



EAST AFRICA DAIRY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

EADD is a Project of Heifer International in Partnership with ILRI, TechnoServe, ABS TCM and ICRAF

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Celebrating Our Women Dairy Farmers



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Cover Photo: Lydia Jjemba. Photo EADD/ Neil Thomas

"Empowering women is not just an end in itself; it is a prerequisite for reaching all of the Millennium Development Goals - our common vision to build a better world in the 21st century,"

- Asha-Rose Migiro, Third Deputy UN Secretary-General

Happy International Women's Day's!

The international women's day is held every 8th of March each year since 1911. It is a global day to celebrate economic, political and social achievements - past & present- of women. In some countries like Uganda, Russia, China it is a national holiday. To celebrate women's success and review the outstanding inequities that need to be addressed the United Nations (UN) identifies a global theme each year. This year marks 100 years - centenary celebrations and the theme is "equal access to education, training and science and technology-a pathway to decent work for women".

As the East Africa Dairy Development (EADD) Project, we seize this opportunity to reflect on how we have promoted smallholder dairying as a privileged entry point to gender equality and women empowerment. The project roots for effective participation of women, recognizing their long standing traditional role in small scale dairying and the vital contribution dairy makes to poor households. To develop participating families to be able to double incomes from their dairy enterprises, improved production and productivity and access to gainful markets are very key objectives in EADD. To achieve this, access to relevant education, training and scientific and technological innovations- in animal breeding, feeding, health care, milk quality handling and markets- by the farming families are key interventions in EADD.

In the delivery of these key project services questions concerning how equitably, we target men, women and youth are pertinent. Gender relations are at play in the community structures used. Dairy farmer business associations (DFBAs), farmer groups-determine the extent to which women enjoy important benefits such as trainings offered and the technologies being promoted. The level of gender sensitivity in extension services delivery mechanism, to be keen on ensuring women farmers' needs and realities are considered, matters.

Underinvestment in women's knowledge & skill is a common handicap for agriculture in the region. Gender blind agricultural technologies can do harm to the situations of women e.g. increasing workload, lose control over enterprise management or disregarding women's ability to access them. For the last 2 years, EADD has been making very crucial steps, laying a solid ground for addressing these gender issues.

The gender integration strategy developed in 2009 identified key issues and multiple strategies. The staff gender trainings in 2010 raised awareness and confronted teams with the relevance of Gender in EADD. Vibrant gender working groups are emerging complimented by a nascent commitment within the management of EADD to see that gender issues are identified and addressed in the course of project implementation. In 2011 the implementation of the gender integration strategy will be in top gear, guided by the results oriented annual gender action plans developed in each country.

This year an inventory of some anecdotal gender outcomes will be compiled and some researched further, to document encouraging transformations and success stories of women dairy farmers, who have been experiencing increased incomes and personal empowerment attributable to EADD interventions. As part of EADD's celebrations of the international women day 2011, we produce this special edition of the newsletter in which we share some of these success stories.

However, EADD has not yet crossed the important threshold it has set of developing women to the extent of effecting societal change. A mid-term evaluation (2010) finding commends EADD for effectively achieving gender balance among project staff, executive committees in DFABs and dairy service providers. And for getting more women to participate as members of DFABs and benefiting from EADD interventions, including acquiring technical skills in dairy management. Notably, data from women focus group discussions suggested less progress in extending economic benefits of EADD to women at the household level.



***"Without a gender equality revolution there can be no green revolution".
-Kofi Annan***

Gerald Mutinda is a gender expert leading the implementation of a gender and youth strategy at EADD. Photo: EADD/Beatrice Ouma

For the last 2 years, EADD has been making very crucial steps, laying a solid ground for addressing these gender issues...



Our gender interventions should target both men and women. Photo: EADD/Brian Dugdill

At a gender conference in Addis Ababa in January in which the East Africa Dairy Development (EADD) project participated, the 90+ conference attendees identified gender as 'a missing link in agriculture development' and about half said it is 'the key' missing link. This is very illustrative of where we are in addressing gender issues in agriculture development and especially market oriented agriculture development.

So what are the issues?

There are key issues that are no longer in dispute: Women play a key role in agriculture in the region, providing up to 70% of the labour in agricultural production and playing important roles in marketing, processing and ensuring household nutrition. They do this, with less access to resources, assets, technologies and inputs than their male counterparts. And often, they have no control over the products of their labour. There is evidence that increasing the resources and assets controlled by women would have positive impacts on agricultural productivity. With increasing commercialization of agriculture, many a times women have lost control and decision making over enterprises that have become profitable. For this status quo to change, we cannot do business as usual when it comes to addressing these gender inequalities. We especially have to start engaging men to address gender inequalities in agriculture and women's empowerment. We have focused on 'gender roles', 'women's participation' and 'women's access to agricultural information and services' as approaches to address gender equality and women's empowerment. These approaches remain important, relevant and appropriate. However, now is the time to engage everyone, including the men and the wider communities in which women live. We have to start

with the fact that gender inequality is detrimental to everyone; to women themselves, to their households, their communities and the country. And there is no better time to iterate this than on this 100th anniversary of the International Women's Day.

Here are ten things that we can do in market oriented agriculture to achieve women's economic empowerment.

- We need to start with **gender analysis** to understand the roles, priorities and constraints of men and women in agriculture and in value chains. It is especially important to identify the constraints women face and the opportunities for increasing their participation and benefits from agricultural value chains and have specific strategies to address these. These could be for increasing their access to technologies, inputs, financial services, high value markets among other things.
- **Engage both men and women to address gender inequalities in agriculture:** While a lot of approaches have been used to target women in agriculture, those that engage both men and women and that recognize the context in which women are operating and deal with this have been found to be more successful and sustainable.
- **Focus on multiple enterprises and multiple markets:** Men and women prefer and have access to different types of markets. Women especially face major constraints in accessing formal markets and are often found in informal markets or in segments of value chains that are less profitable. Focusing on multiple markets (formal and informal) and commodities that are in the domain of women gives women control of income alongside their husbands, empowers women, and leads to improved livelihoods for whole families.

The choice of markets and commodities should however also be informed by profitability, competitiveness and market demand and not solely on the fact that they are good for women otherwise they can confine women to low profit, informal markets.

- **Strengthen capacity especially for women to understand and engage with markets;** Build on existing knowledge and strengthen capacity to understand market and in such skills as negotiation, pricing, market requirements, product quality, value addition among others.
- **Strengthen social capital and collective action:** Working with women groups has been shown to be an effective mechanism to increase women's participation and benefits from markets. Groups provide an important channel for information, inputs, technologies and financial services. For majority of women, being in groups increases their bargaining power and helps them build savings which they can invest. For these associations to serve women there is need to promote women's leadership and ensure equity in participation and sharing of benefits.
- **Engage women and men in research that helps them to respond to markets and stay competitive.** Use of new and improved technologies can help smallholder farmers stay competitive in markets. Women need to be involved in the design of these technologies and services to ensure they are accessible and appropriate for their use. Women's access and use of improved management and technological tools will determine whether they stay or get pushed out of agricultural markets.

- **Increase access to inputs, assets and services including financial services:** We need to be more innovative in increasing access to services and inputs by women. Support for financial services that do not require physical collateral have provided women with impetus to invest in enterprises. In market oriented agriculture, payment services that use technologies more accessible to women have more access to such as mobile services, village banking etc.
- **Look beyond production:** Women play important roles in production, but also in processing and as service providers for agriculture services and inputs. Strengthening their capacity in these areas has great potential for increasing their economic empowerment.
- **Promote women** that have been successful in engaging and benefiting from market oriented agriculture at farm and at agribusiness level.
- And before we pat ourselves on the back for a job well done, let's ask, **what is the impact**, and impact on what and whom? We need to focus on multiple impacts such as incomes, food security, nutrition, health; and the distribution of impacts on men, women, children, and the poor.

For all this to happen, those working in research and development must have the right attitudes and the right capacity. Gender responsive approaches should become a way of doing business for everyone otherwise; we will not tap into the resources and our benefits will not reach half of the population!



Working together to find a lasting solution. Participants of the recently concluded Gender and Market-Oriented Agriculture (AgriGender 2011) workshop, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. (Photo credit: ILRI/Habtamu).



A great leader is an ordinary person with extraordinary wisdom -Malawian proverb

Agnes Luweesi attends to her dairy cow. Photo: EADD/Brian Kawuma

She is a mother, a grandmother, a farmer, a trainer and a manager. At slightly over 60 years, Agnes Luweesi portrays the strength and agility of a young lady.

As a registered member of the BUBUSI Co-operative society, one of EADD's traditional milk market models designed for informal markets, Agnes doubles up as a community mobilizer and a treasurer for the biggest dairy co-operative society in her area. She commands respect from her peers, men and women alike.

Being an early adopter, Agnes was selected as a model farmer by EADD. She received pasture seeds (Boma rhodes, centrosema, Siratro and Kikuyu grass) and established a fodder farm which she also uses to train her fellow farmers. Agnes takes her role as a farmer trainer in stride and her fellow farmers credit her for their increase in milk production, adding that she is very thorough and diligent while training.

"After being trained by EADD, I embarked on training my fellow farmers because the knowledge is only useful if passed on to the next neighbor," says Agnes.

She adds that through her trainings, farmers in her village have been quick to adopt artificial insemination and are gradually improving their animal feeding practices. She has trained farmers in record keeping, establishing and managing fodder pastures and the benefits of inseminating their cows to improve their breeds for high milk yields.

Agnes conducts her trainings every 2 months based on a needs assessment she performs as she visits her students. She also conducts routine follow up visits to make sure her students are practicing what they are learning and to identify areas of improvements.

"Whenever I train farmers, I am always eager for them to put into practice what they have learnt, that is why I visit with them and check on their progress. For me the satisfaction lies in seeing improvement, and then I know we are making progress, as a community," she says.

As well as training, Agnes is the manager of a milk collection center where over 85 farmers collect milk and sell to JESA Dairy Farm, a major milk processor in the area. The milk collection center supplies the processing unit with an average of 900 liters of milk daily. JESA buys a liter of milk at UGX 700 (\$0.3) earning Agnes UGX 100 for every liter collected.

This phenomenal woman has got her hands full and manages to juggle all her duties superbly. Her days of waiting for things to change are over. She believes she is witnessing an economic transformation and women like her are being empowered to take destiny into their able hands.

"After being trained by EADD, I embarked on training my fellow farmers because the knowledge is only useful if passed on to the next neighbor," says Agnes.

Empowering Women in Groups | Michael Muthui, Kenya

For many years, women have relied on their support groups, pooling their resources as a means of empowering themselves and developing each other. In Kenya, women networks known locally as *chama* are very instrumental to women development. In a *chama*, women rally behind one another to address their socio-economic needs.

The benefits of a women group are immense, ranging from economic empowerment to social support. For a long time, Heifer Project International has tapped into the women networks as means of empowering communities through placement of cows. Likewise, the East Africa Dairy Development Project (EADD) is working with various women networks in order to extend the benefit of commercial dairy farming to many households, some of which are female-headed.

Kemeliet dairy management group is one such network. The dairy management group was formed in 2008 by a group of women eager to participate in the economic development instigated by EADD. Some of the 18 members of the group already had heifers and were selling milk to the informal market to earn a living.

The women opened a joint milk supply account with Tanyikina Dairy Plant. They bulk their milk and sell it as a group. Income from the milk sales go directly to a Group Education Fund kitty they set up. Through the kitty, members can get loans for upgrading their dairy cows to better breeds, school fees for their children and attend to other needs that may arise.

Mrs. Juliana Maiyo is a member of the group and its treasurer. She was instrumental in rallying the women together to join

the group. Juliana attests to the economic benefits the women are reaping for the joint venture.

"We saw that as individuals, our cows were not producing enough milk to be sold. We saw an opportunity with the milk cooler we have here to join hands and sell our milk as a group earning us more money and still leaving each woman with surplus milk for household consumption," says Juliana.

The savings from the kitty have benefitted the women on an individual needs basis.

"Some of us have bought high breed cows, others are using their savings to pay for their children's school fees. I recently bought a cow from my savings and my milk production has significantly risen," adds Juliana who earns an average monthly income of Kshs 10,000 (\$125) from milk sales.

The women have also benefitted from intensive animal husbandry training by EADD. They have received training in fodder establishment, animal health care, silage making and water harvesting.

Michael Muthui is the EADD gender and youth coordinator for the Kenya project and has been working very closely with the group.

"It was easy to work with them because they were already organized into a group. As a group, members can access training and other services very easily. The group also provides a sense of belonging to the women and boosts their economic status as well as their self-esteem. Together, they are very influential," he says
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"Some went among women who were alone, teaching them to join together, for there is hope in two women, help in three women, strength in four, joy in five, power in six, and against seven, no gate may stand."

- Sherri S. Tepper from her novel *A Gate to Women's Country*

Some of the women of Kemeliet dairy management group EADD/Michael Muthui

cont...

Muthui adds that the most important thing is that the women have been able to open a joint milk supply account and are able to save money to meet their needs. This is a strategy that EADD is eager to implement in other regions to encourage women to fully participate into project activities, including buying shares from the dairy plants.

"We are testing the effectiveness of this joint milk supply account for women so that we can replicate it across the region. In most instances, shares are registered in the name of the man as the head of the household or jointly as spouses and so women don't get to fully benefit. We want women to be integral part of this project and we employ contextual workable strategies," concludes Muthui.

Behind Every Successful Dairy Co-operative There is a Woman | Joseph Karake & George Mose, Rwanda



Evelyn Uwimana, as a woman leader she has faced challenges and has managed to overcome them. Photo: EADD/Joseph Karake

The leader's head is never completely empty of a potent idea –Africa proverb

Evelyn Uwimana is the chairperson of Gahengeri Dairy Farmers Co-operative (COOPAG) in Rwamagana District in Rwanda. As its chairperson, Evelyn runs the day to day activities of the dairy co-operative including nurturing effective partnerships, planning and budgeting, procurements, organizing and chairing meetings with stakeholders and members. She also plays a critical role in resolving disputes that may arise between members.

The dairy co-operative which was set up in 2008 has a membership of 3,071 members, 1,620 of which are women.

Evelyn who is among the pioneers of the dairy co-operative has been very instrumental in its set up taking a lead role in mobilizing farmers especially fellow women to register and buy shares.

Under her leadership, the co-operative has recorded one of the highest numbers of shareholders in the EADD operational areas. At the time when she assumed her leadership role, the dairy co-operative had only 121 non-active members. Registration of new shareholders means that the once struggling co-operative is getting back on its feet and will soon be a vibrant dairy enterprise in the region.

Evelyn also ensures that COOPAG complies with government rules and regulations governing co-operative societies. She spearheaded its official registration to the umbrella body Rwanda Co-operative Agency (RAC).

She has also engineered different activities bringing on board over twelve business service providers who attend to farmers needs in terms of offering trainings, artificial insemination, agro-vet services to provide farmers with a range of farm-care and animal health products. The co-operative has also sunk a bore hole to provide water for the soon to be installed chilling plant.

Evelyn is also overseeing a biogas project that her co-operative has initiated together with the Rwandan Ministry of Infrastructure and SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. Members of the co-operative will install biodigesters to provide a cheap source of fuel. Already Evelyn has installed one in her homestead.

As a leader, Evelyn brings energy and a lot of enthusiasm to her job. She is a good listener and members of the co-operative credit her with solving disputes amicably by listening patiently to both sides before making a decision.

Asked about the challenges she has faced as a leader she said,

"Initially I faced a lot of cynicisms from people who believed I was not up to the task. People actually thought that my husband was the one running the show! But with time, I have won over my critics just by sheer hard work and dedication to my job; they have learnt to have faith in me as their leader."

For now, Evelyn is proud to be part of the economic empowerment of dairy farmers in Rwanda and her hope is that every farmer, man or woman earns a decent income from their sweat.

A Woman's Hard Work Begins to Pay Off : The Story of Lydia Jjemba | John Musisi & Brian Kawuma, Uganda



The hardworking woman brings forth food. African Proverb

Lydia admires her dairy cows.
Photo: EADD/Brian Kawuma

Her smile exudes optimism as she feeds her favorite cow. Handful by handful she loads the trough while she narrates her experiences as a dairy farmer. Lydia Jjemba is not your ordinary small-holder dairy farmer if her well diversified five-acre farm is anything to go by.

In 2003 Lydia embarked on a journey to uplift her family's standard of living by opting for mixed farming after receiving several trainings from Agency for Integrated Rural Development, a Non-Government Organization operating in her home area, situated in Namayumba sub-county, Luguzi parish, Wakiso district.

Most of the trainings she had received from this agency focused on organic farming for sustainable agriculture but Lydia's dream was to own a dairy cow. With no money to purchase her cow, Lydia concentrated on farming.

For Lydia, hope came in form of Send A Cow in Uganda, an organization working very closely with Heifer Project International and donating heifers to deserving families. She received a heifer. When the cow calved, Lydia was collecting an average of six litres of milk per day. She consumed two litres domestically and sold the rest to the nearby milk collection point which was paying her UGX 400 (\$ 0.2) per litre. Production was low and extension services such as trainings, artificial insemination, veterinary services were not easily accessible. The nearest veterinary officer was based 40 kilometers away in Kampala.

In 2008 Lydia joined BUBUSI dairy co-operative after sensitization by EADD staff. Through the co-operative, Lydia together with her fellow farmers has been able to access training on animal husbandry and extension services. She has been trained in animal nutrition, hygienic milk production, animal health and care. She has also received training on feed conservation and to grow alternative high value feeds like pasture legumes that have the potential to bolster the productivity on her farm.

Lydia has also received pasture seeds of different species like calliandra, Russian confrey, Rhodes grass, Napier and lablab that she multiplied and now grows on her farm. Her farm is being used as a model farm to train other farmers.

Community Animal Health Service Providers (CAHPs) and artificial insemination (AI) technicians trained by EADD now provide her with better and efficient services for her animals.

Currently, Lydia owns four cows although she has since sold some to get money for development projects. Her production has risen and each day she sells an average of 32 litres of milk from her farm earning UGX 550 (\$0.3) per litre. She also runs a milk collection center where she bulks milks from her neighbors for collection by the milk processor JESA Dairies.

Lydia has been able to diversify her agricultural and entrepreneurial ventures. Her home is a beehive of activities. As well as rearing goats and local breeds of chicken, she has a section on her farm that is used to graft and bud fruit trees which she sells. She is currently constructing a green house for the trees. She also grows mushrooms that are highly demanded for their delicacy and medicinal value. Of late, she has begun to venture into small-scale manufacturing of herbal soaps and jelly. Lydia is a busy woman.

She credits EADD with boosting her economic development saying, "I now generate more income from my milk sales and the different projects I have started on my farm. These have enabled me to take my children to good boarding schools and our lives have greatly improved."

She says that as opposed to many community development projects, EADD's commercial nature has opened her eyes and those of other farmers in her community to explore their full potential. "We are not fully there, but we will get there," Lydia concludes.

How One Cow Changed a Family's Life | Joseph Karake & George Mose, Rwanda

Meet Madeleine Madamu, a widow and genocide survivor. Madeleine who is a resident of Muhazi, located in Rwanda's eastern district of Rwamagana is mother of six children.

Madeline and her family lost their household head along with all their possessions during the 1994 Genocide war. Following the tragedy, life has not been an easy ride for the family of seven who have had to survive on handouts from neighbors and do odd jobs in the neighborhood to make ends meet.

In 2006, Heifer Project International through its Pass on the Gift program gave Madeleine a cow to enable the family come out of extreme poverty and improve their nutrition through milk. The family worked very hard to take good care of their only livestock in which they put all their hopes for a better life.

In 2008, Madeleine joined Kamirabose Dairy Farmers Co-operative after sensitization by EADD. Through the co-operative, Madeleine received various trainings on how she could improve her milk production. Regional exposures also opened her eyes on how can she diversify her farming activities on a small piece of land.

Madeleine has also been trained as a community animal health provider, EADD's participatory approach to empowering community members especially women to provide extension services to each other and earn extra income in the process.

Life has significantly improved in the Madeleine household. Having expanded her herd to three cows, her daily milk

production out of the one cow she is currently milking is at 14 litres, half of which she sells and the other is retained for household consumption. She has managed to integrate dairy farming with crops. She sells her produce at the nearby market, earning her an average monthly income of Frw 100,000 (\$200).

The family recently upgraded their one roomed house to a five roomed housed, equipped with water and electricity. Madeleine can now comfortably pay school fees for her children and afford life's little luxuries. She has also employed two domestic workers who help her around the farm and the house, creating more employment opportunities.

For Madeleine and her family, the journey has been long but they look back not with regrets and bitterness but with hope and optimism. They are still working at improving their productivity and the support she is getting from the dairy co-operative will enable her to realize her full potential.

"With just one cow, our lives have completely changed, when I look back to my days of extreme poverty, it seems so long ago and yet I do not forget that as a woman, I have had to work extra hard to provide for my family. The determination of a woman is endless, we never give up hope, we just pick up the pieces and move on," she says.



When a woman is hungry, she says, "Roast something for the children that they might eat."
-Ghanaian proverb

Madeleine feeds her dairy cow. Photo:EADD/ Joseph Karake

Celebrating Our Women Dairy Farmers



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