



## **Kenyan dairy sector learning tour – DAY 1**

***In March 2018, CELEP has organised a learning tour on small-scale dairying in Kenya for a delegation from three West African countries – Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger – in collaboration with Oxfam. CELEP has already been active on this topic and even organised a roundtable session in the European Parliament on pastoralism and dairying during the 2017 CELEP annual meeting in Brussels. European Union (EU) policies affect dairying in both Eastern and West Africa directly (through development aid) and indirectly (through domestic agricultural and trade policies). Dairying is therefore an important entry point to advocate with the EU for recognition of pastoralism. This is also the trajectory through which the International Land Coalition (ILC) Rangelands Initiative defines key milestone in the Participatory Rangelands Management project, which is funded by the European Commission and seeks to improve pastoralists' nutrition. The one-week learning tour in Kenya is being facilitated by RECONCILE, the CELEP regional focal point in Eastern Africa and the European CELEP members DITSL (German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture) and SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation). The CELEP core-group and the European focal point in Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF)-Belgium are providing input and assuring the overall coordination of the tour. Below is a summary of the first day of the visit.***

The first day of the learning tour (26 March) brought the West African delegation to Isiolo in northern Kenya to study and exchange on the camel milk sector in a pastoralist environment. VSF-Suisse (Switzerland), member of the VSF-International family to which also CELEP members VSF Germany and VSF-Belgium belong, arranged the visit to Isiolo. VSF-Suisse first introduced the participants to one of their projects that aims to help extremely poor and vulnerable people. The beneficiaries of these activities (mostly women with children and/or widows without any source of livelihood) were chosen by the Isiolo County Livestock and Fisheries Department. Each woman received one female camel, which is raised in a herd with the other camels distributed by VSF-Suisse. The group also met with the GALESA group of 25 women, of whom most are widows. This group started working with VSF-Suisse in 2013 on keeping milk goat. The rationale behind this is that women can generate income with the proceeds from selling goat milk, until camel milk becomes available, as it takes several months before the camels start producing milk. In this case, too, each woman in the group received a female camel and already 19 of the 25 camels have given birth. They produce an average of 5 litres per milking.



Then the delegation from West Africa visited Muhamed Dakota, the Isiolo County Livestock and Fisheries Department Head. He explained his department's activities and how it works with NGOs to implement development programmes. The delegation also discussed with him the different challenges and opportunities related to camel milk.

The group also met with the ANOLEI women’s milk cooperative. VSF-Suisse, SNV and others support the cooperative, which organises camel milking in the region. The cooperative is a success story for camel milk. The bulking centre collects 5500–6000 litres of milk per day. A network of producers sells their milk to the cooperative. The cooperative consists of 45 women and 1 man, who has an advisory role. They recently bought a refrigerated car so that they can bring the milk daily to Nairobi.

Finally, the group visited a factory called Classic Foods, which is an example of private-public partnership, where the owner provided 70% of the necessary investment and the donor (USAID) 30% – a total of 70 million Kenyan shillings. The aim of the factory is to produce pasteurised and homogenised camel milk. Its processing capacity is 5000 litres per hour. Return on investment is expected within three years.

After this first intensive day, the group could already draw some important lessons. They noted that the Kenyan dairy sector is protected from imports of foreign milk powder, thanks to national trade policies. They also noted that the dairy sector is based on small-scale producers and that milk consumption in the country is high. Regarding the camel value chain, the group observed that the role of women changed as the importance of the economic activity grew: instead of doing the milking themselves, they hire young herders to do it. Women remain active in the value chains by taking up an active role in the bulking centres and selling the collected milk. In addition, the visiting group noted that traditional knowledge is very important and is valued, such as the use of charcoal made from specific plants to kill bacteria in the milk so that it keeps longer. Finally, participants greatly appreciated the overall coordination of NGO support for the camel milk producers. For instance, SNV together with VSF-Suisse and the County of Isiolo founded the ANOLEI women’s milk cooperative. Such an approach is beneficial and should be implemented in West Africa as well to assure a greater positive impact of development interventions.

