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 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).

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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
Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people’s health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

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