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The Tanga Dairy Platform: fostering innovations for more efficient dairy chain coordination in Tanzania

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Abstract:

Population growth and urbanization have increased milk demand in Tanzania. Current milk production growth rates cannot keep pace with this increasing demand. Consequently, there is a need for intensifying production practices and making marketing channels more efficient. In the Northeast administrative region of Tanga, small-scale dairy production is typical in mixed crop-livestock systems, while in Maasai agro-pastoral systems, milk is produced in very small quantities per cow but with large cattle numbers. There are three main 'modern' milk channels in Tanga Region organized around collection centres of the main local industrial milk processor Tanga Fresh, a smaller competitor and a dairy based in Dar es Salaam. However, the bulk of the milk produced in the region is probably distributed by farmers themselves or through the many small informal vendors linked to the dairies or selling to local restaurants and consumers.

Dairy producers in Tanga Region are trapped in a negative feedback loop of poor market access and poor organizational skills leading to low incomes and poor attractiveness for input suppliers, extension services and credit providers. They also suffer from low knowledge on livestock management and zoonotic diseases. The industrial dairies in turn have to be particularly vigilant in planning their supply chain to keep their plants running and their products of good quality, particularly during the dry season when little forage availability leads to very low milk production. They are in constant arguments with the rest of the chain and local government because they are price setters for both farm-gate and retail prices.

In 2008 a DFID-funded research institute facilitated the creation of the regional Tanga Dairy Platform, set up as an informal forum of different stakeholders involved in the Tanga dairy industry to exchange knowledge and develop joint actions to common problems along the innovation platform model. Six years on, the project support has long ceased. Nonetheless, the platform is still running and currently meeting every quarter to discuss problems of the region's

dairy industry. This case study will summarize the story of the Tanga Dairy Platform, relate some of its achievements (common understanding among chain actors on dairy price structure, lobbying policy makers to reduce VAT on dairy inputs and products, and to remove the limit on urban dairy farming) and extract the success factors of this rare example of a self-sustaining innovation platform accomplishing relevant outcomes for its members.

Résumés:

Jo Cadilhon holds a degree in agricultural sciences and two MSc degrees from AgroParisTech: one in geography and development; the second in public rural administration. He also holds a PhD in food marketing from Imperial College London and a degree in Chinese language and civilisation from the Paris Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations. Jo Cadilhon has worked at the French Ministry of agriculture as an analyst on trade and development and as an evaluation officer within its Centre for Studies and Strategic Foresight. He has worked at FAO's regional office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok where he was a marketing expert on agrifood quality improvement. Currently Senior Agro-economist in the Policy, Trade and Value Chains Program of the International Livestock Research Institute, he conceptualizes methods and tools for value chain analysis, and field-tests them within various agrifood development projects in developing countries.

Pham Ngoc Diep is a Graduate Fellow in the Policy, Trade and Value Chains Program of the International Livestock Research Institute in Nairobi. She holds a degree in Economics from a Vietnamese university and is currently pursuing a Master degree in Agriculture and Food Economics at Bonn University, Germany. She has four years' experience in agriculture development projects in Vietnam and Thailand, mainly on the development of smallholder-based short supply chains, sustainable farming system and food safety.

Brigitte L. Maass is an agricultural scientist, graduated from the German University of Hohenheim, with a PhD (Dr. sc. agr.) and habilitation (Associate Professor) in Crop Sciences in the Tropics and Subtropics at Georg-August-University of Göttingen, Germany. Her long-term experience in research for development in tropical agriculture was acquired especially in South America and in Eastern and Central Africa, with employments by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ, in Peru), the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT, in Peru, Colombia and Kenya) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI, in Ethiopia). Her research focus has been on making agrobiodiversity work for improving agricultural productivity and sustainability. As a Senior Researcher of CIAT's Tropical Forages Program in Africa, Brigitte Maass' current research emphasis is on improving peasants' livelihoods in mixed crop-livestock systems from a value chain perspective and by applying participatory approaches.