

FONDAZIONE MARCEGAGLIA ONLUS

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GIRINKA

IMPACT REPORT



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INTRODUCTION



IN THE BUGESERA DISTRICT OF EASTERN RWANDA...

For the last eight years, Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus (FMO) in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda, Through the Ministry of Local Government, has been investing in different social-economic development programs in a rural area of Bugesera District in Eastern Rwanda.

Every year, a set of different projects is implemented at the community level with the general objective to accompany them in the journey to self-reliance and economic resilience in the world's race to reach the sustainable development goals.

FMO interventions in Rwanda consists of already tried and worked government initiatives like:

- Girinka (one milky cow per family),
- Three goats or pigs for families with small portions of lands,
- Microcredit for small businesses,
- School drop-out prevention in 12yrs basic Education,
- Early childhood Development,
- Cooperatives supports & their capacity building
- Vocational Training & Tertiary Education scholarships,
- Growth Stunting eradication & malnutrition treatment for children under 5yrs
- Proper shelters, Water & Sanitation etc

WHY GIRINKA PROJECT?



At the beginning of its collaboration with the Government of Rwanda, FMO was requested and agreed to support one of the most Indigenous approaches, a local solution to numerous problems which the many Rwandan households were facing, called “girinka programme”. The approach consists of providing a milk cow to poor households in order to ensure milk supply to children. The issued milk cows are not only for milk consumption but also for enabling beneficiaries to get out of poverty through selling surplus milk and using manure to increase land fertility for agricultural production

The Girinka program is one of the first interventions Fondazione Marcegaglia has supported since 2014 up to today. It implemented the Girinka Program in line with the Government's guidelines from selection of beneficiaries, to quality of heifers and follow up for sustainability. The positive impact was expected on the different challenges on household level and community in large numbers, among others; Low agriculture productivity and arable land distribution is a major challenge in Rwanda. The obvious consequences is that a substantial number of rural families who subsist on agriculture have less than 1ha, and where there is no use of fertilizers and most of that land is not arable, this will cause land degradation, poverty and low household income.

By giving every poor family one cow that will help the poor families to increase their crop production by using manure, increase their income and their nutrition at the household level and country-wide as well.

FMO picked some of the Girinka program aspects to be its implementation objectives, Impact on Agriculture, nutrition, monetary income, social cohesion and Gender equality.

It is against this background that the study evaluates the impact of one cow per poor family or Girinka program on households which received cows in the last five years in the Rilima Sector, Bugesera district in Rwanda.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the 65 interviewed beneficiaries, they all took time to share their life journey before and after receiving a cow in the Girinka Program funded by FMO. Most of them had not owned a cow before, fewer grew up owning cows in their families in the past but not during the period FMO found them during the selection of its beneficiaries. Most Girinka beneficiaries are the widows heads of families in Rilima Sector, due to Genocide or other circumstantial deaths, most of them were left with children or grand-children to raise alone. Beside being on the list of eligible beneficiaries of Government of Rwanda's Girinka Program, FMO Staff had to make sure they are well equipped with both knowledge on livestock, basic veterinary skills, and infrastructures like cowsheds, spades & wheelbarrows for compost.

During the interview of 65 beneficiaires, we assessed what could have been the impact of the cows received in the families with specific attention on monetary income generated, impact on food production, gender equality, livelihood, nutrition & stunting in children under five years etc.

This research revealed overwhelming positive impact, where 98% of the interviewed beneficiaries said that the cow was profitable for them and their families, contributed to as a main source of income, 100% of respondents said that the cow improved their agricultural harvest. 53.85% of the beneficiaries explicitly mentioned that they had not suffered from malnutrition prior to owning the cow, whereas 38.46 % declared that they had experienced it in the past. Approximately 7.69 percent of the beneficiaries that were interviewed discussed that the growing presence of milk in their household diet "made a huge impact on their nutrition & children growth". Nearly 100% of beneficiaries that were able to collect milk and manure said that they would donate portions of that collection to their neighbors if/when they were in need, oftentimes from the portion that they would have sold to gain profits for themselves, and this brought positive social cohesion among neighbors. The reseach also gathered beneficiaries recomendations and perceptions of beneficiaries on how the Girinka progrma could be improved to be more profitable to beneficiaries.





SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research gathered from this study overwhelmingly proved that the cows have provided many nutritional benefits to the beneficiaries and their households. They have provided milk and aided in the increase of vegetables, facilitating an easier means of maintaining a nutritional diet. The milk and manure produced by the cows provided by the Girinka Program have equipped beneficiaries with both beneficial and profitable aspects that were not present prior to owning the cow. All of the products that were sold provided beneficiaries with a source of income, allowing them to supply their households with basic necessities and critical innovations as well as prioritize costs pertaining to education. Additionally, this revenue gave beneficiaries more wiggle room to spend money on items and/or activities they naturally desired for themselves and their families, such as creating imigongo paintings. The selling of milk and other milk-related products increased the nutritional consumption of those living in the household and local members of the community. In terms of nutrition, some of the beneficiaries recommended that the Girinka Program additionally provide households with water tanks and/or chickens. Many beneficiaries live far away from a water source, making it difficult to get water for both the members of their household and their cow. In relation to the supply of chickens, RUTIHUNZA Marcel described how difficult it was becoming for her and her husband to take care of their cow as they were getting older and their bodies struggled with the physical labor of their maintenance. She recommended that some beneficiaries receive chickens because they are much easier to feed and overall, less laborious to take care of. Lastly, a few of the beneficiaries also mentioned the overall difficult task of paying school fees as many of them are widows and have multiple children. They recommended that FMO build more early childhood development centers around Rilima in order to reassure that their children are receiving a proper early education and food at school.

ABOUT THE BENEFICIARIES

PEOPLE OF RILIMA WHO HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE GIRINKA PROJECT



DUKUZEMARIYA
Triphine



MUKARUSHEMA
Mediatrice



NTAWENDERUNDI
Vincent

Many of the beneficiaries we spoke with over the course of October were the women who were head of their household. They were typically given a cow from FMO after an FMO representative went into the community and found those who fit the criteria of beneficiaries: to start, the beneficiaries were older single or widowed women who were the leaders of their families and came from a low income household. She had to have the land and time and commitment to provide for the cow before FMO named her a beneficiary. When asked about her perception of FMO in the community and its impact on her life, beneficiary BIHOYIKI Leoncie said that it is an organization that helps poor

people, that it took her from “almost nothing to somebody” and she is only thankful for what FMO has done for her and her family.

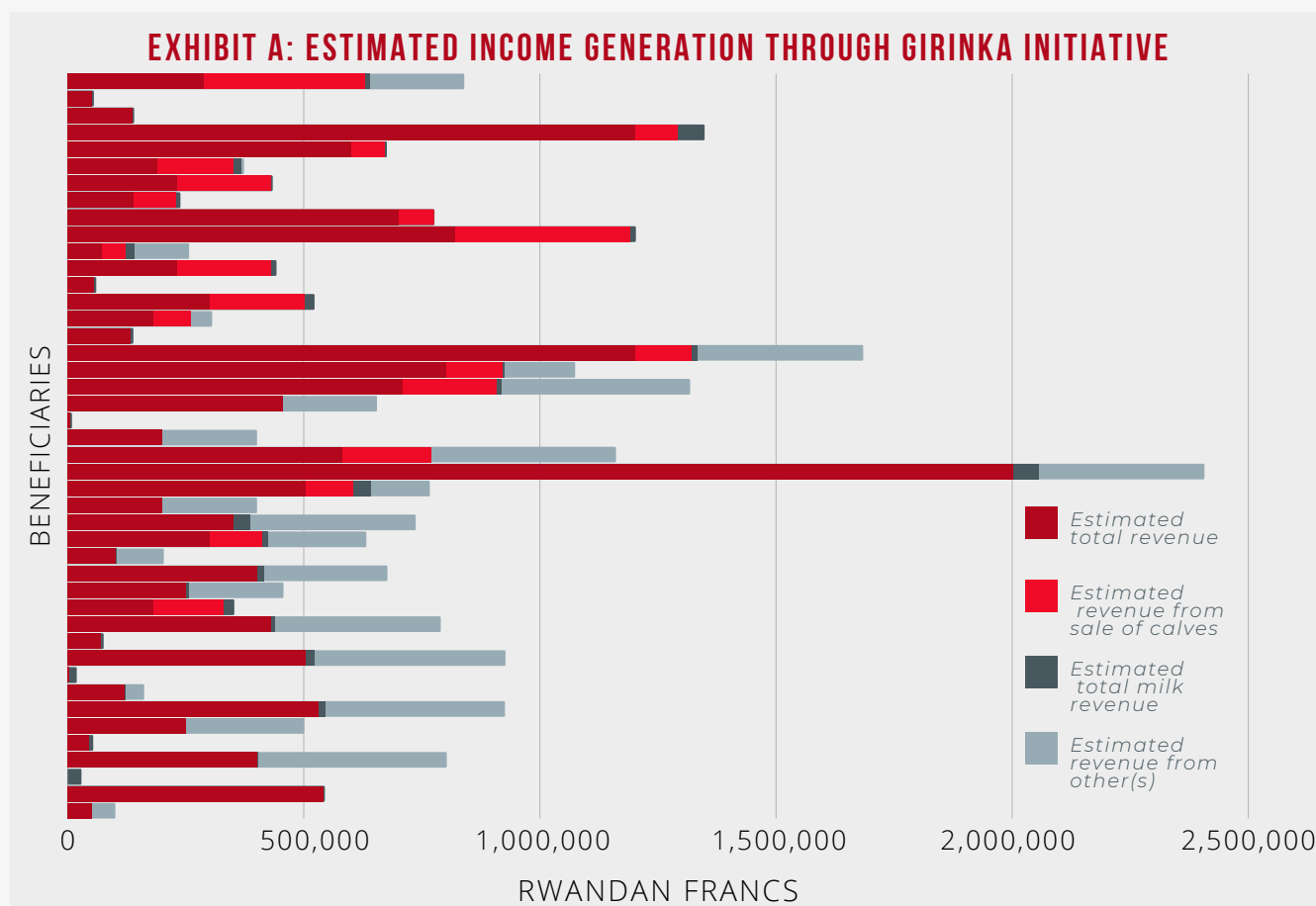
While the Girinka Project has an overwhelming positive impact on beneficiaries, we still heard stories of hardships. Women like MUKARUSHEMA Mediatrice were given a cow that died prematurely or could not keep its calves to full term so there was never healthy offspring to donate back to the program or neighbors. These challenges created new tests for the beneficiaries to overcome by using the resources from the cow as efficiently as possible while it was still around.

MONETARY INCOME GENERATION

While the premier goal of the Girinka program is to enable families to feed their children with milk, the accessory aspiration is to curtail the poverty of those families, and within the community by allowing them to not only sell their surplus milk supply, but boost their agricultural harvest through the use the cow's natural fertilizers, as well as selling that bounty and the manure to other farmers in the community. In fewer words, the Girinka program empowers entrepreneurship in its beneficiaries, and provides many opportunities for income generation that would likely not be available otherwise.

Let us first address the basics; did the beneficiaries find that the cow was profitable for them? In short the answer is simple; yes, 98% of the interviewed beneficiaries said that the cow was profitable for them and their families. The only 2 respondents that said otherwise said so because of unfortunate and premature death in the cow.

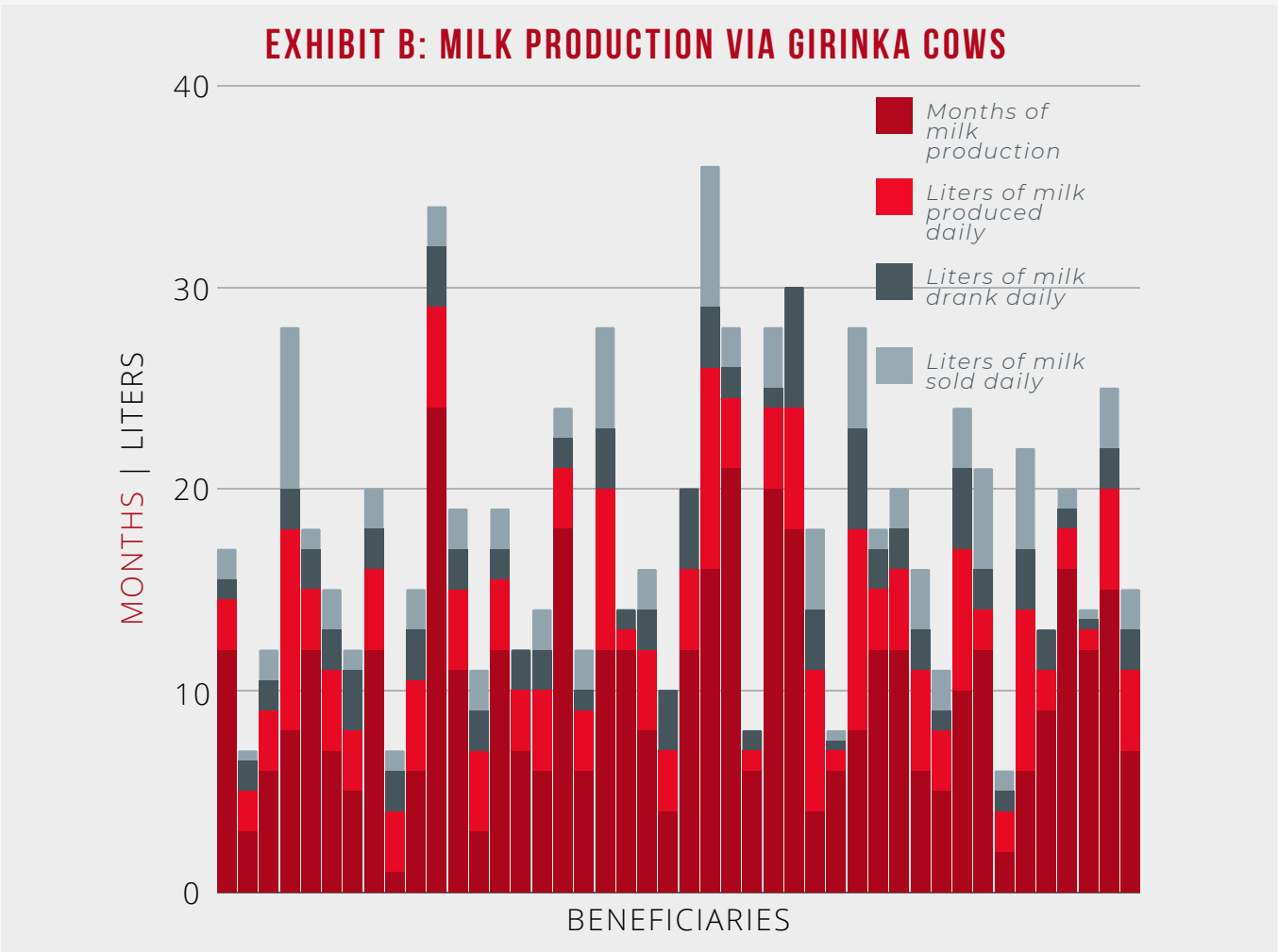
69% of beneficiaries said that milk was the most beneficial aspect of owning the cow, or at least one of a few, (39% said milk alone). The average number of months it took for the received cow to give birth was 10.8 months, including the outlier data of when the cow was received as a calf. Of the 49 beneficiaries interviewed, 95 calves were produced. Calves not only enable an additional beneficiary (passover program), but allow for an exponential increase in revenue streams. Birth allows for milk production from the mother, increased manure production, and the ability to sell the cow, as a calf or full-grown, which allows for large-sum payouts when the family may be in need. In one instance, the beneficiary said her son was about to be suspended from school because she could not afford to pay school fees, but selling the cow allowed for her son to continue his studies. Estimated income generation is displayed in exhibit A.





MONETARY INCOME GENERATION

Looking more specifically at milk sales, beneficiaries have earned upwards of 57,600 RWF. Many of the beneficiaries were able to harvest a significant amount of milk from cows after they gave birth, some as high as 10 liters per day. Additionally, some cows produced milk up to two years after giving birth. On average, beneficiaries sold 43% of the milk produced by their cow (at an average rate of 268.42 RWF). Beneficiary #4, BIHOYIKI Leoncie, collected ten liters daily, and was able to sell 80% of the milk at 300 RWF per liter, gaining 2,400 RWF each day, from milk sales alone. Leoncie estimates that she has generated 1,200,000 RWF since receiving the cow. Milk income generation is displayed in exhibit B.

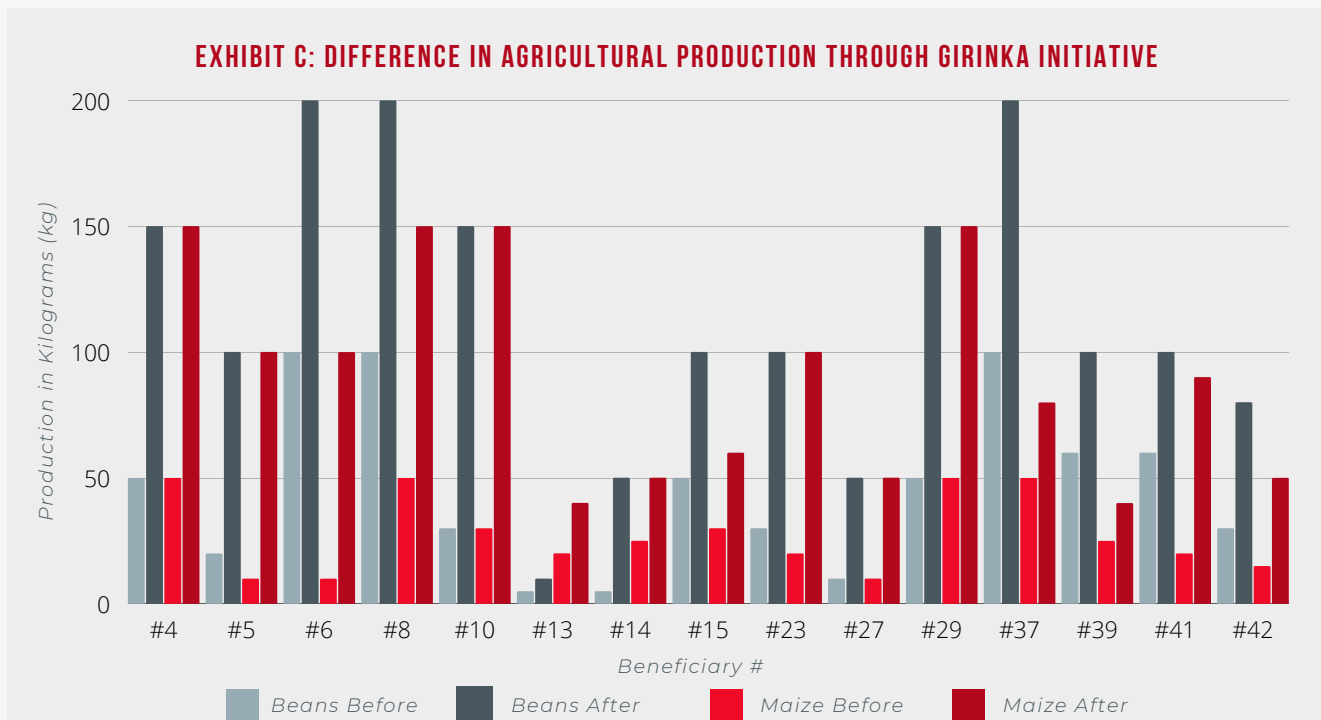


In addition to milk and calves, many beneficiaries were able to sell manure to other members of the community to use in their own farms and gardens. Additionally, many cows that passed were able to be sold as sources of meat that brought in a great deal of revenue to the families. Lastly, when it becomes necessary to the beneficiary (only after engaging in the passover program), they are also able to sell the received bovine for an instant gratification of large sums.

IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

One of the most beneficial aspects of the Girinka Initiative has been the application of manure produced by the cow to the recipients agricultural products. Out of all the recipients interviewed, 100% of respondents said that the cow improved their agricultural harvest. This is an overwhelming display of the success of this initiative's impact on agricultural production. Of the respondents, 32 said that the manure produced by the cow given by FMO increased their harvest by 100-250%. This indicates that nearly half of the recipients doubled or more than doubled the amount of crops that they were producing before receiving the cow.

Below, the chart in Exhibit C shows the increase in production of two common crops: beans and maize. The recipients chosen to be displayed in the chart were the recipients who grew both beans and maize and provided quantitative data in kilograms.



As the chart displays, there is an extremely positive relationship between the application of manure from the FMO provided cow to the crops and the increase of agricultural production for both beans and maize. Such trends were also seen with the application of manure to other common crops such as bananas, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and fruit trees. Adversely, 100% of recipients who lost the cow (due to death, inability to take care of it, giving it away, etc.) said that their agricultural harvest significantly decreased following the loss of manure for production.

The amount of manure produced by the cow varied for each recipient. Such factors that contributed to this data include the length of time the recipient had the cow, the cow's health, and the agricultural season (rainy or dry). Many recipients also did not measure how much manure the cow produced or could not remember due to age. Of the 32 recipients who could recall how much manure was produced, there was an average of 2.66 trucks produced each year by the FMO cow. The least number of trucks of manure produced by the cow was 0.5 and the greatest number of trucks of manure produced was 12. Some recipients kept all manure produced by the cow to use on their own land, and some sold manure as an extra source of income.

Additionally, the use of other products for agricultural production before and after the Girinka Initiative outside of manure produced by the cow was examined. Out of all recipients interviewed, only seven used something other than cow manure before they received the cow from FMO. Of the seven, five were using artificial manure provided by the government on their crops and two were using other animal manure (chicken and goat). After receiving the cow, only seven used something other than cow manure for their crops. Of the seven, five were using other products because they lost their cow. Of these five, four were using artificial manures provided by the government and one was using goat manure. The two who still had their cow and were using something other than cow manure for their crops were using artificial manure they purchased to mix in with the regular cow manure to assist with agricultural production. Those who lost the cow and did not use anything afterwards indicated that they could not afford and did not have access to artificial manure.

IMPACT ON NUTRITION

CONSUMPTION AND ORGANIZATION OF COWS' PRODUCTS



By providing cows, the Girinka Program supplied most beneficiaries with a surplus of milk compared to before. The production of milk gave the beneficiaries the ability to not only increase their overall nutrition through consumption, but also to generate a greater household income through the selling of milk. 84.61 percent of all the 26 beneficiaries interviewed on the cow's impact on nutrition both consumed and sold milk while 3.85 percent of beneficiaries reserved the milk strictly for consumption. The milk was consumed in various forms, but the most common amongst households was to take it plain as other milk-based products called for more ingredients that families typically were not able to financially purchase. 59.26 percent of the beneficiaries tended to either drink the milk plain or mix it with tea and/or porridge whereas 18.52 percent of those interviewed used the milk produced by their cows to create other products, such as butter, oil, and yogurt. One beneficiary mentioned that their cow produced 3 liters of milk per day, giving the beneficiary the capability to produce at most 5 liters of yogurt per week while dedicating 1 liter of the cow's daily milk production to consumption, by both members of the household and neighbors. Overall, the milk was drunk equally amongst family members as they typically consumed the milk together either in the morning or late in the evening. 11.54 percent of beneficiaries were not able to receive adequate milk from their cows due to various reasons, such as the cows' inability to produce a calf or it was unhealthy and sick.

Milk was mainly prioritized to suffice members of the household, which for some included grandchildren, but a large number of the beneficiaries additionally shared the milk with local members of their community. 23.08 percent of beneficiaries explained that the milk produced by their cow was consumed solely by family members whereas 69.23 percent of the beneficiaries mentioned that the milk was at some point shared with their local neighbors and/or their shepherds. The most common reason for sharing milk with one's neighbor was for health reasons as 27.78 percent of the beneficiaries explicitly stated that they shared milk with their neighbors when they were sick. Although the production of milk was one of the most beneficial aspects of the cow, some also found an additional advantage once their cow died. 18.52 percent of the beneficiaries stated that the members of their household consumed and/or sold the meat of the cow once it died, further strengthening their diet and household income.



IMPACT ON NUTRITION

MALNUTRITION

Over half of the beneficiaries interviewed stated that they along with the members of their household had never experienced malnutrition. 53.85 percent of the beneficiaries explicitly mentioned that they had not suffered from malnutrition prior to owning the cow gifted to them by FMO whereas 38.46 percent declared that they had experienced it in the past. Approximately 7.69 percent of the beneficiaries that were interviewed discussed that the growing presence of milk in their household diet “made a huge impact” as it spurred an unexpected recovery from and the alleviation of ulcers that either they themselves or their family members were suffering from. Although a smaller percentage of beneficiaries stated they had experienced direct cases of malnutrition before, a larger number of beneficiaries declared that the issue of malnutrition, at some point, was an evident problem in their community. 33.33 percent of the beneficiaries that stated malnutrition was a problem in their community also cited that it has become less severe and that the number of cases has reduced due to the growing and effective role of FMO in the area. AYINKAMIYE Christine insisted that malnutrition was slowly disappearing due to the implementation of the Girinka Program. She believes that the program’s initiatives have “reduced the disease at a high rate” and are the reasons as to why it “is actually almost gone in the community.” Some who did not see malnutrition as a problem in their society argued that a majority of, if not all, civilians are now cow and/or garden owners, giving a larger population more access to products with greater nutritional value. Many also stated that the expansion of the government’s food assistance programs has diminished malnutrition rates as they have reached more impoverished households and children.

The beneficiaries that experienced cases of malnutrition in their households described how the cows gifted to them made a positive impact on the overall nutritional intake of their family members. The cow supplied both nutritional milk for the beneficiary’s diet and



manure, which fertilized their gardens and increased their vegetables and/or fruit production. MUKARUSHEMA Mediatrice discussed how the health and nutritional satisfaction of her family relied on her garden’s ability to produce bountiful crops. Prior to owning the cow, she didn’t have a source of milk nor milk to sell in order to buy other nutritional products, therefore, “if she didn’t grow anything, she couldn’t eat.” Due to the cow’s presence in her life, she is empowered with the choice of where to adequately allocate the 2 liters of milk it produces. She can sell 1 liter of milk per day and purchase nourishing foods, such as fish, and the other liter is free of her choosing, whether that be through consumption or through distribution to her neighbors. The cows expanded access to healthy and natural nutritional products not only for beneficiaries, but also for various members of the community as products were commonly shared. Although not all of the beneficiaries endured direct cases of malnutrition, they were still positively impacted by the cows’ presence in their households as it provided both milk and natural fertilizer and was both a source of income and labor. MUSABISENGWA Josee detailed how, in the past, she would go into debt in order to provide for her family, but now that she owns a cow, it has heavily impacted her life. It has not only provided her children with milk, but also given her the motivation and energy to escape her prior lifestyle of “sleeping in all day and night” in exchange for working and managing a garden, which is profitable due to the cow’s manure.

IMPACT ON NUTRITION



EFFECTS ON KITCHEN GARDENS

All of the beneficiaries' kitchen gardens improved in terms of crop production due to their cow's manure. The manure from the cows provided by the Girinka Program has served as a natural fertilizer in gardens belonging to the beneficiaries, contributing to an increase in produce and crops, further benefiting the nutrition of household members. 92.3 percent of the beneficiaries used all of the cow's manure for their garden whereas 3.85 percent of beneficiaries both sold manure for revenue and used it in their garden. Prior to owning the cow, many beneficiaries either purchased artificial fertilizer or did not have kitchen gardens. Although their kitchen gardens benefitted from the cow's manure, 23.08 percent of the beneficiaries mentioned the overall difficulty of maintaining a kitchen garden due to Rwanda's strong and long lasting sunny season. The combination of extreme sunlight and a lack of rain has contributed to the overall problem of malnutrition in different

aspects. As mentioned in the interviews, the dry season has forced a handful of kitchen gardens into failure, disallowing the production of crops, in addition to decreasing the amount of food available for the cows, negatively affecting their milk supply. Although the dry season has been unbearable for certain beneficiaries, the natural fertilizer provided by their cows has served as a safety net for when problems arise. Overall, the cow's manure has provided beneficiaries with an effective fertilizer that has served as a valuable source for their vegetable gardens. NYIRAHABINTWARI Marie Gaurette stated that "having a cow was a very big privilege" due to the manure it supplied to a household. It gave them the ability to provide organic nutrients for their families in order to fight malnutrition in addition to a means of climbing the economic development ladder, specifically through the merchandising of the extra crops their garden produced.



IMPACT ON NUTRITION

GAINED REVENUE DISTRIBUTION

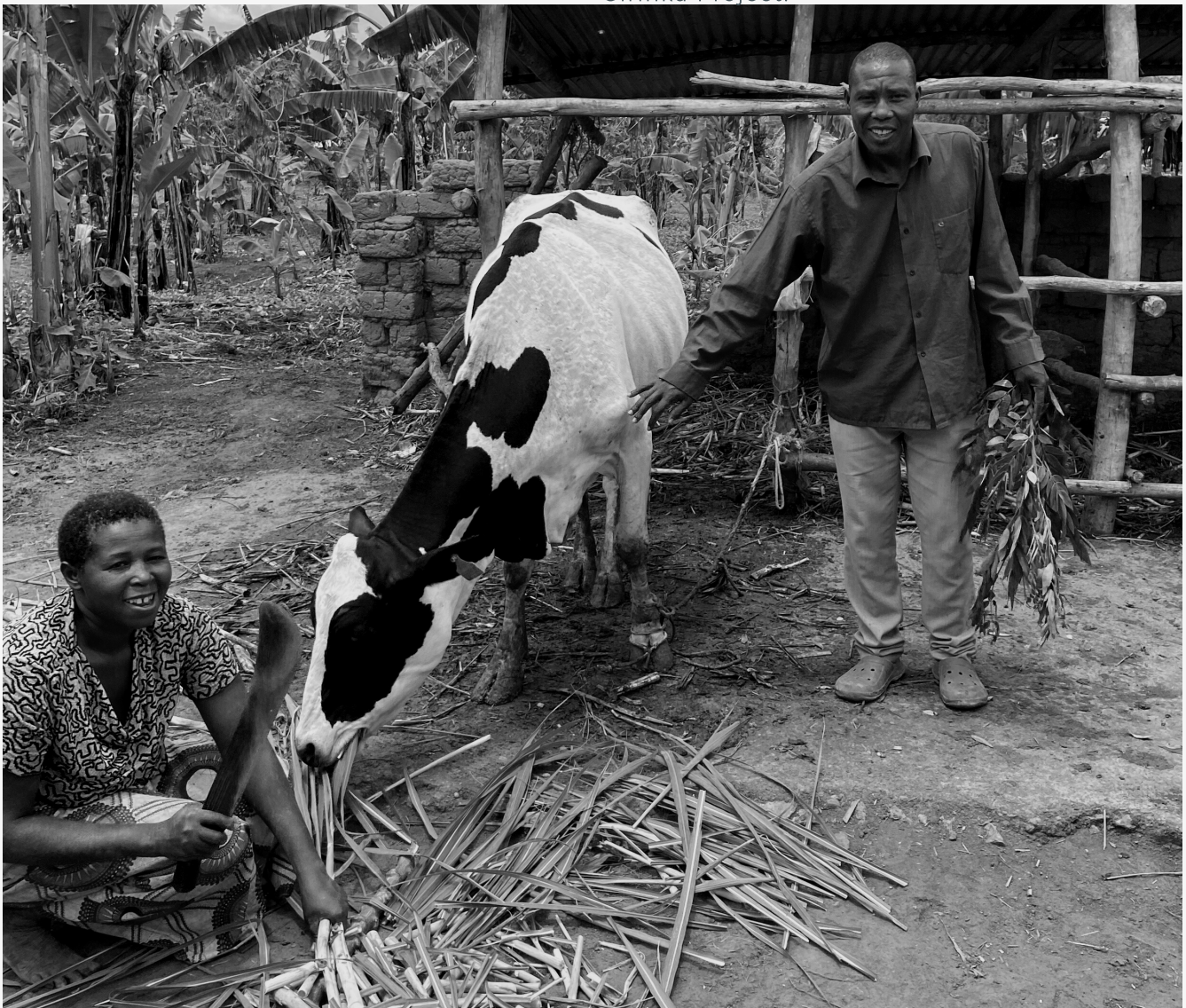
As mentioned earlier, the cow's milk provided an influential source of income for the beneficiaries and overall was financially beneficial for their households. 73.08 percent of all of the beneficiaries interviewed sold at least 1 liter of their cow's milk and that revenue was spent on various items and forms of support for the household. 76.92 percent of the beneficiaries mentioned using the money to purchase specific foods they couldn't grow in their garden and cooking materials, such as corn flour and cooking oil. Some of the products bought included: beans, rice, particular vegetables, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, meat, fish, salt, and sugar, which were mainly purchased at their local markets. In addition to buying food in order to sustain themselves and their families, several beneficiaries detailed the priority of paying some type of fees relating to either their children's or grandchildren's education. 34.62 percent of the beneficiaries interviewed used their earnings from selling milk to pay for at least one of the following: school materials, school fees, books or uniforms.

Although the main priorities were school fees and food, several beneficiaries additionally detailed the necessity to cover other costs for their households. The beneficiaries took advantage of this new source of income to take care of priorities regarding the household and what they believe would be most beneficial for their families. 11.54 percent of the beneficiaries interviewed described how they used this capital for personal benefits and 38.46 percent of them mentioned using these funds on the upkeep of their homes and farms. Some of the personal benefits included the purchase of shoes, clothes and investment in personal projects, such as beekeeping. Those who invested in the upkeep of their homes and farms designated money to various necessities, including the payment of their shepherds, some type of construction in relation to their homes, the purchasing of chairs, dishes, soap, and multiple other products in order to suffice their basic needs. Overall, the revenue gained from the selling of milk, manure, yogurt and other products made available by the cow from the Girinka Program provided these beneficiaries with the ability to allocate money where they believed was most beneficial for themselves and their families.

IMPACT ON LIVELIHOOD

Thanks to the money generated from the cow, beneficiaries were able to purchase materials for their homes and families, pay for expenses they otherwise would have needed government support on, made improvements to their homes and some even began new business ventures with their new form of income. As we spoke with more beneficiaries, we discovered broader impacts on individual livelihood that the project has offered. Families have been able to pay for school fees and medical insurance on their own, cultivate crops that have practically doubled in abundance since using the cow's manure as fertilizer, and elevate their status in the community as individuals others can look up to as role models for success and pride.

MUSABISENGWA Josee has been able to capitalize on her artistic skills by selling her imigongo paintings at the markets and buying supplies she needs with the money generated from her cow. She also told us that before receiving her cow from FMO she would sleep on the couch or stay inside watching television all day; now, she is active in the community and around her household again - she even told us that if someone were to take her cow away, it would be like "starting the third world war" with her. Josee is a standout beneficiary of the Girinka Project because she was one of the first women to be selected for the project. Not only did she become a shining success story for the impact a cow can have on your life, but she was elected a leader of the women's cooperative that started the Girinka Project.



IMPACT ON SOCIAL COHESION

One of the beautiful aspects of the Girinka project is the Passover program, where the beneficiary will pass on the first born calf to a new family, which not only keeps the program sustainable, but improves cohesion within the community. Rwandan culture places a heavy significance on cows, and it is traditionally the most prized belonging to a family, and is considered the best gift you can give and/or receive. When asked about the relationship between the new beneficiary and the donor of the calf, everytime they say that their relationship has improved. Many of them rely on each other for advice on taking care of the bovines. One beneficiary, NYIRANTAGORAMA Esther, even said that she became very close friends with the woman she passed the cow to, and their daughters even fetch the grass to feed their cow together. Another, MUTUYIMANA Eliada, said that before giving the cow to the new beneficiary, she didn't even know her, but after the passover they became really close and have such a strong relationship that they share a water tank. They visit each other regularly and have a very strong bond, all thanks to the Girinka project's passover program.

In addition to the mandatory Passover program, cohesion in the community is improved out of the goodness of the beneficiaries' hearts. Nearly 100% of beneficiaries that were able to collect milk and manure said that they would donate portions of that collection to their neighbors if/when they were in need, oftentimes from the portion that they would have sold to gain profits for themselves. Income to them was less important than keeping their community sustained and healthy. BIHOYIKI Leoncie even stated that in addition to giving out milk to her neighbors, she also uses her income from the cow to buy rice for her neighbors at the market. AYINKAMIYE Christine [pictured] also stated "I helped (she no longer owns the cow) neighbors by giving them milk and manure when they needed it, also when I got money from selling those items and someone came asking for help, I would kindly and freely give them the money they needed." Milk is also given to families in the community that have just had a new baby or have a sick [malnourished] child, which additionally tackles community nutrition issues.

In addition to donating milk and manure to her neighbors, NYIRIBAMBE Appolinarie shared that owning a cow has allowed her to provide job opportunities to her community, including paying a shepherd as well as people to help load manure onto trucks. Providing jobs to community members enables a symbiotic cycle for economic advancement, as well as prosperous social development.



IMPACT ON GENDER EQUITY



In spite of the Girinka program's mission to empower women and promote gender equity, the majority of the responses of those who still had husbands maintained their position as secondary head of the house. The husbands also maintained their position as primary head of the house. Out of 6 women with husbands interviewed, 4 said that they believe they share ownership with their husbands and 2 said that their husbands have full ownership of the cow. Out of 5 men with wives we interviewed, 4 said they think they have full ownership of the cow and 1 said his wife has ownership of the cow. This shows the trend of upholding traditional gender roles in the household, specifically when it comes to men making financial decisions and maintaining ownership of any assets.

Of all the widows interviewed, 100% said that they have full ownership of the cow. The widows had a very different opinion on gender roles in the household, and expressed belief that they were the primary head of household and felt empowered as women. The widows gave very positive responses towards the cow when it concerned giving them independence, both socially and financially. All widowed recipients said that they either made all financial decisions on their own, or consulted their children first. They all either divided work in the household or hired a shepherd to assist them. A common fear in the widow recipients was losing their stability and livelihood after the deaths of their husbands. The majority of widow respondents indicated that FMO gave them their freedom back, put them on their feet, and gave them a more respected voice in the community.

The way that work was divided within the household depended on how many people lived there, how old they were, and how much work the cow required. No recipients indicated that work was separated by gender. Tasks were instead divided by availability - who was home at what time. When asked what tasks each gender could perform, all recipients stated either could do any task. Out of 24 recipients, 9 stated that work was divided between the family, 2 stated the husband does the work, 8 stated that the wife does the work, 3 stated that a shepherd does the work, and 2 stated that the kids in the family do the work. The husbands do significantly less work than the wives, which was most often excused due to the fact that they are the providers of the family and have other work to attend to. All recipients, regardless of marital status, gender, or age said that there was never any conflict within the family surrounding the cow or anything relating to the cow.

An overall pattern deduced from the interviews conducted shows a positive correlation between the widows receiving the FMO cow and higher levels of gender equity. However, little to no growth was shown from the recipients who were still married. One recipient even stated, "a husband is a husband, and a wife is a wife" when asked why she believed her husband had total control over herself, the cow, and the finances of the household. She, along with many others, maintained that men and not women should be the head of the household because that is the societal expectation. Widows, when asked the same question, believed that women could be the head of the household and be successful at doing so. This leads to the hypothesis that the presence of men in the household changes how women see themselves in society.