

ABSTRACT

Milk and other dairy products are important food and items of trade in Somalia. However, the actual local milk supply does not meet the ever increasing demand. In spite of popularity for fresh milk, the quality and marketing of milk remains poor due to inadequate regulatory and quality assurance systems and low knowledge on milk hygiene practices. In order to improve quality and safety of milk and dairy products VSF-G implemented a project which focused on three areas for improving the dairy value chain: i) strengthening the public sector to be an effective regulator of food hygiene, ii) supporting the private sector and public-private partnership for economic development of the dairy sector, and, iii) developing human resources and provision of appropriate equipment for handling milk to reduce health risk for consumers. In the process, it was learnt that improved milk hygiene does not only reduce health risks but also results in higher revenues at household level. The use of aluminum cans increased the duration the milk stayed fresh (and the amount of fresh milk sold by a vendor increased from 26.5 to 45 liters per day; the number of customers from 25 to 35 and the price of a liter of milk from \$0.61 to \$ 0.77 and with a profit margin of \$0.16 per liter. Since fresh milk was found to have the highest market value, interventions to improve storage were initiated: replacement of plastic cans by aluminum cans, a shorter transportation time, milk cooling facilities and milk testing before bulking. At times of poor accessibility, milk processing becomes necessary to produce storable products; ghee and sour milk. Interventions in the dairy value chain promote gender equity since women play complementary roles whereby women milk small ruminants, men milk camels, transport milk and trade in dairy products. In order to establish effective regulatory frameworks for the dairy value chain, community projects can serve as role models. Even with interest from public institutions changes in the sector will take time until favorable macroeconomic policy environment is created. But in the meantime, small scale dairy value chain involving business development such as Village Milk Centers and women groups are representing a successful model for sustainability in rural development.

SOMALI DAIRY SECTOR



Vendors in a milk market using jerry cans to store milk. Plastic containers cannot be properly cleaned, bacterial growth is high and fresh milk gets quickly contaminated. Improved milk hygiene does not only reduce health risks but also result in higher revenues at household level



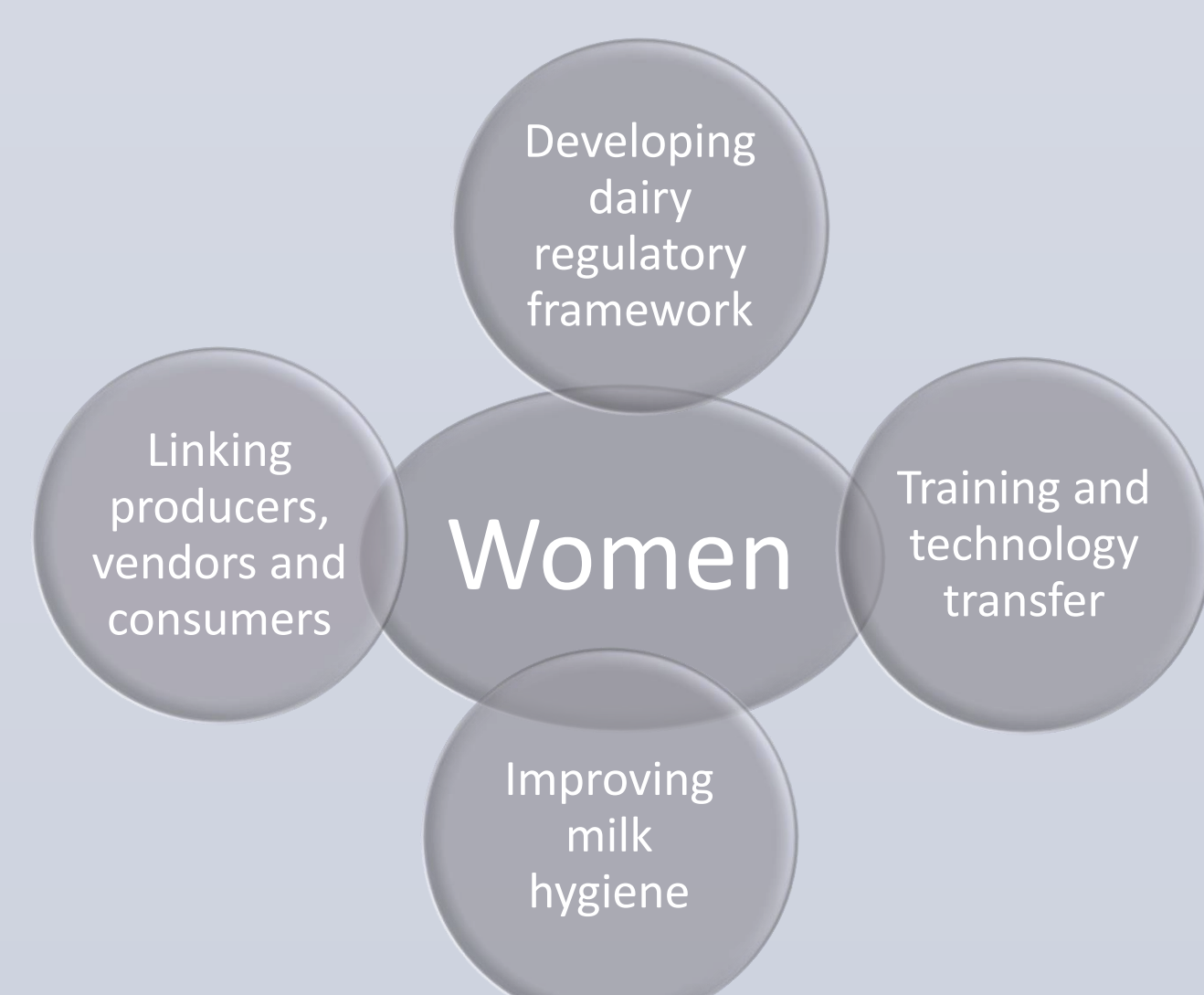
Interventions in the dairy value chain promote gender equity since women play complementary roles whereby women milk small ruminants and sell dairy product in the market whereas men milk camels, transport milk and trade in dairy products

- Milk and other dairy products are vital items of trade in Somalia.
- Fresh milk is a staple food in the Somali diet.
- Milk from camels is a preferred dairy product and sold to urban consumers.
- Milk provides important part of the daily income especially to women.
- Actual local milk supply is below demand in urban and rural settings.
- Consumers substitute local fresh milk with imported milk products.
- Fresh milk importance in Somali diet ensures demand for milk on the market.
- Urbanization is rapid and cash economy growing in Somalia as many consumers receive remittances from Diaspora

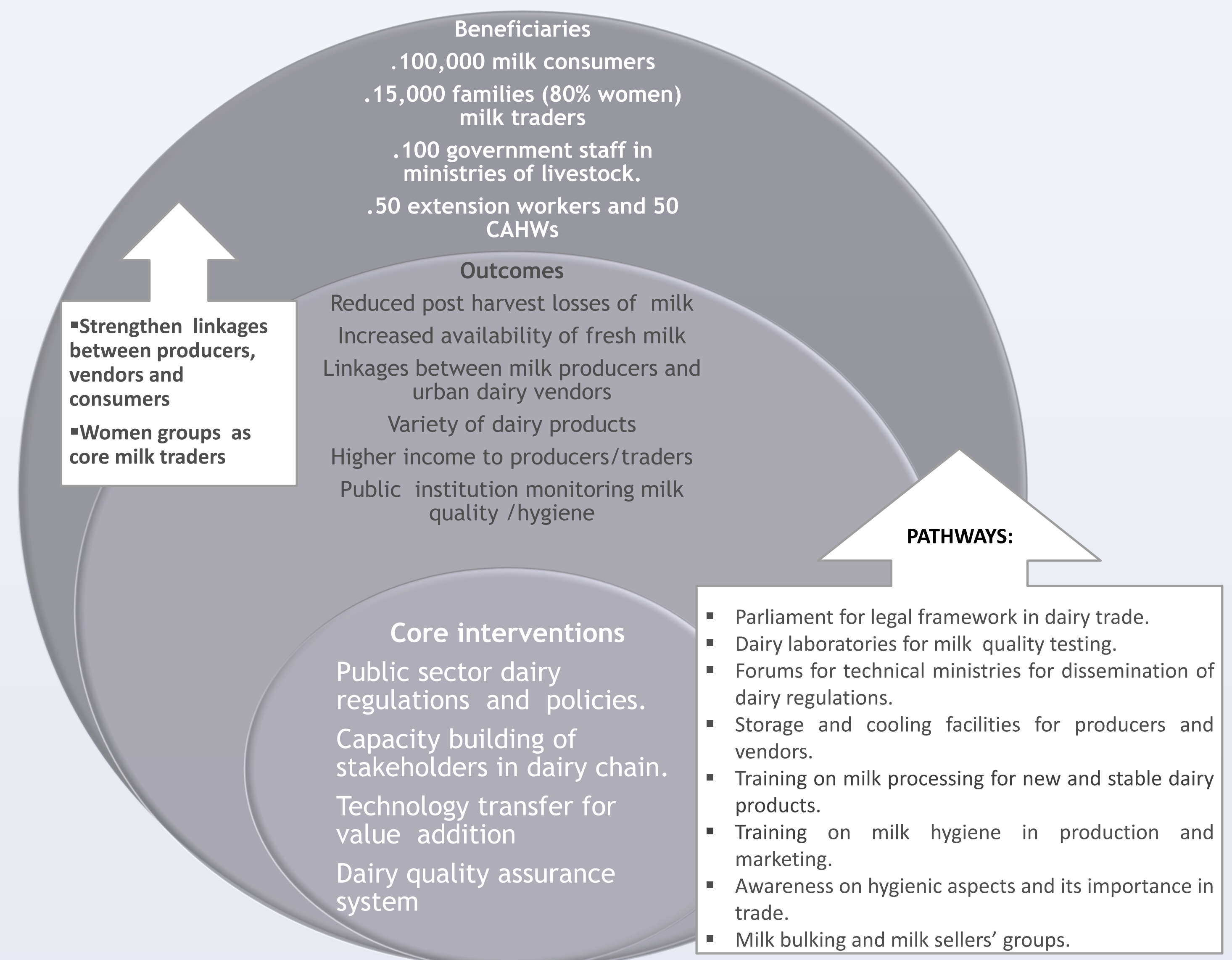
MAIN CHALLENGES

- Poor quality of marketed milk (quality and food safety concerns)
- Inadequate regulatory systems on the dairy sector
- Inadequate quality assurance systems
- Low knowledge on hygiene practices
- High post-harvest losses of milk due to poor storage

APPROACHES IMPROVING THE DAIRY VALUE CHAIN



INTERVENTIONS, OUTCOMES AND BENEFICIARIES



LESSONS LEARNED

- ◆ Better quality of local milk and dairy products minimizes losses and health risks, and generates higher revenues for value chain actors
- ◆ Fresh milk has the highest market value
- ◆ To improve freshness of milk focus on i) better hygiene, ii) milk containers, iii) shortens time of delivery to markets; iv) cooling facilities at milk collection points; v) milk testing before bulking
- ◆ Ghee and sour milk are the main storable dairy products of fresh milk under pastoral systems with low technology.
- ◆ Interventions in dairy value chain promote gender equity: i) women and men complement roles in dairy sector ii) women main traders of milk and its derivatives
- ◆ Women empowerment through employment and by working with men
- ◆ Dairy value chain regulatory frameworks take time to establish (political process)
- ◆ Small scale dairy value chain involving business should focus on Village Milk Centers (VMCs) run by women along the chain (bulking points)
- ◆ Women groups present a model for success and sustainability for dairy value chain and rural development.



A woman using easily rinsable aluminum milk cans for marketing fresh milk and a women's group processing milk surplus in storable dairy products

ABOUT VSF-G AND THE PROJECT

Vétérinaires sans Frontières Germany (VSF-G) is a non-governmental, non-profit making organization, engaged in the field of veterinary relief and development work. Currently VSF-G works in Republic of Sudan, Republic of South Sudan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Somalia.

This work refers to an initiative implemented by VSF-G in Somaliland and Puntland from 2010 to 2014 co-funded by the European Union and VSF-G/TOG called "Somalia Dairy Development Project II".