

More and better milk

The partnership of FrieslandCampina and 2SCALE in Nigeria: the business case for recognizing female Fulani as dairy producers

The FrieslandCampina company

FrieslandCampina is Nigeria's largest producer of dairy products. Until recently it used mostly imported milk powder, because local supplies of fresh milk were unreliable and insufficient. To stimulate local sourcing, FrieslandCampina and 2SCALE set up a fresh milk value chain with Fulani in southwest Nigeria. This dairy partnership involves 1,800 Fulani milk producers, of whom 950 women. They supply a daily average of between 10,000 litres (wet season) and 5,000 litres (dry season) of milk, to the FrieslandCampina factory in Lagos. According to FrieslandCampina, in the beginning the biggest challenge of local sourcing was the poor quality of the fresh milk due to the presence of bacteria.

The supply side

Traditional pastoralists from the Fulani community produce 70% of Nigeria's milk, but they rarely participate in formal dairy markets. In Fulani culture cows are assets, while milk is seen as a by-product. Fulani are interested in production of cows, but not so much in milk production. Although cows are owned by men, women own the milk they produce. Women engage in many milk-related activities, such as milking the cows, ensuring the water supply, pre-bulking milk at the camp and processing milk into cheese, butter and fat. They also cook for the herdsmen. The money earned from milk sales is usually spent on food and other household necessities. 2SCALE is bringing in technology, training and market linkages to help the Fulani produce milk on a commercial scale for FrieslandCampina.



Gender-based constraints

Lack of clean water

Cleaning the milking utensils is traditionally the task of women. One of the causes of the poor quality of the milk is the lack of clean water to clean the milking buckets. These buckets are washed in the same streams where animals drink and defecate.

Women do not participate in trainings and programme meetings

As women are the ones who engage in milk production, it is important that they participate in trainings. But women also have to search for water for the household, for which they have to get up early and walk long distances. This is so

time-consuming that they can't participate in meetings and trainings.

Control over income from selling milk

Women get only a limited share of the income from selling milk. During the rainy season, when the milk production is twice as high as during the dry season, there is also an increase in bacterial contamination. Women thus need more money in the wet season to improve the quality of the milk. But as the Fulani women emphasised, their husbands tend to keep all the money for themselves in this period, to expand their herds.



Result:

Expansion of the sales channel for dairy products



Strategies

Establish water points

To help reduce bacterial contamination of fresh milk, FrieslandCampina set up water points at the Milk Collection Centres (MCCs) and dug solar-powered boreholes in the Fulani communities. Consequently, men became more involved in washing the big milk jars at the MCCs immediately after delivery, and women have clean water to wash buckets, sieves, and other equipment with the appropriate detergent. The nearby water points save the women a lot of time.

Technical training for both men and women

Women were given the opportunity to participate in trainings on milk quality and the importance of hygiene at all stages of milk production. 2SCALE organised training sessions at the community level and designed them to specifically allow for women's effective participation. Therefore, trainings included demonstrations and simple messages, using pictures and diagrams. Consequently, the milk quality improved tremendously. As a result, FrieslandCampina recognized the women as game changers.

Women are considered key actors in the programme

Fulani women are increasingly receiving priority support from FrieslandCampina and 2SCALE, such as facilitation of land and barn access on a lease basis. This is due to their key contribution to milk quality, as well as their dynamism and eagerness to seize new business opportunities for the benefit of the whole Fulani community.

Engaging women in the sale of dairy products

Without water fetching the women have more free time, which they can use for other activities. 2SCALE linked women to the FrieslandCampina product marketers, to become retailers of the company's dairy products.

For the Fulani women, this petty trading at the community level is a new income-generating activity, with an income over which they have direct control. An advantage for all the women and their families in the communities is that dairy products become more easily available.



Results

Benefits for FrieslandCampina

More fresh milk delivered at the MCCs

Women have become reliable suppliers for the company.

Better quality of the milk

Bacterial contamination of the milk has reduced considerably as a result of the availability of water points and training of women.

Increased market outreach

The company's market outreach has increased since the Fulani women have become retailers for dairy products in their communities.



Benefits for women

Appreciation for women's role

Women are recognized as game changers for the company.

Reduction of workload

No more walking long distances to fetch water for cleaning milking utensils.

Increased knowledge and skills

Better participation in training sessions specially designed for women.

New sources of (own) income

Time saved is used for trading of milk products at the community level. Women have direct control over this income.

Food security of families

Dairy products are more easily available for women and their families in rural communities.



Credits

2SCALE. 2017. *Gender Mainstreaming in Agribusiness Partnerships: Insights from 2SCALE*, pp. 14-15.

