

BD4FS Partners with Local Leadership to Build Food Safety Culture

BD4FS Ambassador Firm Approach positions local processors as leaders to empower smallholder producers

In Senegal, millions of livelihoods directly depend on smallholder livestock production. Under the right conditions — incentives, infrastructure, and technical support — the milk sector in Senegal can meet the growing demand for dairy products among the growing urban middle class, as well as provide an affordable and safer product for nonfarm rural families. To fill the gap, Senegal imports milk and derived products; nearly 50% of the national consumption of dairy products is imported. By modernizing and supporting the 200,000 dairy farmers, Senegal could benefit from a “dairy revolution.” One of the challenges Northern Senegalese dairy processors face is safely collecting milk from pastoral farmers in who travel nomadically and seasonally to find greener pastures for their animals. Laiterie du Berger (LDB) obtains fresh milk from more than 2,500 Senegalese producers who are dispersed in areas poorly served by reliable transport routes. There are a few collection centers in the region supported by international donors and Senegalese NGOs, however, LDB is the only business in the region capable of absorbing significant volumes.¹



A Laiterie du Berger milk collector receiving milk from pastoralist Fulani farmers in the Richard Toll area. Photo credit: Mohamed Dia

Feed the Future Business Drivers for Food Safety (BD4FS), funded by USAID and implemented by Food Enterprise Solutions (FES), recognized LDB as a leading firm or “Ambassador” in the dairy value chain. An Ambassador firm is a business that has a branded product or products with a good local reputation, an established QMS (quality management system) and has either been certified or is working towards certification in food safety. These firms partnered with BD4FS to reach other small and medium growing food businesses (GFBs) that are part of their value chains. The primary mission of LDB is to connect rural milk supply to growing demand in urban areas.

Through a co-design process, BD4FS and LDB reviewed potential points of contamination in the dairy value chain and recognized that producers—at the beginning of the value chain—needed training and technical assistance in safer food handling. BD4FS trained 374 producers, including 234 women and 131 young people, on topics including hygiene practices, product handling, quality maintenance, and methods to improve the shelf life of products. BD4FS training and technical assistance empowers local milk producers to improve the safety and quality of the milk they sell to LDB. After implementing these practices, local milk producers are better able to meet the food safety standards required by regional retailers, giving them larger market access through LDB. The producers of the region, primarily the Fulani women, will have met their daily expenses due to the steady income from LDB as well as selling surpluses at a higher retail price (from

¹ This idea has been raised in the context of cooperation with the Africa Milk project (<https://www.africa-milk.org/fr/about-the-project>). According to Eva Tournaire (https://agritrop.cirad.fr/595085/1/2019_MOQUAS_Tournaire_V2.pdf), there are many questions related to this approach: - location, sizing, operation, cost, advantages and limitations of such a system; and - by whom and how will these costs be covered?

Tournaire, E. 2019. Dynamics of milk collection systems in Senegal, Case of the Laiterie du Berger and Kirène. Final dissertation. Page 19-43. - Dynamique des systèmes de collecte de lait au Sénégal -Cas de la Laiterie du Berger et de Kirène. Mémoire de fin d'études. CIRAD. Page 19-43. https://agritrop.cirad.fr/595085/1/2019_MOQUAS_Tournaire_V2.pdf

door-to-door markets)² that they can now command because of better quality milk. Additionally, producers improving dairy handling and preservation methods will reduce losses and earn higher incomes through selling value-added products.

The BD4FS Approach Promotes Localization

This collaborative co-design experience with a lead firm in the dairy sector illustrates the effectiveness of the BD4FS Ambassador Firms³ approach where the targeted selection of GFBs within a value chain can successfully pull upstream suppliers to adopt safer food handling practices, while simultaneously benefiting downstream actors who benefit from greater access to safer food. BD4FS mobilizes local food safety experts to work with business champions, like the Ambassador firms, who understand food safety's importance to their bottom line.

By providing food safety training to Ambassador firm suppliers, BD4FS enables small-scale food companies to meet quality standards and comply with food safety protocols. This approach positively impacts the entire value chain as other suppliers are motivated to adopt standards expected by Ambassador firms and other retailers with larger market access.

This experience with LDB demonstrates how the involvement of private sector ambassador businesses can contribute to improving the larger food system serving local markets. The combined action of the ambassador companies and BD4FS on the value chains will impact producers through better control of food losses and, on the economic level, income generation, especially for women producers. BD4FS, in addition to the growing food businesses it supports, will continue to work with leading companies to help promote sustainable outcomes by empowering local leadership to build a culture of food safety at the grassroots level.

Learn more about FES and BD4FS activities at <https://www.foodsolutions.global/> and follow us at:



² Tournaire, E. 2019. Dynamics of milk collection systems in Senegal, Case of the Laiterie du Berger and Kirène. Final dissertation. Page 31. - Dynamique des systèmes de collecte de lait au Sénégal - Cas de la Laiterie du Berger et de Kirène. Mémoire de fin d'études. CIRAD. Page 31.

The prices are: Retail: 500FCFA/L or 0.79USD/L; Sales to LDB 200FCFA/L or 0.32 USD/L
https://agritrop.cirad.fr/595085/1/2019_MOQUAS_Tournaire_V2.pdf

³ Food Enterprise Solution. 2022. Business Drivers for Food Safety Tools and Practices. Page 1.
https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00Z7B9.pdf.

