 77 inseminations. The cooperative also has inadequate milk testing equipment which makes it hard to conduct all the necessary milk tests. Lastly the cooperative has a rudimentary records and book keeping system and it is working with EADD project to set up a more comprehensive system.

Value addition

In order to commence milk chilling, the cooperative has entered into an agreement with a trader who owns a cooler with a few mechanical issues in the area to repair the cooler and use it for “free” for one year after which the cooperative will either decide to lease it or buy its own. The trader has also promised to offtake all the milk bulked by the cooperative. The project plans to support the cooperative repair the cooler. Secondly, in order to provide more value to its members, the cooperative plans to start ghee and butter making. The cooperative is also looking at packaging yoghurt into plastic cups and bottles targeting the elite society members who may not be comfortable with pouches as a way of expanding its yoghurt market.

Halfof the milk collected is used to make probiotic yoghurt while the rest is sold to a trader who runs a cooler in Jinja town. The cooperative members were trained on yoghurt making by YOBA Foundation and currently four members are actively involved. To ensure quality yoghurt production, the cooperative has acquired the necessary equipment which include a large deep freezer which cost UGX2,000,000; a fridge worth UGX1,600,000; a sealing machine valued at UGX400,000 and five, 50 litre capacity aluminium milk cans.

One of the major market outlets for the yoghurt is Buwenge supermarket in Kamuli town while the rest is sold in the open air market. The yoghurt is packed in branded 400ml polythene pouches. Each 400ml sachet is sold at UGX1,000 while raw milk prices range between UGX700 and UGX800. The yoghurt is transported using a hired motorcycle – a major cost to the cooperative. The demand for the yoghurt is increasing with time and the cooperative intends to start making larger volumes.

The chairman of the board, Mr. Daniel Bulubu attributes each of the achievements realized so far to the cooperative’s working relationship with EADD project which has seen revival of operations albeit at a small scale. In particular the members of the board and management staff cited various trainings on dairy production including AITs training and dairy business management; linkage to the milk market; linkage to equipment suppliers which included a negotiated price for the deep freezer and lower price for milk cans from Dairy Development Authority; linkage with YOBA foundation for training on yoghurt making; assistance with pasture seeds as well as training on biogas making as some of the benefits from EADD project.

Buyende Dairy farmers cooperative

A similar success story is told by Buyende Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society. Despite having had a 3,000 litre capacity cooler donated by the government in 2009, the equipment remained unutilized until mid-2015 when EADD project helped revive its operations. In June 2015, the cooperative started operations with a meagre 129 litres of milk from twelve farmers and is currently receiving over 800 litres per day from 38 farmers of the 201 who are registered as cooperative members. The cooperative sells its milk to Danbus Dairy in Jinja. When asked why it took so long to start operations, the board chairman said that “people have been in the dark but since EADD came they have seen the light and started appreciating the cooperative”.

Balawoli yoghurt packed in an icebox on the way to the market

The branded poach used to package the yoghurt

The EADD Senior Business Manager, Mr. Moses Gateja sampling Balawoli yoghurt

The marketing manager and one of the members involved in yoghurt making pose infront of the deep freezer
For many years, Lessos dairy Cooperative (one of the EADD hubs in Kenya) members have been experiencing feed shortages during the dry season. Majority of the members depend on grazing natural pastures and collection of naturally occurring grasses. This has always impacted negatively on the PO business since milk collection reduces significantly during the dry spell.

After going through the feed implementation plan process, the PO management strategized to; establish 10 acres of pasture to be conserved as a strategic feed reserve; purchase a forage harvester to promote fodder conservation, stock the agro-vet with relevant pasture seeds and identify volunteer farmer trainers to host demonstrations and bulk pasture seeds.

Currently, the Lessos dairy has harvested 850 bales of hay through the forage harvester; they have ensiled 26 acres of silage. “We have trained farmers out of which they have established 65 acres of Rhodes grass and 139 acres of maize for silage,” Paul Murei, the PO extension manager said. Through the PO initiative, the volunteer farmer trainers have established 8 acres of forage sorghum to be bulked as seed and passed on to the next farmer groups.

Hay from the cooperative costs an affordable price of Kshs. 180 ($1.7) to 200 ($1.9) this is much cheaper than hay from other farms that costs Kshs 250 ($2.6) to 300 ($2.9).
“During the dry season, farmers go as far as Eldoret to purchase hay, that is expensive and the quality is not assured,” Murei the Extension manager shared. “2016 we plan to increase the PO fodder business from 10 acres to 15 acres of Rhodes hay and sensitize more farmers to utilize the forage harvester.”

He added that they had plans to increase acreage to over 200 acres so that they could lower the prices as the cost of production will be low. According to Murei, their vision is to have farmers who value the importance of proper feeding and avail quality affordable feeds to them.

The East Africa Dairy Development Project, Phase II (EADD II) is a five-year program focused on sustainably improving the livelihoods of smallholder dairy farmers by improving their income through enhanced dairy production and market access in East Africa. The project aims to double the dairy income of 136,000 farming households in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, as well as stimulate income growth for an additional 400,000 secondary beneficiaries by 2018. Heifer International leads the EADD II consortium implementation with: Technoserve (TNS), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), African Breeders Service Total Cattle Management (ABS) and World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), and is mainly supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Elanco, a division of Eli Lilly and Company, have also provided funding and talent commitments to EADD II.

EADD in the News

- East African farmers to benefit from using mobile phones to record yield https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/72387/ResearchBrief58.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

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More Forage More Milk More Money: The Story of Henry Tanui

Henry Tanui, lives on his 1.5 acres of land in Lessos Division, Nandi County. He is 39 years old married to Margaret Chepkoech and have been blessed with four children (2 girls and 2 boys). Henry was one of the farmers identified by Lessos dairy in March 2015 to be trained as a volunteer farmer trainer (VFT) so that he can train his group members on improved feed and feeding technologies.

Henry belongs to Onaika group that has a membership of 11 women and 4 men. He has trained all his group members and they have each established; Sunflower, Sorghum, Lucerne, and Oats.

He established oats forage, forage sorghum, fodder trees, and sunflower after undergoing the training on feeds and feeding. He has dedicated one acre to forage production.

"After utilizing the planted forages, my cow that was in milk increased production from 5 to 14 kilos", adds Henry.

"With the extra earnings, I bought farm inputs, more forage seeds and have started building a house. I also plan to pay some deposit to Lessos to access forage harvester as my forage sorghum is ready for ensiling," Henry beamed.

"I intend to increase my dairy cows from two to four, increase the acreage under fodder and invest in a tractor drawn pulverizer," Henry said when asked about his future plans.

His words of advice to other dairy farmers is for them to grow good quality feed for their livestock and know how to feed different feed varieties. It is not only cheaper but it results in increased milk yield and reflects in the income.

Henry’s words of advice to other dairy farmers is for them to grow good quality feed for their livestock and know how to feed different feed varieties. It is not only cheaper but it results in increased milk yield and reflects in the income.

Written by Sylvia Wafula

EADD in the News

• Kenya dairy sector tops in East Africa http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/03/15/kenyas-dairy-sector-tops-in-east-africa_c1311660?page=0%2C1
• Tanzania dairy farmers in Kenya for bench-marking http://www.mediamaxnetwork.co.ke/people-daily/211153/tanzania-dairy-farmers-in-kenya-for-bench-marking/
• East African farmers to benefit from using mobile phones to record yield https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/72387/ResearchBrief58.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

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