

Pastoral dairy development in Eastern Africa

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Ann Waters-Bayer¹, Wolfgang Bayer¹, Margareta Lelea², Koen Van Troos³, Ken Otieno⁴

¹Agrecol Association; Germany; ²German Institute for Tropical & Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL)/University of Kassel; ³Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF) Belgium; ⁴RECONCILE, Kenya

Members of CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism)



Somali women selling camel milk (Photo: Michele Nori)

Pastoralism is a source of food security, nutrition and income for ca. 20 million people in the drylands of Eastern Africa. Most pastoral development interventions focus on meat but pastoralism is a multifunctional system in which milk plays a central role.

Aim of study: To inform European & African policymakers on challenges & potentials of pastoral dairy development

Methodology: Collection & review of literature & experiences on dairy development in Eastern Africa



Almost all milk from pastoral herds is sold "informally", here on market in Ethiopia (Photo: Tesfahun Fenta)

Findings

Specificities of pastoral dairying

- High seasonal fluctuations in milk yield – not suited for year-round dairy businesses
- Mobile system in sparsely populated areas – conventional dairy unit cannot collect enough milk on economic basis
- Pastoralist women sell milk as fermented products in short value chains – fermentation kills many milk pathogens
- Multifunctional system – supports more people per unit area than purely milk- or meat-oriented systems
- Almost all milk produced by pastoral herds in Eastern Africa sold "informally"

Major constraints in pastoral dairying

- Lack of context-appropriate facilities for preserving & selling seasonally surplus milk
- Capital-intensive requirements hinder small-scale dairying
- Socio-political marginalisation: poor access to public services, including transport infrastructure

Importance and potential of pastoral dairying

- Pro-poor development: selling milk augments incomes of poorer pastoralists; low-cost & decentralised value chains make products affordable and available for poorer consumers
- Milk provides higher food security & better nutrition & health of people in drylands
- Pastoralist women's economic empowerment, as women control milk income

Some recommendations to policymakers

- ✓ Recognise specificities of pastoralism and support dairying in ways that fit this context
- ✓ Recognise role of women in pastoral dairying
- ✓ Develop context-appropriate milk standards that allow poorer consumers to have access to nutritious food and poorer producers to income from milk

CELEP statement with references: www.celep.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Statement-Celep-May-2018-final-.pdf



Women selling milk at roadside in Isiolo, Kenya (Photo: Tom Martin/VSF Suisse)

Contact: waters-bayer@web.de
www.celep.info

