

## **Celebration of the World School Milk Day in Sululta (Ethiopia) - October 8, 2013**

The World School Milk Day (WSMD) was celebrated very colorfully in Sululta town on Tuesday October 8, 2013. The celebration was organized for the second time in Ethiopia. The objectives of the celebration were:

- ♣ to raise awareness on significance of milk for children & teenagers in a playful way
- ♣ to promote the idea of establishing school milk program and
- ♣ to open room for those involved in dairy sector to promote milk and milk products

The Oromia Regional Livestock Development and Health Agency (OLDHA) and the Livestock and Irrigation Value Chain for Ethiopian Smallholders (LIVES) Project of ILRI took the lead in organizing the event. The program was sponsored by OLDHA, LIVES/ILRI, SNV, Plan international-Ethiopia, Sululta municipality, LAME Dairy (Shola), Selale Dairy cooperative, LONI milk processing plant, Wise team, DAT and Neway PLCs, and others. The celebration took place in the compound of the Sululta primary school in the presence of school children, teachers, and guests from collaborating institutions. The importance of milk and milk products for everyone, especially children, was portrayed through different activities.

During the celebration, T-shirts, caps and more than 2000 brochures prepared in two local languages were distributed to the participants. Mass sport, Circus, and traditional variety shows and playing of songs by school children attracted the attention of everybody. Following, the welcoming and opening speeches by local officials, elders blessed the celebration. A drama on the importance of drinking milk was shown by BEEZ Academy students. Best poems selected from poem competition among students in Afaan Oromo and Amharic languages were read by the winners. Competitions such as women milk churning and calf/heifer/cow drawing by students as well as horse galloping impressed celebration participants. The selection of best dairy cows and heifers and show of the selected cows/heifers revealed the ability of the local farmers in dairy animal management. There was also a brief training on the importance of feeding human breast for health of children. The fair share was included exhibiting dairy related traditional foods, dairy products, preference test for different kinds of milk and highlighting about the importance of the celebration for organizations involved in the WSMD celebration. Milk and milk products were distributed to school children to test and enjoy. The winners of the competitions were given awards and more than 2,500 people participated in the celebration.

At the close of the program, Dr. Dereje Gudata, thanked everyone for their participation and promised OLDHA to put the WSMD as part of its annual program. The news of the celebration was broadcasted through mass media in two local languages to sensitize the public on the importance of the WSMD in Ethiopia.



Picture 1: Participants attending the World School Milk Day celebration



Picture 2: Students showing drama on the importance of milk



Picture 3: Women milk churning competition using traditional and modern equipment



Picture 4: Selected dairy cow show



Picture 5: Mass sport by school students



Picture 6: Selected poem reading by a student





Picture 7: Selected drawings by students



Picture 8: Milk based traditional food show

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