



# LWR's Work in Dairy Production



## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) is a non-governmental organization, founded in 1945 to respond to the needs of communities devastated by World War II. Today LWR works with local implementing partners worldwide to respond to emergencies, seek lasting solutions to rural poverty, and work for peace and justice for all. LWR seeks to empower communities through a philosophy and framework called accompaniment, which emphasizes shared values and jointly-developed objectives to achieve sustainable results.

## THE CHALLENGE OF SMALLHOLDER DAIRY FARMING

Throughout the developing world, millions of smallholder dairy farmers struggle to make a sustainable living from dairy production and encounter a range of obstacles, including:

- Low milk yields due to poor animal stock, inadequate pasturage, the prevalence of livestock diseases, and limited access to veterinary health services;
- Limited access to credit, fodder and other inputs;
- Unsanitary milking and milk handling techniques;
- Limited ability to create higher-value products such as cheese, yogurt or other dairy products;
- Lack of access to markets and market information.

## LWR'S EXPERIENCE WITH DAIRY PRODUCTION

With a focus on asset-building that includes food security, income generation, and community empowerment, LWR works with partner organizations in multiple countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia to strengthen all aspects of the dairy value chain. From the production of milk through its value-added transformation into products such as cheese and yogurt, to the generation of income from the sale of quality dairy products, LWR and partners work to:

- Improve pastures through introduction of new fodder crops, irrigation, improved herd and land management;
- Leverage credit to increase smallholder farmers' access to animal feed, supplements, and other dairy production inputs;
- Reduce mastitis and other animal diseases through veterinary extension services and training in animal health;
- Improve dairy herds through artificial insemination;
- Improve hygienic management of milk and dairy products;
- Increase value-added processing by helping producers' associations produce higher value pasteurized milk, yogurt, cheese, or ice cream;
- Promote access to market information, strategies for branding and selling products, and linkages to buyers at local, regional or national levels.

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## LATIN AMERICA

In Peru, LWR works with local and regional non-governmental organizations to help more than 650 small-scale dairy producers increase and improve milk production by improving breeding practices and increasing quality fodder and farmer technical skills. LWR has also sponsored annual contests to reward the best cases of improved herd and pasture management.

In addition to milk production, LWR supports milk transformation through local cheese-making with technical support for pasteurization, product standardization and quality control (including the installation of on-farm artisanal refrigeration units for cold storage), as well as small business management and marketing. LWR also works with targeted cheese-maker associations to ensure compliance with Peruvian government quality and hygiene standards, and to link producers to provincial and departmental markets. LWR has joined a public and private consortium supporting the development of the Cajamarca Cheese Museum — the first of its kind in Latin America — that will highlight the area's rich tradition of cheese-making in a custom-built state-of-the-art facility. It will offer research facilities, on-site cheese-making demonstrations, and interactive historical and artistic exhibits, as well as serve as a national tourism attraction and a center for education, workshops, and sales promotion.

## AFRICA

In Burkina Faso, LWR is working with three herders' associations to increase dairy production volumes. By increasing access to credit, the herders are able to purchase improved dairy breeds, promote artificial insemination, and establish community-managed animal feed and supply banks. LWR has also strengthened its relationship with another value chain actor, a women's association involved in milk processing. The women's association purchases the groups' raw milk and then pasteurizes, processes, and packages milk and yogurt for sale on the national urban market. Since partnering with LWR, this 27-member women's association has consistently met national food hygiene

standards, developed new product lines and expanded to new markets, increasing dairy processing and sales by 600 percent. The association won special honors for their dairy products at Burkina Faso's 2009 national agricultural fair.

A similar LWR project in Kenya has helped increase livestock farmers' access to veterinary support services and provided training in appropriate dairy production practices. Project participants are now rehabilitating swampland and water catchment areas to conserve and improve grazing land and aid in the production of fodder and food crops.

## ASIA

In the Batticaloa District of Sri Lanka's Eastern Province many women-headed households have been affected by both the long-term conflict in the region and the 2004 tsunami. LWR supports these families by supporting their livelihood activities, including animal husbandry and milk processing. Working through a local partner, LWR provides livelihood assistance grants, access to cows and goats, and technical training on milk processing and management, as well as promotes market linkages to achieve better prices for the milk products, thereby increasing participants' income. LWR also works with local women to increase awareness of the nutritional value of goat milk. As there is a demand for goat milk products throughout the district, goat husbandry provides a strong potential for income generation.

## THE FUTURE FOR SMALLHOLDER DAIRY FARMERS

Through improving range and pasture management, increasing access to inputs and financing, strengthening dairy farmers' technical, organizational and managerial capacities, broadening access to markets, and promoting collective action, LWR is working with farmers to increase their participation in the dairy value chain. As smallholder families participate more fully in this value chain, they will be able to more actively commercialize their products and influence the decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods.

