



# Unleashing the Knot: An Assessment on Socio-economic Empowerment of the SDVC II Producers

## INTRODUCTION

The CARE SDVC program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, was based on the idea that if we offer women dairy farmers the same access to information, services, and markets as men, we could change dairy value chain systems. Project results show that when we offered services to women, not only did

production increase, but so did women's economic empowerment. The project showed positive sign in joint decision-making in breed upgradation, keep milk sales income solely to women and savings money utilization. It was happened by CARE's trainings to women about how to produce more with quality milk through improved livestock practices, sell to more profitable & transparent market by Digital Fat Testing point run by BRAC Aarong Dairy, and diversify their income. This paper aims to assess the economic and non-economic situations of women (income, access to services, care economy, social norms) at household and group level.



### KEY FEATURES OF THIS GENDER ANALYSIS

Socio Economic Activity profile looks at the gender division of labor: who does what, where, when and for how long.

Access and control profile looks at who has access to and control over resources and benefits.

Analysis of influencing factors looks at other factors that affect the gender differentiations, inences, and opportunities and constraints.



## What did we accomplish?

01

### Activity Profile: Gender Division of Labor

There has been some success

- Improved sharing in cow health management: Joint decision-making in cow health treatment and disease management went up to 48%.
- Increasing joint labor fodder collection/cutting: Men and women who shared fodder collection or cutting went up to 43%.
- Get women involved in groups: There was an increase in women's involvement in dairy and savings group, use of milk sales income and loans from savings, maintaining family daily expense and crisis period at household level.

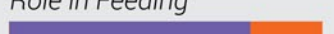


#### Activity Profile in Graph

##### Cow Health Management



##### Role in Feeding



##### Cowshed Cleaning



##### Care Economy



In the words of a woman "Now we have the capacity to make a call and in uence the service providers and even Livestock of cer to provide door step services".

#### Room for Improvement

**Some roles are still gendered:** women continue to be primarily responsible for cleaning the cowshed and cattlefeeding.

**Women's unpaid labor burden:** women continue to shoulder 99% of the unpaid household care work, such as cleaning, tending children, and cooking.

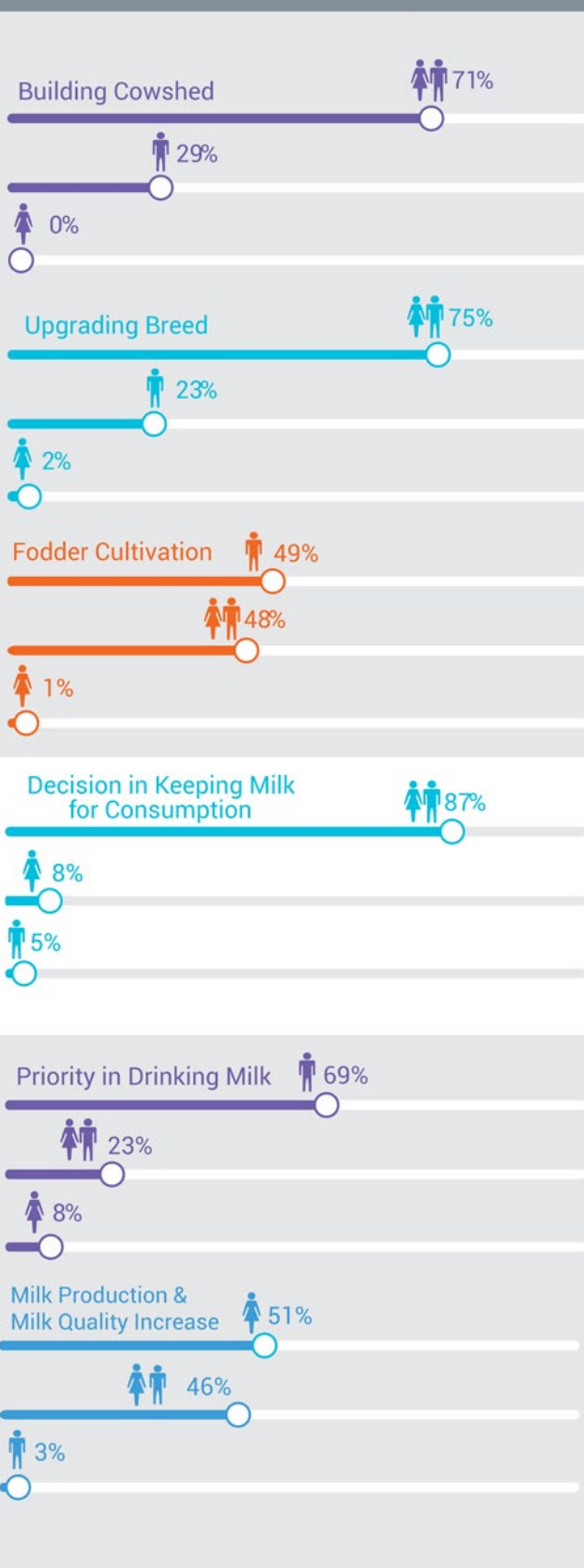
In the words of a husband of a woman member, "Females are now worthy of respect. We need to endorse this by involving them in taking decisions in cow management."

02

### Access and Control Profile: Access to Information & Services of Women in Dairy Cow Management

- Building Cowsheds:** Now families make the decision about building a cowshed together 71% of the time.
- Adapting improved breeds:** Joint decisions to upgrade cattle breed went up 75%.
- Gaps between men and women closed:** The gap between men and women making decisions to cultivate fodder has been cut in half.
- Women have more contribution to milk quality & milk production:** Women contribute more in increased milk production and quality of milk (51%), while jointly 46% as they give more time to health management and feed management of their cows than men.
- Mixed progress in milk consumption:** Majority of women (87%) make decision to keep milk for consumption whereas women are still 7 times less likely to get priority for drinking milk as men are likely to get first priority (69%). This finding may support to unearth the answer of the qualitative aspect of Endline Evaluation.

### Access and Control Profile in Graph



In the words of a husband of a woman member, "Females deserve respect as they learnt many things from CARE's training. We praise them and take advices from them in cow health management and

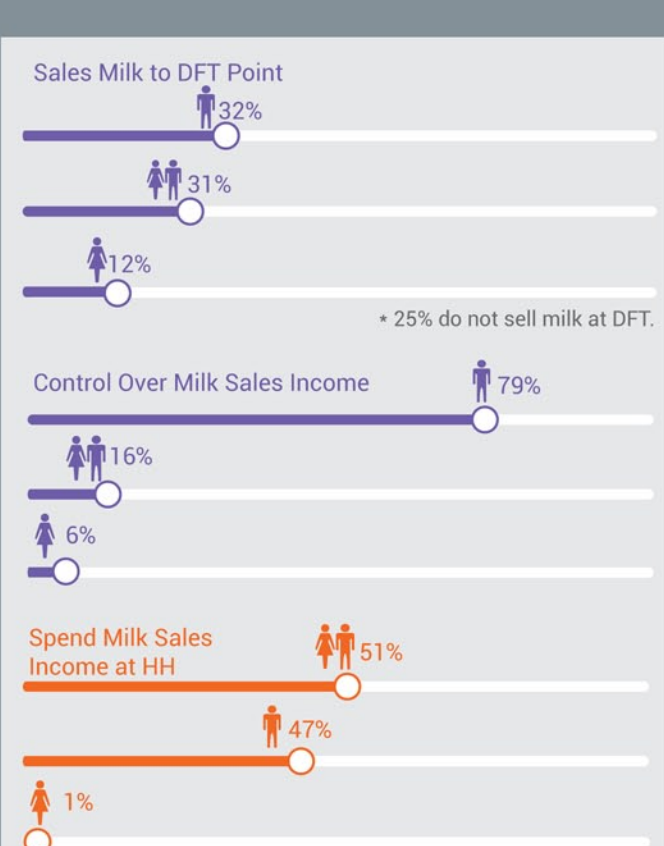
- Increase access to services:** During SDVC, women's access to extension services went up to 36% from livestock hospital of government. Majority of the respondents said that for the case of direct contact to hospital, their husbands or male members do so from vet clinic or hospital which is 59%.
- Women engagement to DFT:** Men are most likely to use Digital Fat Testers (32%), although 31% of couples have joint access. Only 12% of women access DFT alone. Timing, distance, and the family care burden can all be obstacles to women's access.

As one woman member said, Men go outside for hard work and for family income, they require physical strength more. So they need to drink milk more."

- Keeping milk sales income:** women keeping milk sales income as a recipient (83%) but don't have control over it.
- Improving shared income expenditure from milk sales:** Income from milk sale for daily expenses (cow feed and health treatment, food and education) is seen jointly 51%.
- Control over saving money utilization:** women tend to save more than men from DFT income (88% and 11% respectively); taking decision jointly to get loan and its utilization went up 76% and 75% respectively.
- Adapting to resilience:** 61% of families are taking joint action to preserve animal fodder.

#### Room for improvement

- Men have more control from DFT income:** The number of men who could control over assets (purchasing land, lease or valuable assets) went up 79% from the DFT income where as it is seen 44% in Baseline, 2013.
- Men more likely to buy feed and vaccine:** Men are 88% more likely to buy feed and vaccines for cows, as women still face high restrictions on mobility.



## How did we get there?

- Diversify incomes:** Gave more choices about how to make money, as households diversified their income through milk sales income and savings operation.
- Extension services:** During SDVC, women's access to extension advisory services increased through communication, leadership training, campaign and linkage with the service providers.
- Connect to the government livestock services:** SDVC worked with para-professional extension agents, but also connected to government livestock services.
- Get women access to markets:** SDVC helped to connect women to service markets so that they could sell milk at a fair price at DFT. Women's access to markets increased due to 3-way credit system (DFT point owner-input shop owner and producer).
- Improved communication between men and women:** Both women and men told that couples dialogue was one of their trustworthy relationships, and one that had a profound impact on the way they interacted.

## What we learned

- Involve women in deciding where DFTs to be installed:** The distance to a DFT or an inconvenient location can prevent women from using the centers. The smaller the distance, the easier it is for women to access services.
- Engage men to shift roles:** Traditional division of labor perpetuates barriers that prevent women from accessing markets. Getting men involved in sharing household burdens and changing their expectations of women (such as the idea that women shouldn't leave the house) lowers these barriers.
- Social attitudes:** Societal culture does not allow them to go and seek services from livestock hospital.

03

### Analysis of Influencing Factors: Factors that Affect the Socio-economic Empowerment

- Women still face many barriers:** This analysis shows that distance, lack of ownership on cows, high household labor burden, husband and community's disapproval are still strong barriers for many women to access services and markets.
- Women as entrepreneurs:** Men still tend to believe that women maintain all household level activities and en are in charge of activities outside the home and all productive roles. Women see themselves as entrepreneurs.
- Tradeoffs between formal and informal markets:** Women traditionally sell milk in the informal market close to home because it takes less time and the milk collectors will make advance payment to them. Selling milk in the formal market is time consuming for them.

Additionally, they cannot carry large volumes of milk, cannot get advances, and have to maintain a certain time-table for selling milk at DFT.

In spite of such constraints, women like to sell in formal markets. Their incomes are higher in the formal market, and they get better services from the DFT centers. The centers can also arrange transport or flexible timing for women to accommodate their needs.



A GAF session at Shahidbag, Kaunia, Rangpur.

#### For further query or technical assistance

Anowarul Haq

Director, Extreme Rural Poverty Program  
CARE Bangladesh, Mobile: +880 1777 755848  
Email: anowarul.haq@care.org

Ahmad Sadequul Amin

Coordinator, Agriculture & Value Chain  
Extreme Rural Poverty Program  
CARE Bangladesh, Mobile: +880 1755 500195  
Email: ahmadsadequul.amin@care.org

Akram Ali

Project Manager-Marketing & Communications  
Extreme Rural Poverty Program  
Mobile: +880 1736 108137  
Email: akram.ali@care.org



RAOWA Complex (Level: 7-8)  
VIP Road, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1206, Bangladesh  
Phone: +880-2-9889009, Fax: +880-2-9889041  
www.carebangladesh.org