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Constraints of Camel Meat and Milk Marketing and Strategies for its Improvement in the Arid and semi-Arid Northern Kenya

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Abstract

A survey to identify constraints along the camel milk and meat value chains and, to design strategies to address the challenges in order to increase profits for the chain players was conducted in northern Kenya and Nairobi. The methods used included Participatory Integrated Community Development (PICD), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informants Interviews (KII), Direct Observations (DO) and Informal Interviews (II). The PICD, FGD, KII and direct observations were conducted in all the study sites while informal interviews were used for individual chain players in Nairobi and Laikipia. The KII were used on opinion leaders, DO in markets and slaughter facilities.

In a second step, field testing of the intervention on milk hygiene at market level and meat processing at household level was carried out for one year in Garissa and Bangali. Results indicated that about 50% of marketable camel milk was not sold, 30% (about 7.5 million litres) of marketed camel milk per annum was sold in sour state at 0.13\$ lower than the price of a litre of fresh milk; processed meat got spoiled along the chain and, producers experienced difficulties marketing their camels due to poor infrastructure, distant markets, limited value addition and hygiene problems. Annual economic losses associated with milk spoilage were estimated at US\$ 961,538.5. Proposed interventions include; training producers, bulking & market agents and transporters on milk hygiene, management of milk related diseases, training milk and meat sellers on business skills, introducing simple value addition technologies, promotion of value added products, among others. Preliminary findings indicated that an additional 3 million litres of camel milk was sold in fresh state, giving an annual saving of US\$ 384,615.4. Increased profitability of up to 60% compared to 30% before the intervention was reported among nyirinyiri processors. In conclusion, economic potential of the camel could be fully exploited by facilitating adoption of proposed interventions at all levels of the camel milk and meat value chains.

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