

Monthly Update – May 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 efforts on selected crops and regions to help transform the country's food security.

USAID-TAPP NARROWS DOWN NEW PARTNER GRANT APPLICATIONS TO 11



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Martha Kisanga, a small-scale vanilla farmer in Hai district, who is a member of a cooperative that sells vanilla beans to project partner NEI.

Building local capacity is crucial to improving agricultural profitability, competitiveness, and sustainability. USAID-TAPP has partnered with 30 local agribusinesses and other organizations in Tanzania to date and is about to add some new partners to the list. Out of 160 grant applications received from private companies and NGOs in response to a new partner solicitation released to the public in April this year, USAID-TAPP selected 27 organizations to further develop their proposals. After extensive assessment reviews, 11 applicants were given the green light to go through to the next stage, where their application will be reviewed by a panel of experts. Winning grantees will receive awards ranging from \$30,000 to \$250,000, and together these organizations will represent approximately 4,000 new farmers working with a variety of high-value crops such as bananas, chilies, onions, avocados, orange flesh sweet potatoes (OFSP), green peas, cut flowers, tomatoes, and spices. USAID-TAPP is also making large strides with

its existing partners. This month, staff visited partners ZAPHA+, HACOCA, Buturi, Nsombo, NEI, Mcharo and Rungwe Avocado Company to give technical and planning support. ZAPHA+ and HACOCA have been supported with drip irrigation systems, while Buturi and Nsombo have installed water pumps for technology adoption with project support. Further support has been extended to partners who are using OFSP vines. About 7,500 vines were distributed to Buturi outgrowers, who will reproduce them for other outgrowers in Pwani region. USAID-TAPP also provided improved agricultural inputs to partner Rungwe Avocado outgrowers, and at least 100 outgrowers from partner NEI have been trained on basic business skills and group governance.

IRRIGATION SCHEMES UNDERWAY AFTER HEAVY RAINS

Now that the heavy rains have stopped, USAID-TAPP is concentrating its efforts on setting up irrigation schemes across the country, making water available to farmers living in areas where there are constant water shortages. In May, the project helped farmers build reservoirs and boreholes, constructed shallow wells, and installed drip irrigation systems for project farmers so they can harvest and use water throughout the year instead of having to wait until the next rainy season or for their turn to access water from the rationed water source in their communities.

Prior to joining USAID-TAPP, 38 year old Vedasto Mlawa was barely surviving from the profits he made from his farm. To supplement the family income, his wife was running a small business selling local doughnuts or *mandazis*. Despite their team effort, the family was only scraping by. To add to his hardship, Mlawa's farm is located in an area in Iringa which faces extensive periods of water shortages. Many farmers in this region have to rely heavily on the

rainy season, which is between November and April in the Southern Highlands. Using traditional farming methods, Mlawa cultivated tomatoes during the 2011 rainy season; and in April 2012, harvested his crops and made a profit of Tsh 1,500,000 (\$960). That same year, he received trainings from USAID-TAPP where he learned about raised beds, proper spacing, use of agricultural inputs, and the importance of seedling trays. In December 2012, Mlawa invested Tsh 280,000 (\$180) and planted tomatoes using his newly learned rainfed production practices and technologies. In April 2013, he harvested 13,860kg of tomatoes, raking in a profit of Tsh 6,000,000 (\$3,820), nearly four times higher of a profit than the year before. USAID-TAPP is now working in Mlawa's community to help construct a new well that will allow them to use drip irrigation instead of rainfed production during the next planting season.

SCALING UP HEALTH & NUTRITION IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

The orange flesh sweet potato (OFSP) is a highly nutritious crop that has health benefits for pregnant women, new mothers and young children. USAID-TAPP encourages project farmers to cultivate the crop on their farms as a way of alleviating malnutrition.

Between May 19-31, when USAID-TAPP's Health & Nutrition Manager Dorothy Magesse visited farmer groups in Njombe, Mbeya, and Iringa regions, she observed a growing trend of farmers falling short of the "three meals a day" requirement. She also noted that many farmers are not consuming a properly balanced diet. The insufficient intake of proper vitamins and minerals means that farmers are more prone to malnutrition and infections. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies also pose health threat to pregnant women and new mothers, as it contributes to maternal mortality and poor health outcomes during pregnancy and breastfeeding. To scale-up nutrition within horticulture, USAID-TAPP works with farmers to establish kitchen gardens to ensure availability of vegetables at home. The project also works with farmer groups to cultivate orange flesh sweet potatoes (OFSP) on their farms. OFSP is a highly nutritious crop that has health benefits for pregnant women,

new mothers and young children. In Mbeya region, Magesse visited Jinue Mbeswe, Lishe kwa Wote, and Nsala farmer groups, where group members admitted only having two meals a day, which lowers their energy levels and results in shorter hours in the field and lower productivity. Members promised to change their eating habits by increasing their meal intake to three times a day.

Magesse also conducted extensive health and nutrition trainings in Njombe and Iringa regions. The Mkombozi Ng'anda and Kimau Uhekule farmer groups in Njombe received nutrition training and also worked with Magesse and USAID-TAPP agronomist Patrick Kyalawa to reestablish their kitchen gardens and plant OFSP. Through her visit to the Kitelewasi and Juhudi Igomaa farmer groups, Magesse was able to give nutrition training to students of Igomaa Primary School. It was brought to her attention that 90 percent of the students survive on one meal a day, due to parents not having enough money to provide for their family or because children are going to school too far away from their homes to easily go home for a quick meal during school breaks. Magesse, with the help of USAID-TAPP's agronomist Chesco Kadege, will work with the school to establish a demonstration plot near the school with kitchen gardens and OFSP, allowing them access to nutritious meals.

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"Increased food security through enhanced productivity"

USAID-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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