

## FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS:

# ENHANCING MILK QUALITY AND CONSUMPTION FOR IMPROVED INCOME AND NUTRITION IN RWANDA

The Feed the Future Innovations Lab for Livestock Systems (LSIL) project on 'Enhancing milk quality and consumption for improved income and nutrition in Rwanda' seeks to contribute to efforts towards enhancing milk quality and consumption for improved incomes and nutrition in the country.

The three-year project builds on the work and lessons of the Government of Rwanda program known as 'One Cow per Poor Family' or 'Girinka' and a recently ended United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Feed the Future Rwanda Dairy Competitiveness Program (RDCP II).

Recent research by ILRI shows that one way to improve income, dietary diversity and child stature is through increased consumption of animal source foods (ASF), which are usually the scarcest in the diets of poor households. Therefore, achieving desired nutrition outcomes can be promoted by integrating ASF in food and nutrition information.

The project focuses on consumption of milk from livestock because dairy development in Rwanda is considered by the Government of Rwanda as a promising solution for both income generation and nutrition, in line with the Girinka program. Milk is a wholesome food that can be produced daily and is traditionally consumed in Rwanda. As such, it lends itself well to generating significant income and nutrition benefits for poor households in the short-term. However, challenges related to producing high quality milk and achieving competitiveness in milk market channels still exist. And even though there has been much investment in dairy value chain programs, the evidence base linking dairy interventions and nutrition outcomes is lacking.



## Project objectives

- To evaluate the impact of a nutrition education intervention on the consumption and nutrition outcomes from animal-source foods for children aged 12–23 months, and pregnant and lactating women.
- To assess and enhance performance and capacity of dairy cooperatives to improve market access for smallholder milk producers.
- To evaluate the costs and benefits to value chain agents for supplying high quality milk that meets the “Seal of Quality (SoQ)” standards.

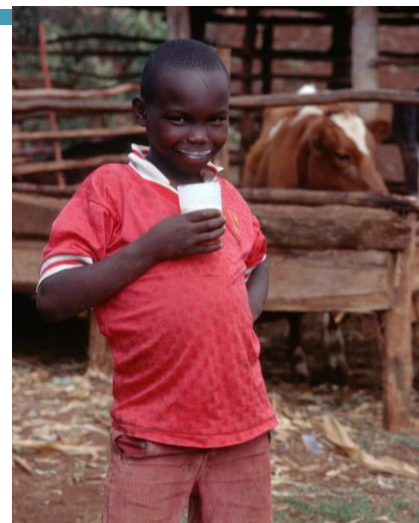
## Approach

The project will be undertaken in the sites of RDCP II that include the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Kigali milk sheds. The project adopts an interdisciplinary approach that draws from the fields of economics, sociology, human nutrition, food science, and public health to identify the methods for achieving its objectives.

The project also provides opportunities for undertaking relevant Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) activities for Rwandan collaborators and project beneficiaries. In particular, approaches to evaluating the nutrition intervention and enhancing the capacity of dairy cooperatives will involve HICD activities.

Women and men project participants will be educated on the importance of nutrition and how household members make decisions with respect to food consumption and particularly milk. The project will assess performance gaps of dairy cooperatives in aspects of governance, gender, leadership, and business management and draw a gender sensitive capacity development response plan.

An analysis of the costs and benefits of supplying milk that meets SoQ standards and how these are distributed at the different nodes of the value chain will be undertaken. Recommendations for increasing and sustaining profitability that emerge from this analysis will then be communicated to milk producers, processors and other value chain actors during implementation of the capacity development response plan.



## Partners

This project is jointly implemented by ILRI, RTI International, University of Rwanda and TechnoServe.

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