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TAPP
TANZANIA
AGRICULTURE
PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAM
Mapato zaidi kupitia kilimo bora

Monthly Update – February 2013

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating its efforts on selected crops and regions, especially SAGCOT, to help transform the country's food security.

EFFECTIVE WATERING METHOD PREVENTS DROUGHT, INCREASES PRODUCTION

Joseph Kwaselema, like many farmers from Maleckchanda, Mang'ola district in Arusha, has dealt with severe water shortages for as long as he can remember. The problem has slightly improved which each farmer from the area allowed 45 minutes per week to irrigate their farmland using the canal nearby. Without a constant supply of water for their crops, many farmers face drought and poor productivity.

Kwaselema's solution to his water problem came through his involvement with USAID-TAPP. Mohamed Bakari, one of USAID-TAPP's agronomists, taught Kwaselema good agricultural practices. The project also assisted with the installation of a drip irrigation system and the construction of a reservoir on his farm, relieving Kwaselema from worrying about scarce water resources in the area.

Today Kwaselema scans his onion production yield on his three acre plot and joins other members of the Maleckchanda Farmer Group, which he chairs, as they make their way to his field to begin harvesting. Working through the first row of onions, group member Veronica Bura spends the early hours of the morning harvesting the mature crops, pulling out her last onion from the soil just before the sun sets. After a three-day harvesting marathon, Kwaselema and his group members harvested 4,800 kg of onions which were transported to the market and bought by local buyers as well as international buyers from Kenya and Uganda. The group made a profit of Tsh 3,400,000 (\$2,166) from total sales.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Veronica Bura harvests onions on a farm that, thanks to USAID-TAPP, has increased production because of better agricultural technology such as drip irrigation.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM FROM DONOR FUNDS THROUGH USAID-TAPP

The success of the Boresha Parachichi Farmer Group in Mbozi Michen in Mbeya region comes from both the efforts of the group members and that of USAID-TAPP, which has given these smallholders financial freedom from donor funds. When the group joined USAID-TAPP last year, it was comprised of avocado and maize farmers. Using traditional farming methods, they planted avocado plants, which are still under production, and maize crops, which they recently harvested 1,800 kg in July 2012 and made a profit of Tsh 450,000 (\$287) from total sales.

Under USAID-TAPP, the group was provided with technical assistance to equip them with the necessary skills to become efficient farmers. With the knowledge they acquired from USAID-TAPP on land preparation, raised beds, starter solution, and pest management, the Boresha Parachichi Farmer Group planted cabbage seeds in October 2012. With a profit of Tsh 3,100,000 (\$1,975) made this month, from 6,200 kg of cabbage, the group was able to reinvest some of its earnings in a new drip irrigation system and the procurement of additional agricultural inputs like hybrid tomato, sweet pepper, and cabbage seeds.

LOCAL FARMER GROUP GETS SECOND CHANCE WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Milton Chitanda, USAID-TAPP Production Manager for Southern Highlands, explains to Dr. Kadege, Mbeya District Commissioner, proper spacing, a good agricultural practice which the Isukamawela Farmer Group used to plant their Irish potatoes.

On February 5, the Isukamawela Farmer Group from Mbozi in Mbeya region welcomed the district commissioner, Dr. Kadege, 100 farmers from neighboring towns, and USAID-TAPP staff and partners to witness first-hand their healthy field of Irish potatoes grown using good agricultural practices learned from USAID-TAPP's agronomist Damas Kisalala.

The 45 member group, consisting of 34 men and 11 women, struggled last year when their tomato production failed due to drought. They didn't have a water pump available at the time and the lack of water supply caused significant crop damage. When they started receiving technical assistance from USAID-TAPP in April 2012, the group was producing cabbage, which they harvested in August 2012 and used the profits to invest in a water pump.

Once the group mastered the art of improved farming methods, they decided to clear out the wilting tomatoes and plant Irish potatoes, which is in high demand in the southern highlands. With a water pump on hand to curb their water woes, combined with a drip irrigation system, improved seeds, and fresh fertilizer given to them by the project, the members started a new chapter in their farming career.

After four months of anticipation and diligent care, the Isukamawela Farmer Group harvested potatoes and distributed to each group member to use as seeds to plant on their farms. Prior to USAID-TAPP's assistance, this group was yielding six tons of potatoes per acre. With new agricultural technology, the group of farmers is now yielding 14 tons, a 136 percent increase in production.

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

"Increased food security through enhanced productivity"

TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification, and improved market access. Visit www.tanzania-agric.org for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The content is the sole responsibility of Fintrac and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.