

TranZDVC Bulletin

The newsletter for the Transforming Zimbabwe's
Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranZDVC) project

DECEMBER 2020



FROM THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

The Year 2020: Full of challenges, yet we achieved a lot in dairy farming

This past year has certainly been a challenging one. Like many others, we've had to adapt the way we work to continue meeting our TranZDVC project goals while complying with national restrictions to slow the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

That being said, COVID-19 didn't slow us down!

In 2020, our communications team continued to cover events related to dairy farming in Zimbabwe. We published exciting stories to reflect our work. It is impossible to capture all the field trips and stories we undertook as a project – with our partners. The year 2020 was full of daunting challenges, yet we achieved a lot in dairy farming. We had exciting “voices from the field” as captured in this edition of the newsletter. One of them is our front page story of women in dairy where we feature Felictas Marunda, from Chitomborwizi in Makonde District, Mashonaland Province. We also have under project update the Matching Grant Facility and the importation and distribution of 200 in-calf heifers (Jersey and Holstein breeds) through five processors (Dendairy, Dairibord Zimbabwe Limited, Kefallos, ProDairy and Nestle Zimbabwe.). As we know, Zimbabwe requires 50 000 heifers to meet the annual demand of 130 million litres while the national dairy herd is at 39000 producing at least 80 million litres of milk annually.

The editorial team welcomes your feedback on these stories, and future issues of this publication.

We also focus on the procurement of 2000 sexed semen and 2000 convectonal semen. To support this initiative TranZDVC conducted training and refresher courses for at least 100 officers from Agritex and the Department of Veterinary Services.

TranZDVC wishes its partners and varied readers a happy season. See you in the new year. Happy reading!

Dr Edson Chifamba, TranZDVC Project Coordinator.

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Woman Dairy Farmer Leads the Way Towards Dairy Commercialisation

“Two hectares of land with crops and livestock, cutting grass with a knife, and two or three tethered lactating cows that produce on average five litres of milk per day for home consumption.” This is typical of smallholder dairy farming in Zimbabwe where the activity is a hurdle and many times, an unprofitable enterprise. But, times are changing. Smallholder farmers from across Zimbabwe have become eager to learn about modern dairy farm management. With little capital, but with increasing knowledge and skills about dairy farming, smallholder farmers are now starting to invest in their farms and run them as family businesses rather than for subsistence farming. Knives are being exchanged for one row maize choppers, and chaff cutters, and smallholder dairy entrepreneurs are constructing new milk parlours and investing in better breeds of cows.

Felictas Marunda, aged 67, is a member of Chitomborwizi Dairy Network, in Makonde District in Mashonaland West Province, and one TranZDVC project's six leading women farmers in the area. Marunda has been in dairying for the past four and a half years. Before, she was engaged in tobacco and poultry farming. She now has 17 cows. Five of the cows are lactating, producing a total of 78 litres of milk daily. In the wet season, the cows produce 90 litres of milk daily. But, Marunda has not always been a leading farmer. Marunda has been motivated by TranZDVC which helped her to develop from an ordinary smallholder to a leader among her peers.



Felictas Marunda at her solar-powered borehole which she is using to irrigate grazing pastures.

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Marunda also attended extension activities, such as training sessions and exchange visits. She's saving on feed costs as she now has pastures at the farm. She has since stopped using open field grazing. During one of the exchange visits, she also learnt how to grow lucerne as a source of protein for her cows. However, Marunda still had not learnt how to deal with her biggest challenge: providing adequate feed for her cows during the dry season. The lack of feed was affecting her cows' condition and milk production. Marunda realised that she needed more up-to date knowledge and skills in fodder production and management, in addition to other herd management skills.



Tending to her cows... Marunda is determined to go even higher in her dairy farming business.

Linking smallholder farmers to formal markets is at the core of TranZDVC project's drive to commercialize smallholder dairy producers. The project has linked the farmers to Nestle where they sell their raw milk at US\$0.38.

Zimbabwe Association of Dairy Farmers monitoring and evaluation officer, Tapiwanashe Dhewa, confirms that in the beginning of 2019, Marundai had a poorly managed herd. The feed that the farmer fed her cows was of low nutritional value, young stock was not in good condition and her record keeping was in shambles. All this has changed as she's taking dairy farming as a family business.

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TranZDVC Highlights for 2020

In-calf Heifers Imported and Distributed

TranZDVC imported and distributed 200 in-calf heifers (Jersey and Holstein breeds) through five processors (Dendairy, Dairibord Zimbabwe Limited, Kefalos, ProDairy and Nestle Zimbabwe.). Zimbabwe requires 50, 000 heifers to meet the annual demand of 130 million litres while the national dairy herd is at 39000 producing at least 80 million litres of milk annually.

With TranZDVC's initiative of injecting more heifers into the national herd, approximately 5.4 million litres of milk will be added to the national milk supply, 300 more heifers will be imported from South Africa and distributed during the first quarter of 2021.

Artificial Insemination to Improve Dairy Breeds

The project procured 2000 sexed semen and 2000 convectional semen. To support the Artificial Insemination initiative, training and refresher courses were conducted for at least 100 officers from Agritex and the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS).

Artificial Insemination to Improve Dairy Breeds



The Chitomborwizi Dairy Network Association farmers benefitted from a 42-panel solar system enabling them to bulk and chill their milk.

TranZDVC's Matching Grants Facility seeks to promote the establishment of multilateral partnerships that leverage investments in dairy productive assets and infrastructure and to address some of the bottlenecks and or underlying challenges within the dairy value chain in Zimbabwe. To date, the project has successfully implemented Windows 1, 2 and 3 of the facility.

Window 1 is targeting large-scale processors, and farmers who receive a Euro 40,000 grant. They then match with another Euro 40 000 to buy productive assets which are expected to benefit small-scale farmers. To date, nine disbursements have been made.

Under Window 2, the project is giving Euro 10.000 on a 70:30 ratio, where the project's contribution is 70 percent while the beneficiaries will cede 30 percent to buy any asset for small-scale milk processors and collection centres. A total of 23 entities have benefitted under Window 2.

A total of 127 beneficiaries received grants under Window, which is benefitting small-scale farmers. Each farmer receives a Euro 2,000 grant to invest in dairy farming. This window is expected to support around 500 farmers.

The grants awarded cover areas such as hay/ fodder provision, silage cutting, solar powered water supply, milk bulking and milk processing.

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