



Good Practices and Innovations from the Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP)

## LAMU COUNTY

### USING THE HUB MILK MARKETING MODEL TO BOOST SALES AND REDUCE WASTAGE

#### INTRODUCTION

Two elements characterise milk production in Lamu County; milk glut and milk shortages during wet and dry seasons respectively. Milk wastage that decimated pastoralists' hopes of improving their income, and high level of exploitation by middle men were prevalent due to lack of an organised market. In 2015, key stakeholders, among them the agro-pastoral and pastoralist communities, the Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project (RPLRP) and the County Government of Lamu, through the Department of Livestock and Cooperatives, made a decision to strengthen the Witu Cooperative. The model cooperative operates a central milk hub at Witu with other collection centres strategically placed at Pangani and Koreni.

The objective is to prevent the 60 percent milk wastage that crippled income from pastoralists, thereby enhancing the economic value of livestock through diversification of pastoral income.

*The women are involved in activities such as milking, transportation and sales.*



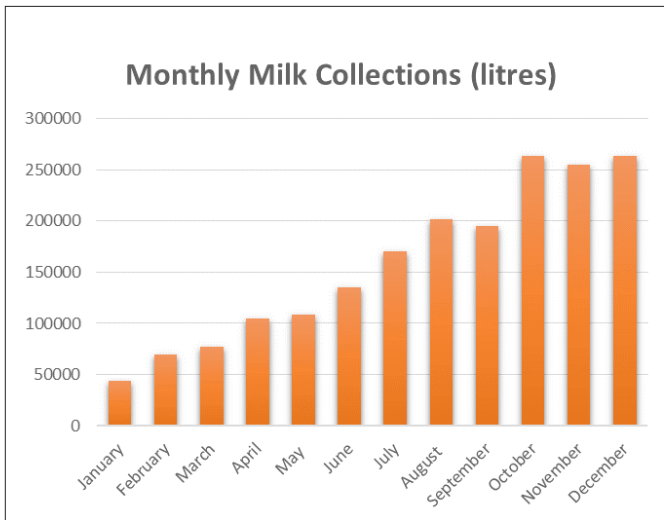
Milk ATM in Lamu Island

#### GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The model cooperative operates in Lamu West, Lamu Sub-county. The central hub is at Witu Township with other collection centres strategically placed at Pangani and Koreni villages. A milk ATM was placed on Lamu Island.

## STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

The pastoralists of Somali, Orma and Sanye origins were the primary beneficiaries of the Witu Cooperative. However, the Bajun communities that are agro-pastoralist and fishers are also expected to benefit. The direct beneficiaries currently stand at 285 community members (98 women, 172 men



Milk projections for year 2019

and 15 youth). The women are involved in activities such as milking, transportation and sales.

The main actors are the shareholders of the cooperatives and the County Government of Lamu. The two spearhead implementation while RPLRP facilitates whenever required. The State Department of Livestock ensures milk safety measures are adhered to through regular inspection and capacity building. Continuous cross-border diseases surveillance and mass vaccination is done with the assistance of the RPLRP project and the County Government of Lamu.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The following steps were taken to implement the practice:

- Literature reviews
- Planning with active officials of the cooperative
- Awareness and sensitisation
- Enlisting of stakeholders
- Collection of milk at strategic points
- Equity sharing of dividends
- Monitoring and evaluation

Twelve community members are assigned as committee members to oversee implementation of the cooperative. The plant management structure is organised to ensure efficient implementation of major activities such as expansion of fodder pasture lands and establishing individual pasture land; account for members' contributions; draw plans for strategic vaccination, deworming and fodder conservation; and establish a revolving fund and saving and credit scheme.

Monitoring is guided by a monitoring and evaluation plan and done at weekly and monthly intervals. This enables all stakeholders to follow the day to day progress and performance of the project.

## RESULTS

- Two containers were strategically placed in Koreni and Pangani for milk collection and a milk ATM was set up on Lamu Island.
- A mini milk processing centre with the capacity to handle 5000 litres of milk daily has been established.
- The practice has promoted clean milk production and handling. Organised milk marketing has increased efficiency and reduced the negative influence of middlemen.
- Focus group discussions with the

stakeholders revealed that the cooperative has reduced wastage from 60 percent to 10 percent. They also reported that households' income had improved through the sale of milk, enabling them to purchase other food products and diversify their diets.

## SUCCESS FACTORS

- Joint capacity building of pastoralists
- Pooled veterinary vaccination, drugs and treatment exercise
- Uniform pricing of milk
- The cordial relationship between stakeholders and partners improves collaboration in efforts to promote the growth of cooperatives and support to pastoralists to improve milk value chains.



Witu Livestock Cooperative office. Credit: RPLRP Lamu County, Kenya.

## CONSTRAINTS

- Inadequate handling equipment at collection centres
- Irregular cash flows
- Monopoly of pricing of milk
- Perception that women's access to income through sale of milk is violating men's traditional roles of being a key provider.

## LESSONS LEARNT

It is important to adhere to the cooperative principle of democratic and inclusive governance to maintain closeness with the community and in answer to their needs and their aspirations. This will ensure proper management of the model.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- Full funding of the business model (hub)
- Awareness creation/publicity
- Clean milk production
- Facilitation of stakeholders
- Adherence to the principle of cooperative-democracy and good governance
- Stabilising the business model to make it more reliable

## REPLICABILITY AND UPSCALING

The results achieved so far illustrate the feasibility of this practice, and it is being scaled up through combined efforts of the Department of Livestock and Fisheries and RPLRP. Two collection centres (Pangani and Koreni) are up and running and there is possibility of venturing into new markets.



Signpost to the cooperative. Credit: RPLRP Lamu County, Kenya.

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