

Brief



INITIATIVE ON

Livestock and Climate

# Champions for transformation: socially inclusive scaling of equitable climate-smart dairy practices in Kenya

Renee Bullock and Tanaya DuttaGupta

December 2023



## Key Messages

- ▶ **Dairy norms and practices are gendered** and require transformational approaches to increase women's benefits from farmer-led scaling approaches.
- ▶ **"Champions for Transformation"** adapts GROOTS Kenya's champion model to support women in dairy communities in Kenya to strengthen women's leadership and peer learning in collectives.
- ▶ Men for Women Champions also lead engagement forums with other men to address inequitable intra-household benefit and burden distributions.

## The challenge

**Climate change** is severely affecting livestock production systems in East Africa. Efforts to enhance resilience, or the capacity to anticipate, cope with and recover from climate impacts are essential to sustain livestock-dependent communities.

**Scaling climate-smart livestock practices through locally-led institutions may increase adaptation capacities. Dairy innovations that improve efficiencies in milk production have the potential to mitigate livestock emissions, a key priority in the national agenda.**

**Intra-household gender relations** both shape and are shaped by the uptake of new farm innovations. Gender-blind approaches can reinforce existing inequitable power relations in dairy households. Gender norms and practices often influence women's and men's dairy activities. In married households in Western Kenya, men typically own dairy cows and women provide substantial labour in everyday activities, such as milking, feeding and cleaning sheds in semi-intensive and intensive production systems. Despite women's significant labour contributions, their potential to earn or decide how to use income from milk sales is often limited (Bullock et al. 2023, Tavenner and Crane 2018).





**Figure 1:** Men cut fodder, repair shelters and often socialize in the afternoon.

### *Opportunities to learn about climate-smart practices are similarly gendered.*

Extension services often target men because men own cows and often have more time than women to socialize (Figure 1). Women are often busy with household tasks and have limited time to attend training events. Unequal access to information further limits women's participation in deciding whether to try out an innovation. Labour-intensive innovations may also unintentionally increase women's labour burdens in dairy production.

Integrating socially inclusive approaches is essential to ensure that farmer-led scaling is both inclusive and supports social equity in dairy households.

Dairy norms and practices are gendered and thus require transforming gender relations to increase women's abilities to benefit from farmer-led scaling approaches, specifically their access to information, technologies that reduce labour and income management. The innovation is comprised of sequential steps, mapping the champions, organizing them into groups, then strengthening women's leadership in collectives through training on group dynamics and financial literacy followed by male engagement that addresses inequitable intra-household relations. Finally, over time and through women's engagement in the champion model process, the next generation of women champions will advocate for grassroots women as county and subcounty level coordinators and public leadership positions.

## Partnership to support socially inclusive scaling

ILRI sustainable livestock systems gender team partnered with GROOTS Kenya to co-create a socially inclusive scaling approach in Bomet County, Kenya. GROOTS Kenya is a national movement of over 5,000 women- and girl-led self-help groups and community-based organizations. The organization was founded in 1995 because of the low visibility of grassroots women in development processes and decision-making forums.

GROOTS Kenya scales and sustains a grassroots movement for women and girls, promotes women and girls' leadership, economic empowerment of women and girls and resilience building to impacts of climate change and eliminates injustices against women and girls.

*They use a **champion model**, which is a community-led approach to development wherein grassroots champions identify, conceptualize and solve problems. Champions are women or men who are agents of change or individuals who understand their community needs and actively and intentionally try to change their situation, in part by promoting women's agency in their communities.*

Community-based organizations and self-help groups play a central role in network building, supporting peer-to-peer mentoring, learning, and locally-led development. Engaging with stakeholders, namely public and private sector actors, ensures the sustainability of the model in communities.

## Our innovation

The "**champions for transformation**" innovation adapts GROOTS Kenya's champion model to dairy communities to increase women's potential to benefit from access to information about climate-smart practices and manage dairy income.

### Setting the foundation (2023)

#### Conduct a context analysis to select sites

GROOTS reviewed secondary data and interviewed stakeholders such as government officials in the livestock sector to learn more about dairy opportunities. Three wards in two subcounties were selected based on the need for dairy capacity building amidst higher levels of poverty relative to other sites where ILRI is working. Working in underreached and marginalized wards also provides greater opportunities to strengthen institutional presence and capacity.

#### Create women-led savings groups

Six seasoned champions from other locations, one of whom was a man, travelled to the three wards (Kiprerer in Bomet east subcountry and Sigor and Kongasis in Chepalungu subcounty). They met with community members and grassroots women and men engaged in dairy production. They conducted six gender-disaggregated group discussions to gather information about climate change, dairy and gendered opportunities and challenges. Ten groups were created and will be registered in Bomet County.

### Implementing responsive and transformative approaches (2024)

#### Mentor and strengthen group capacities

A training programme will be developed and tailored on a group-by-group basis to build the capacities of group members. Seasoned champions, some of whom are Kalenjin in dairy households, will mentor women in the newly formed groups for three to four weeks to create a strong and sustainable collective.





**Figure 2:** *Men for Women Champions sensitize other men in the community.*

Topics include governance, financial literacy and record-keeping. Next, technical training about climate-smart dairy practices will be coordinated with key partners and stakeholders (e.g. county staff, vets and livestock officers). Exchange visits may be planned.

### **Facilitate men's engagement**

Men for Women Champions refers to men who have demonstrated a commitment to women's and girls' empowerment. They sensitize other men in the community through forums in which they discuss the importance of building women's capacities, specifically equitable decision-making in dairy households. Some of the men who are sensitized may choose to join the women-led groups as members of the grassroots movement.

### **Empower grassroots women's collective agency and voice.**

Potential future champions, both women and men, are identified through this process. They mentor women and men in other contexts and become part of the GROOTS movement. For instance, they may advocate for women's voices in leadership (e.g., represent the interests and voice of women as ward and subcounty coordinators).



## Next steps

**Gender transformation** takes time and men's engagement should be continued and strengthened. Men and women will engage in gender dialogues to collectively discuss and reflect.

Links to the **household approach** (DuttaGupta and Bullock 2023) will be made to strengthen women's networks and learning capacities so that locally-led adaptation and scaling of climate-smart livestock practices are socially inclusive.

## References

- ▶ Bullock, R., DuttaGupta, T., Miriti, P. 2023. Insights from positive deviance approach to support socially inclusive climate adaptation in Kenya dairy systems. Poster, presented at CGIAR Gender Impact Platform Conference, New Delhi, India.  
<https://hdl.handle.net/10568/132516>
- ▶ DuttaGupta, T. and Bullock, R. 2023. Scaling with households to support socially inclusive climate smart dairy practices in Kenya. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI.  
<https://hdl.handle.net/10568/135880>
- ▶ GROOTS Kenya. 2023. The Champion Model.  
<https://grootskenya.org/champion-model/>
- ▶ Tavenner, K., Crane, T.A. 2018. Gender power in Kenyan dairy: cows, commodities, and commercialization. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 35(3), 701-715.



Figure 3: GROOTS Kenya's vision and mission.





INITIATIVE ON

Livestock and Climate



This work was conducted in partnership with **GROOTS Kenya**, and this brief was developed in collaboration with the GROOTS Kenya team.

**Authors:** Renee Bullock and Tanaya DuttaGupta

**Cover Illustration:** A grassroots champion mentoring women from dairy households.

This work was conducted as part of the CGIAR Research Initiative on Livestock and Climate, which is supported by contributors to the CGIAR Trust Fund.

CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future.

CGIAR science is dedicated to transforming food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. Its research is carried out by 13 CGIAR Centers/Alliances in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector.

[www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)

We would like to thank all funders who support this research through their contributions to the CGIAR Trust Fund: [www.cgiar.org/funders](http://www.cgiar.org/funders)

To learn more about this Initiative, please [visit this webpage](#).

To learn more about this and other Initiatives in the CGIAR Research Portfolio, please visit [www.cgiar.org/cgiar-portfolio](http://www.cgiar.org/cgiar-portfolio)

© 2023 CGIAR System Organization. Some rights reserved.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International Licence (CC BYNC 4.0)

