

Breaking the glass ceiling: strengthening women in dairy farming to improve livelihoods

Smallholder dairy farmers are facing a number of challenges when rearing animals for milk, often struggling to make any profit in Pakistan. These challenges are led by lack of information about improved farming practices particularly to the women. Women have their pronounced participation in smallholder livestock farming.

Aik Sath Dairy-Beef Project is an initiative of Australian government which is working with collaboration of University of Melbourne, Australia and University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore Pakistan. The Dairy-Beef Project is providing trainings and advisory services to farming families in Punjab and Sindh for transforming their farm production into profit and better livelihoods.

Gull Bano, a female farmer belongs from village Khalifo Ahmed district Sujawal in Sindh. Being from the remote rural area and having a big family size, she strived for fulfilling the needs of household members. Due to this, she remained engaged in her household activities and had little time to participate in social and community gatherings.

When the project started, Gull did not participate in project's monthly advisory meetings in her community. *"I always had curiosity that why other women of community gather at a place for a meeting?"* said Gull Bano.

Wondering about the women meetings, Gull went to her sister-in-law who was already

participating in project meetings. Gull asked her about project meetings and wished to attend it. She took Gull Bano to the project meeting.

Gull Bano said *"When I started joining meetings, I developed interest for livestock farming. I did not have any animals at that time but my sister-in-law gifted me a heifer to start farming"*.

Learning and getting information about dairy farming always keep the women enthusiastic to get more benefits from farm production. They have good affiliation with dairy animals because of its contribution in their household.



Gull Bano, chopping fodder for her farm animals, Khalifo Ahmed, Sindh

"I enjoyed the learning about livestock farming and improved farm practice . Starting from a heifer, I built to a herd of six animals. With continue flow of information about my animals, I have good milk production, healthy calves and disease free animals. I am happy for getting profit from milk and satisfying the domestic needs, children education and health. My farm has become a supportable source of income for my family and I feel good to see my improved living condition" said Gull Bano

Theme 1 – Improving livelihood

Gull is a progressive female farmer has big thoughts and vision for her livestock farm. She said *“I wanted to get more benefits and profit from my livestock and I am passionate to learn more about livestock business and enterprises”*. Her role in livestock and particularly her interest in the business relating to her animals, opens opportunities for optimising their farm profit.



Gull Bano's daughter showing attachment for her farm animals, Khalifo Ahmed, Sindh

Dairy-Beef Project is engaging farming families particularly women in beef value chain to enhance their profit and improving their livelihoods. Building capacity for calf fattening and forming farm business group for collective actions will help farmer to achieve their farming goals and improving the livelihoods.



Livestock farm of Gull Bano
Khalifo Ahmed, Sindh

Theme 1 – Improving livelihood