

New collaborative project: Farmer Field Schools in The Gambia

August 2004

Issue 2

The Farmer Field School (FFS) project by Theme 2 (Innovations) is a participatory, innovative and experiential approach to field extension of Trainers course for Livestock FFS in the Gambia, targeted at the Small Ruminant Project (SRP) at the International Trypanotolerance Centre



Modou Gaye, a facilitator of a small ruminant FFS, conducts a training session with a group of farmers. Erik Hoeven, SRP scientist, is seated far right in the foreground.

in which farmers ‘learn by doing’. The focus of FFS is building capacity among farmers so that they can analyze their production systems, identify problems, test possible solutions and then either adapt existing production technologies, or test and adopt new technologies best suited to their farming systems. In this way, the farmers themselves identify what works best for them.

In 2003, FAO and ILRI organized a Training

(ITC) in Banjul. The training course was organized after a need was identified to adapt a participatory process that would allow small ruminant farmers in the Gambia to address gaps in knowledge in the management of their small ruminant animals—mainly sheep and goats.

During a recent follow-up visit from 23 to 30 May 2004, Gertrude Buyu, one of ILRI’s FFS experts based in Nairobi, visited

the SRP staff, FFS facilitators and 300 farmers from four villages involved in implementing the new extension methodology. The main aim of the visit was to check on the progress of FFS initial ground-working activities.

Several challenges facing the initial ground-working were identified, key among them were high illiteracy levels and many social commitments among the farmers that led to infrequent meetings. Low productivity of small ruminant animals was attributed to widespread poor management practices, for instance, failure to adhere to deworming schedules, poor control of mange, failure to vaccinate animals against pneumonia and irregular feeding of supplements. Thus, there is a need for the FFS to build the farmers’ capacity to evaluate their management practices and identify proactive solutions that will lead to improved small ruminant management.

Currently, Erik Hoeven, a scientist with the SRP, is developing an illustrative training manual on management issues that affect small ruminant productivity. Other participa-

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Welcome to the second issue of “The Milk Run”. We acknowledge the encouraging feedback on our inaugural issue. We shall continue to keep you in the know of dairy news and activities in ILRI. This issue highlights outcomes of dairy-related projects by ILRI’s Theme 2 (Innovations) and Theme 3 (Markets).

Contact us

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New SDP Milk Cans Feature in Tanzania



Milk on the go: Improved milk containers developed by Smallholder Dairy Project and Approtec's Xtra-cycles on display at the Mwanza Milk Week Show in Tanzania
(Picture courtesy of David Wendover, Approtec Tanzania)

As part of a pilot study on milk hygiene training for small-scale milk traders in Kenya, Theme 3's Smallholder Dairy Project (SDP) tested the use of improved metal milk cans. SDP is jointly implemented by ILRI, the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development.

Many small-scale traders prefer to use cheaper plastic jerry cans to transport milk because they risk having their containers confiscated by the authorities as a result of unlicensed sale of milk. But research by SDP has shown that the non-foodgrade plastic containers are associated with low quality milk, thus prompting a need for better milk handling methods.

The new aluminium cans were designed through a participatory approach involving the milk traders, a local metalware manufacturer and SDP researchers. The attractive new cans are available in 5- and 10-litre capacities and have several benefits: they are foodgrade, leak-proof, easy to sterilize, durable, and importantly, are associated with better microbial quality of raw milk. Because of this, local regulatory authorities have supported the use of the improved metal cans by small-scale traders. Six churns of either capacity can be transported with ease on a bicycle carrier, enabling the traders to ferry up to 60 litres of milk by bicycle.

This new technology is now spreading regionally. Approtec Tanza-

nia, a company that develops appropriate technology for small-scale end users, found out about the new milk cans during a regional dairy policy workshop held in Mombasa, Kenya in November 2002.

Approtec Tanzania recently showcased the improved milk cans at this year's Milk Week Show held in Mwanza, Tanzania from 2-4 June, 2004. Approtec has separately been involved in designing a special bicycle—dubbed “MoneyMaker Xtra-cycle”—to improve the cumbersome traditional method of ferrying milk, which involves strapping a 50-litre container on either side of the bicycle. The Xtra-cycle's heavy-duty carrier allows for three 10-litre cans to be carried on either side of the bicycle's rear wheel. Now Approtec wants to promote the dual use of the Xtra-cycles and the 10-litre metal cans developed by SDP.

The prototype Xtra-cycles and the SDP milk cans were displayed at the Mwanza Milk Week Show and attracted the attention of Tanzania's Minister for Water and Livestock Development, Mr Edward Lowassa, who was greatly impressed by the improved technology. Following the event, there are indications that the Tanganyika Farmers Association will stock the 20-litre cans for retail.

We are encouraged by the growing interest that traders and other dairy sector stakeholders are showing in the improved metal milk cans and we plan to continue supporting the process of disseminating this innovative milk handling technology both locally and in the region.

—Tezira Lore



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tory tools are also being developed with the farmers' needs in mind, such as agro-ecological systems analysis sheets that use more illustrations than words. The various FFSs are due to submit their grant proposals but in the meantime farmers continue to meet for special topics.

The problem-solving analytical skills which farmers learn from a well-facilitated FFS apply immediately for the enterprise in question (small ruminants). However, farmers are also empowered to apply similar decision-making approaches to other livestock enterprises, natural resources management and even human health challenges. Indeed FFS is not only about technology but human development too!

—Tezira Lore

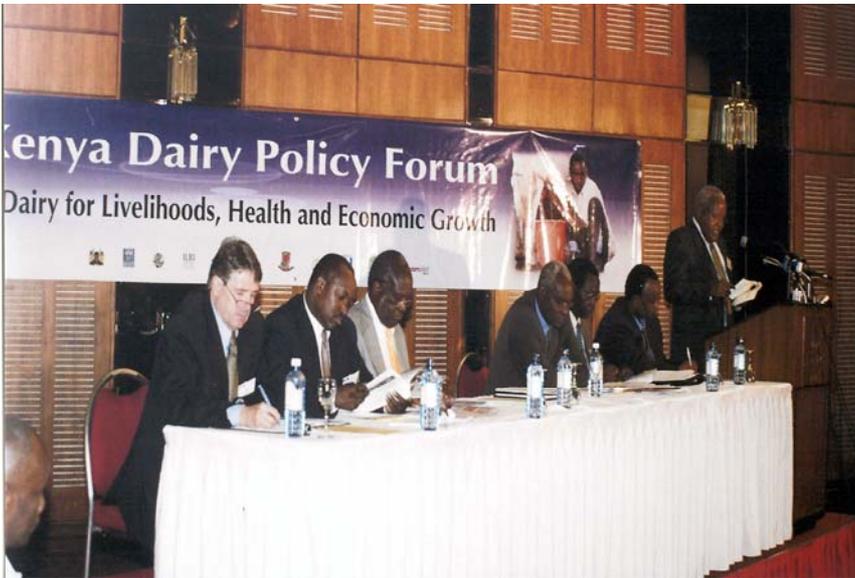
Kenya's Dairy Stakeholders Meet at National Policy Forum

The long-awaited Kenya National Dairy Policy Forum was held on 11 May 2004 in Nairobi. The Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), the Kenya Dairy Board (KDB), the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development (MoLFD) and ILRI jointly convened the meeting,

topics presented were launched to convey SDP's research findings and policy implications to a wider audience. There were also presentations from ECAPAPA (Eastern and Central Africa Programme for Agricultural Policy Analysis) on harmonization of regional dairy policy, and from the

Agriculture Committee to reinforce our pro-poor policy position and also help advance the passage of the new Dairy Act.

SDP's policy-related research is also making an impact regionally through the ECAPAPA project that seeks to harmonize regional dairy policy in eastern and central Africa. Amos Omere, a veterinary epidemiologist attached to SDP, is playing a key role in this initiative.



Meeting of the minds: Kenya's Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Development, Mr. Joseph Munyao, addresses the forum. Seated (L to R): Bruce Scott (Director of Partnerships and Communication, ILRI), Paul Gichohi (Managing Director, KDB), Reuben Chesire (Chairman, KDB), Harry Mule (Permanent Secretary, MoLFD), Romano Kiome (Director General, KARI) and Julius Kiptarus (Director, MoLFD)

which acted as a platform for highlighting policy-related research outcomes of Theme 3's Smallholder Dairy Project. Several local NGO and research partners supported the Forum through their roles in advocating for promotion of a pro-poor policy environment for Kenya's dairy sector.

A total of 140 people attended the meeting, including Ministers and other senior government officials, researchers, dairy farmers, and representatives from key industry bodies and NGOs. Bruce Scott, ILRI's Director of Partnerships and Communication, was present.

SDP's presentations centred on demand patterns, employment, competitiveness, public health, nutrition and the policy environment in Kenya's dairy sector. Dairy policy briefs on the

KDB on the challenges facing Kenya's dairy industry and the KDB's planned interventions. The forum also saw a number of key outcomes:

Policy & legislation

The process of passing the draft Dairy Industry Bill into law, which has been at a standstill since 1997, has now regained momentum with the Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Development affirming his commitment to push for the Bill to be passed in Parliament. The new law is aimed at creating a more favourable policy environment for the informal dairy sector.

Additionally, through a USAID capacity-building project among various parliamentary committees, we plan to communicate our policy information to the Parliamentary

Training

One of our NGO partners—Strengthening Informal Sector Training and Enterprise (SITE)—is developing a training and certification programme for small-scale milk traders. The Kenya Dairy Board, which had initially resisted this initiative has, after the forum, agreed to participate in training and certification of small-scale traders in milk hygiene and quality control. We see this as a milestone in our quest for official recognition of Kenya's informal milk market agents.

Communication

KARI—one of ILRI's key national research partners—has indicated plans to facilitate dissemination of SDP's research outputs during a special session at their Biennial Scientific Conference to be held later this year. This will be yet another useful opportunity to communicate our research results to the wider scientific community.

We hope that the momentum gained through the forum will be sustained and that policymakers and regulatory bodies will adopt the policy research outcomes to help create a more favourable policy environment for all dairy industry stakeholders.

—Nick Hooton/Steve Staal/Tezira Lore

“You can't have the butter and the money from it”

French proverb

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ILRI—Better Lives and Lands for Better Livestock

ILRI, headquartered in Nairobi Kenya, is a non-profit institution governed by an international Board of Trustees. ILRI is one of 16 Future Harvest Centres that conduct food and environmental research to help alleviate poverty and increase food security while protecting the natural resource base. The Centres are supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. ILRI's research products are designed to raise livestock productivity without depleting the natural resources on which farming depends. ILRI's mission is to enhance the wellbeing of present and future generations in developing countries through research that improves sustainable livestock production.

Theme 1

Targeting opportunities

Theme 2

Enabling innovations

ILRI's research themes

Theme 3

Market opportunities

Theme 4

Biotechnology

Theme 5

People, livestock
& the environment

Report from Asia: Flooding threatens dairy producers

Exceptionally heavy monsoon rains over Bangladesh and the states of NE and E India have inundated wide tracts of low-lying land, forcing millions of people to leave their homes and farms. The NE Indian State of Assam has been hit particularly badly.

One of ILRI's partners, Moloy Bora, Assam's Director of Dairy Development, reports that many dairy cattle have been lost to the floods while others have retreated to hill country. The effects on the livelihoods of dairy producers will be great and recovery a long and costly process, especially as many of India's major dairy-producing states are faced with drought, reducing the number of affordable replacement animals.

—William Thorpe



Seeking higher ground: Dairy cows move to the hills after recent severe floods in the Indian state of Assam

Dairy Diary: Important dates for you to note!

27 to 30 September 2004

FAO APHCA (Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific) Conference on Smallholder Dairy. Chiang Mai, Thailand.

27 to 30 September 2005

Uganda's Dairy Development Authority (DDA) is coordinating the First Eastern and Southern Africa Regional School Milk Conference to be held in Kampala, Uganda. For details, visit the DDA's website <www.dda.or.ug> or email the conference coordinator on dda@afsat.com

Video on Wastewater Agriculture in Hyderabad

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) India has produced a video on the use of wastewater in the city of Hyderabad, with the title: "Making a living along the Musi River: Wastewater users in and around Hyderabad City, India" (directed by Stephanie Buechler, Gayathri Devi and Rama Devi). The video is supported by the British Department for International Development (DFID).

The city of Hyderabad, with its

surrounding nine municipalities is one of the fastest growing Indian cities. The Musi River, which runs through Hyderabad, is dry upstream of the city (except during the monsoons), but domestic, hospital and industrial wastewater released from the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad converts it into a perennial river.

In the urban and peri-urban areas, drainage water from both

domestic and industrial sources is channelled to several contiguous plots of land. Wastewater agriculture all along the Musi River provides livelihoods to a diverse group of women, men and children from different caste groups and represents a broad spectrum of social classes. Dairy production is one of the enterprises featured in the video. Copies of the video can be requested via ruaf@etcnl.nl.

—William Thorpe