

## Evidences

### Study #3916

**Contributing Projects:**

- P1680 - Product Line 5.3.1: Menu of approaches for nutrition-sensitive livestock-related interventions to improve availability, affordability, access and utilization of animal-source foods

**Part I: Public communications**

**Type:** OICR: Outcome Impact Case Report

**Status:** Completed

**Year:** 2020

**Title:** Rwanda government adopts and integrates animal source foods consumption communication materials into the national maternal and child nutrition curriculum to improve nutrition outcomes

**Short outcome/impact statement:**

ILRI and its partners have implemented a social and behavior change communication intervention on animal source foods consumption, particularly the drinking of milk among Girinka households in Rwanda. This was implemented through a Feed the Future Innovations Labs for Livestock Systems (LSIL) research project. In 2020 the national counselling cards were updated to include animal source foods consumption messages, which have been validated through the National Child Development Agency and are now being used nationally by community health workers.

## **Outcome story for communications use:**

Increasing the quality, marketing, and consumption of animal source foods (ASF), including milk, is a development priority for Rwanda, where chronic malnutrition among children in poor households is prevalent. Only 30% of children aged between 6-23 months consume a diet that meets dietary diversity requirements, while 38% of children under 5 years are stunted.

Under the USAID Feed the Future Innovations Lab for Livestock Systems (LSIL) project "Enhancing Milk Quality and Consumption for Improved Income and Nutrition in Rwanda", ILRI and partners have been contributing to efforts to enhance the quality and consumption of milk for improved income and nutrition for children and pregnant and lactating women, drawing upon the lessons of the ongoing nationwide Girinka (One Cow per Poor Family) program. The intervention was implemented by Community Health Workers, reaching 1,262 mothers with children under 2 years of age through community activities and 234 through individual home visits.

To raise awareness and promote consumption of animal source foods, especially milk, ILRI and partners implemented a social and behavior change communication (SBCC) intervention in Girinka households with young children aged 12-36 months. The materials developed consisted of five counselling cards, one poster and one brochure translated into Kinyarwanda, with key messages focused on:

- a. The importance and benefits of animal-source foods and milk consumption.
- b. The appropriate quantities of animal-source foods and cow's milk to be consumed by pregnant and lactating women and young children.
- c. The appropriate time to introduce cow's milk and animal-source foods to young children.
- d. How to recognize cow's milk allergy or animal-source food intolerance symptoms and treatment.
- e. The importance of hygiene, food safety and storage of fresh milk.

The materials and messaging were developed with a gender sensitive lens, to promote the inclusion of mothers, fathers and caregivers. The style was also adapted to Rwanda's existing national nutrition program materials.

The national counselling package originally developed in 2011 for use by community health workers did not include messages on the importance and benefits of animal-source foods. Further to the successful pilot of SBCC materials, in 2020, the counselling cards were updated to integrate animal source foods messaging, particularly the promotion of these foods for young children under the title "Your baby needs animal-source foods".

The updated counselling cards have been validated at the national level through the National Child Development Agency (NCDA) and are now integrated into the national community health workers curriculum.

## **Links to any communications materials relating to this outcome:**

- <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/114623>
- <https://tinyurl.com/yyofwbsb>
- <https://tinyurl.com/yaeqkrns>

## **Part II: CGIAR system level reporting**

**Link to Common Results Reporting Indicator of Policies :** Yes

**Policies contribution:**

- 666 - Nutrition cards developed by ILRI and partners adopted by Government of Rwanda in its own community health workers curriculum (<https://tinyurl.com/2q6kell2>)

**Stage of maturity of change reported:** Stage 1

**Links to the Strategic Results Framework:**

Sub-IDOs:

- Increased capacity for innovation in partner development organizations and in poor and vulnerable communities

Is this OICR linked to some SRF 2022/2030 target?: Too early to say

Description of activity / study: N/A

**Geographic scope:**

- National

Country(ies):

- Rwanda

Comments: N/A

**Key Contributors:**

Contributing CRPs/Platforms:

- Livestock - Livestock

Contributing Flagships:

- F5: Livestock Livelihoods and Agri-Food Systems

Contributing Regional programs: <Not Defined>

Contributing external partners:

- RTI - Research Triangle International
- TSI - Three Stones International

**CGIAR innovation(s) or findings that have resulted in this outcome or impact:**

Social behavior change communication materials on animal source foods consumption

**Innovations:**

- 1179 - Social and behavioural change communication strategy for improving consumption of animal source foods by mothers and children in Rwanda (<https://tinyurl.com/2jaq4hp9>)

**Elaboration of Outcome/Impact Statement:**

The social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) materials under the project were designed and developed through a consultative process with the National Child Development Agency (NCDA), the government institution responsible for child development and protection, and the Rwanda Biomedical Centre [1]. The SBCC intervention comprised home visits and community nutrition activities implemented by community health workers (CHWs) through a randomized controlled trial in two districts in Rwanda between February and September 2019 targeting Girinka beneficiaries [2, 3]. A total of 3500 mothers were reached through the intervention. Implementing partner Three Stones International (TSI) conducted the trainings for the SBCC intervention using a cascade model starting with national training of trainers workshops for NCDA and Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) staff. This was followed by district level trainings of 40 staff. The district trainers then trained a total of 176 CHWs to implement the SBCC intervention [4]. The intervention results showed increased maternal knowledge and awareness of animal source food consumption and modestly increased children's frequency of milk intake by an 8.0 percentage-point increase in consumption of fresh cow's milk 2 or more times per week [5]. The results were shared with RAB, NCDA and the National Food and Nutrition Technical Working Group. As a result, the national Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) package materials developed for CHWs to counsel mothers and other caregivers about infant and young child feeding was revised in 2020 to include the animal source food counselling cards that were used in the project [6]. The package was validated and CHWs trained on the revised curriculum. Its implementation is ongoing.

**References cited:**

- [1] Ouma, E.A., Flax, V., Izerimana, L., Niyonzima, E. and Nyilimana, C. 2020. Impact of Girinka program on child nutritional status and household food security. Poster prepared for the Livestock Innovations Lab Virtual General Meeting, 28-30 September 2020. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI (<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/110200>)
- [2] Flax, V., Ouma, E.A., Schreiner, M., Izerimana, L. and Niyonzima, E. 2019. Does the Girinka program improve the nutrition of young children and can the impact be increased through social behavior change communication? Feed The Future Innovation Lab For Livestock Systems project on enhancing milk quality and consumption for improved income and nutrition in Rwanda. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI (<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/103983>)
- [3] Innovation Summary: Social and Behavior Change Communication Strategy for Improving ASF Consumption (2019, USAID, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Livestock Systems). (<https://tinyurl.com/tgzbbg>)
- [4] Flax, V., Ouma, E.A., Izerimana, L., Schreiner, M.A., Brower, A., Niyonzima, E., Nyilimana, C. and Usimwe, A. (2020). Impact of animal source food (ASF) social behavior change communication (SBCC) on nutrition in Girinka households in Rwanda. Poster prepared for the Livestock Innovations Lab Virtual General Meeting, 28-30 September 2020. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI (<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/110203>)
- [5] Colverson, Kathleen Earl. (2018). "Increasing the Health and Nutritional Outcomes of the Government of Rwanda's "One Cow per Poor Family" Program from a Gender Perspective." Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal 8 (2): 31-44 (<https://doi.org/10.18848/2160-1933/CGP/v08i02/31-44>)
- [6] Ministry of Health Rwanda. Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) National Materials for Community Counsellors (<https://tinyurl.com/2cuu75aw>)

**Quantification:** <Not Defined>

**Gender, Youth, Capacity Development and Climate Change:**

**Gender relevance:** 1 - Significant

Main achievements with specific **Gender** relevance: 3500 women reached

**Youth relevance:** 0 - Not Targeted

**CapDev relevance:** 2 - Principal

Main achievements with specific **CapDev** relevance: Much debate between the project team and stakeholders went into the discussion on the appropriate time to introduce cow's milk to young children, before it was agreed to continue emphasizing that cow's milk be started at 12 months. Specific messages on this and the importance of hygiene, safe handling and storage of fresh milk, were also developed.

**Climate Change relevance:** 0 - Not Targeted

**Other cross-cutting dimensions:** No

**Other cross-cutting dimensions description:** N/A

**Outcome Impact Case Report link:** [Study #3916](#)

**Contact person:**

Emily Ouma - E.Ouma@cgiar.org