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“Filling gaps and removing traps  
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## Dairy Producers’ Levels of Adaptability Post-Market Shock in Bamenda, Cameroon

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### Abstract

Formal and informal markets usually complement one another in urbanised centres of developing countries. In Bamenda – the capital of the North-West region in Cameroon – the dairy market consisted of a single private milk factory and a web of informal sellers until mid-2016, when the factory closed its doors. As a result of the sudden departure of the formal market, milk producers made several changes to their farm management. As part of the Urban FoodPlus project, we carried out surveys in 2017 in urban, peri-urban and rural zones of Bamenda with 201 current and 123 former milk suppliers to look at the various strategies undertaken. Four levels of adaptation to post-market shock were observed: producers who remained in the market (Sellers), producers who stopped selling but kept the milk for household consumption (Self-Consumers), producers who stopped selling, stopped breeding, but kept the dry dairy animals (Keepers), and producers who stopped selling and sold all their dairy animals (Quitters). The objectives of this study are to analyse if certain characteristics can predict dairy producers’ level of adaptability to market shocks and if there are policy implications to make producers more resilient to such events. We divided the analysis between Mbororo pastoral producers and sedentary Grassfielders because we noticed that the different production systems had separate and distinct adaptation levels. A multinomial logit model was used for the Grassfielders whose adaptation levels varied between Sellers, Keepers, and Quitters, whereas a logit model was used for the Mbororo’ën whose levels were limited to Sellers and Self-Consumers. Our results show that Grassfielders are more likely to remain in the market after a shock when they are younger and literate, have bigger households and a land title, and when they use accessible trainings, institutional credit, and market price information. For the Mbororo’ën, younger producers with large households who are members of dairy cooperatives and settle more permanently in the rural areas are more likely to remain Sellers. Therefore, policies and development programs should consider the distinct production systems and focus on the aforementioned characteristics in order to strengthen dairy producers’ resilience to market shocks.

**Keywords:** Adaptation, Cameroon, dairy, market shock, milk production, pastoralism