

# EAST AFRICA DAIRY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

## PROFILES *of* PROGRESS



Paul Kimeni Muchai participates in the East Africa Dairy Development Project. The project provides training, veterinary care, financial services, and access to a chilling plant—allowing farmers to pool their milk and increase their income (Kenya, 2011).

Paul Kimeni Muchai's quiet character belies his ambition. A 40-year-old farmer with a wife and three children, Paul lives just outside Ol Kalou in central Kenya. He owns three dairy cows and a tidy three-acre farm where he grows fodder for his livestock and potatoes, beans, peas, and maize for his family.

While his farm functions well and his cows produce enough milk to support his family, he has bigger plans: to own a large herd and buy more land. Dairy farming is a way of living with so much promise, Paul explains, that he hopes his son follows in his footsteps.

Heifer International's East Africa Dairy Development (EADD) Project has helped bring Paul this hopeful future.

About 15 years ago, Paul had left Ol Kalou and moved to Mombasa, where he sold scrap metal. Unsatisfied, and looking for a better life, he moved home to become a farmer like his father. In Mombasa, says Paul, there was no investment in his future, and no way to improve his life.

Since the project began, EADD has sold **304,000 liters of milk a day** through chilling plants (a 102 percent increase from 2009).

**“Dairy farming is a way of living with so much promise, I hope my son will follow in my footsteps.”**

—Paul Kimeni Muchai, Kenyan dairy farmer

When he first started raising dairy cows, it was challenging. The hardest thing was getting the knowledge and money to help them produce more milk. When he learned about the EADD, and the benefits of joining the Ol Kalou Dairies Cooperative, he signed up. And it has paid off. Today, his cows produce ten kilos of milk a day—more than double what they produced before.

“I have learned so many things about farming and about how to feed and maintain the health of my cows,” says Paul. “It’s helped me very much.”

Paul is just one of the nearly 173,000 farmers in Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda who have benefitted from being part of an EADD-established cooperative.

These cooperatives are the glue that holds the farmers together. Through cooperative “hubs,” farmers receive training on how to take care of their livestock, and



Left: Francis Mwangi and Paul Kiama delivering milk to the Ol Kalou chilling plant. Center: Consolidating milk for distribution. Right: Joseph Ong'ang'a Mtulah, manager of the Ol Kalou chilling plant. (Kenya, 2011)

### East Africa Dairy Development Project

**Goal:** To help dairy farmers in East Africa double their dairy-related incomes by increasing their ownership of cross-bred cows, increasing the amount of milk their cows produce, and strengthening their relationship to formal markets so they can sell more milk.

**Countries:** Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda

**Progress:** Since starting the project, EADD has:

- registered 57 dairy business associations, with 172,000 members

- sold 304,000 liters of milk a day through chilling plants (a 102 percent increase from 2009)
- performed a total of 181,000 inseminations (82,000 in 2011 compared to 5,000 in 2008)



**Partners:** Heifer International, TechnoServe, International Livestock Research Institute, African Breeders Services, and World Agroforestry Center

[www.heifer.org/ourwork/success/dairy](http://www.heifer.org/ourwork/success/dairy)

services including artificial insemination and veterinary health care. Financial services through the co-op give them much-needed access to money that they can invest in their farms. Cooperative-hosted chilling plants collect milk from farmers in the area, and it is sold in bulk to the growing formal market. By pooling their milk, farmers can get more for it.

It's this reliable place to sell their milk that makes all the difference to farmers like Paul, explains EADD team leader Ambrose Munene. This reliability of selling and receiving payment is as powerful as the cooperatives themselves. "When these groups get together, they can inspire each other to be accountable," says Ambrose, "and there's even a sense of competition among the farmers to be 'the best.'"

With the additional income he earns from the increased milk production, Paul has made improvements to his home and farm—buying furniture, plastering his house's walls, building a shed for the animal feed, and reinforcing the fences.

Improvements like this can be seen throughout the community, explains EADD's Ambrose. Like Paul, others have upgraded their homes and farms, and more children are in school because families have money to pay for their children's school fees. The nearby town is vibrant with new banks and stores.

"Now, people are thinking of farming as an investment, and a business," says Ambrose.

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