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Pastoral Dairy Development for Food Security and Food Safety in Eastern Africa: Challenges and Potentials

ANN WATERS-BAYER¹, WOLFGANG BAYER¹, MARGARETA LELEA², KOEN VAN TROOS³, KEN
OTIENO⁴

¹*Agrecol Association, Germany*

²*German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL), Germany*

³*Dierenartsen Zonder Grenzen - Vétérinaires Sans Frontières, Education and Advocacy, Belgium*

⁴*RECONCILE, Kenya*

Abstract

Pastoralism is a source of income as well as food and nutrition security for about 20 million people in the drylands in Eastern Africa. Most interventions for pastoral development have focused on meat production, but pastoralism is a multifunctional system in which milk also plays an important role. Greater emphasis on dairy development could improve the nutrition of pastoralist families and other local consumers of milk products in the drylands and could strengthen the role of pastoralist women as the traditional managers of milk and as innovators in dairy micro-enterprises.

In order to inform particularly European but also African policymakers about the challenges and potentials of pastoral dairy development, CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism) reviewed literature and project experiences related to dairy development in Eastern Africa. It looked into the differences between what are commonly described as formal and informal milk markets, including evidence concerning food safety in these markets. It gave particular attention to the specificities of pastoral dairying, which call for a different approach to dairy development in the drylands than in agrarian areas such as the highlands. However, similarities between the two areas were also found, in that many small-scale milk producers struggle to fulfil formal-sector requirements. The review investigated the contribution of pastoral dairying to nutrition in the drylands and the potential contribution of pro-poor dairy development to women's empowerment and wider food security.

After considering the potentials and constraints in pastoral dairy development, CELEP formulated recommendations regarding European policies and development interventions in this sector in Eastern Africa. The partner organisations of CELEP in Eastern Africa are developing corresponding recommendations for policymakers in their respective countries and the region.

Keywords: Dairy development, drylands, Eastern Africa, food safety, food security, markets, pastoralism, policy, small-scale milk production, women