



Kenyan dairy sector learning tour – DAY 2

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 oneweek 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 second day of the visit.

On Tuesday (Day 2), the group continued its learning tour to Meru, a town not far away from Isiolo (about 40 km) to meet the management and workers of the NAARI dairy cooperative. This is a cooperative of 15 local milk producers supported by CELEP member SNV. The cooperative collects cow milk from its members for another processing cooperative. Thanks to the support of SNV, NAARI increased the amount of milk collected on a daily basis from 1700 litres in 2013 to 5000 litres in 2018. The SNV support consists of technical training, leadership enhancement and improving milk quality.



After the visit to the NAARI dairy cooperative society, the group visited a smallholder dairy farm in a village in Meru County. They were guided through the farm to see the owner's 14 milk cows, to see how he produces fodder and how he uses manure to produce biogas. The group discussed the role of the owner – Matthew – as a lead-producer to reinforce the capacities of his peers to improve milk quantity and quality. As Matthew had been the chair of the NAARI cooperative society, he could explain all the challenges that he and the cooperative had faced, and how he and other producers overcame them. He explained that part of the success of the NAARI cooperative society is based on the leadership of the chair. For instance, the chair gave his titled land as a guarantee for a loan for the cooperative. This allowed it to buy a refrigerated truck for transporting milk to the milk-processing plant.



The group had various reasons for evaluating Day 2 of the learning visit very positively. Firstly, the ways and means to increase production were discussed and, in particular, **the role of animal feed**. For instance, one of the milk producers explained how he increased his cows' milk production from 6 to 20 litres through better feeding. He dug several silage pits that made his animals feeding more secure

and better for producing milk. Secondly, the group also discussed **the role of the cooperative**. They thought that the cooperative seems very strong and close to its members, providing them services such as veterinary advice and drugs, sale of concentrate feed for cows but access to certain consumer goods such as flour, cooking oil and sugar. The cooperative also provides access to saving groups and credit, training etc. Members of the cooperative definitely benefit from these services.

As on the previous day, the visiting group also noted the strategic role of women in the economic activities related to dairying. They noticed however that, in the case of the NAARI cooperative, women still have a strategic role in milk production. They are considered the owners of the milk while their husbands are considered the owners of the cattle. Therefore, the women are the ones in charge of milking and bringing the milk to the cooperative collection centre. They also receive the payment for the milk, but usually share their gains with their husbands, who focus more on fodder production and feeding the cattle.



The group also noted that the incomes of the dairy farmers **are relatively low** compared to the final price of the processed milk, even if they gain some income by selling their milk to the bigger processing factory through the collection centre. The centre buys a litre of milk at 0.35 USD from the farmers and sells it at 0.37 USD to the processing factory. However, a litre of pasteurised milk is sold for 1 USD. The producers do not understand why the margin taken by the processing factory is so high, and they plan to start their own processing company to improve their incomes.

In the afternoon, the group travelled over six hours from Meru to Nakuru, to be able to spend the entire next day visiting settled smallholder dairy farmers.