

Monthly Update – June 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.

## EMPOWERING RURAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH MARKET LINKAGES



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Tomatoes at a market in Dar es Salaam can fetch farmers anywhere between Tsh 10,000 (\$6.37) and Tsh 15,000 (\$9.55) per ton.

In order to link smallholders to more efficient and equitable markets, USAID-TAPP performs market analyses, expands buyer networks, and builds local capacity in market information and price reporting services. This service provides farmers with vital information which they would not typically have access to. In the month of June, USAID-TAPP linked farmer groups from Kilolo, Kilosa, and Mvomero districts with markets in Iringa, Morogoro, and Dar es Salaam. Through the success of these linkages, the Mvanda Farmers Group and the Nyamahana Farmers Group were connected to major market centers where they were able to sell their tomatoes and watermelons, respectively, at higher market prices.

Before joining USAID-TAPP, the Mvanda Farmers Group from Kilolo, Iringa, cultivated tomatoes under traditional farming methods, which they would sell to neighboring markets within their community. Since joining in February 2012, they have been trained on good agricultural practices (GAPs) by Fikirini Mkwangwa, USAID-TAPP's agronomist in Kilolo and by Angelus Mhelela, the marketing specialist. In addition to learning about new market opportunities, participants discussed the importance of seedling trays, proper use of agricultural inputs, integrated pest management, and trellising. With this new information, the Mvanda Farmers Group decided to plant tomatoes in March 2013 using these improved methods. After three months of anticipation and tireless tending of their one acre plot, the group's first harvest yielded about five tons of tomatoes, earning them a profit of Tsh 1,775,670 (\$1,131) in sales. Production is still underway and there is plenty more income to be generated from upcoming harvests. The Nyamahana Farmers Group from Iringa had also been struggling with market linkages, but has since improved as a result of joining USAID-TAPP in April 2012. After receiving training on GAPs and market information, the group members planted one acre of watermelon in March 2013. Their efforts paid off after three months, when they harvested 9,600kg of watermelon, raking in a hefty profit of Tsh 4,710,000 (\$3,000) from total sales at the Temeke Stereo market in Dar es Salaam. They have recently converted their one acre watermelon plot into an Irish potato field.

## STRENGTHENING AGRIBUSINESS LINKAGES WITH SMALL-SCALE FARMERS

During this month, USAID-TAPP has been working diligently with financial institutions to provide access to credit for smallholder farmers. This will, in turn, boost private investment. Private investment in Tanzania is critically necessary to develop agribusinesses, which are crucial for reducing poverty, fighting hunger, and improving nutrition. USAID-TAPP business development specialists are in the early stages of talks with the Promotion of Rural Initiatives and

Development Enterprises Ltd (PRIDE), Private Agriculture Sector Support (PASS), and the Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS). In Babati and Karatu, 151 (84 males and 67 females) farmers received training from USAID-TAPP business specialists on agribusiness management. In addition, 533 (268 males and 265 females) farmers from Morogoro and Pwani received introductory training on business management skills and record keeping. Farmers learned the importance of keeping accurate records which reflect all farm activities, including pest management, which they would normally exclude from their record books.

## MAKING LOW-COST DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEMS MORE ACCESSIBLE



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

*Drip irrigation is a simple technology that conserves water and reduces costs while improving rural farmer livelihoods. Pictured here are fine beans under drip irrigation.*

As part of providing smallholders with the tools and opportunities to boost their productivity, increase their incomes, and build better lives for themselves and their families, USAID-TAPP is working closely with the private sector to achieve successful results. One intervention, based on successes of other project farmers, involves exploring the country's irrigation potential as well as providing low-cost irrigation kits to rural farmers. Through partnerships in support of country-owned and private sector-led growth strategies, USAID-TAPP has been able to reduce the cost of drip kits by 50 percent, making them more affordable for smallholder farmers. By using drip irrigation, rural farmers have reported bumper harvests of onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and sweet peppers. The drip irrigation kit, made up of drip tape, filter and rows of pipes, helps reduce labor and conserve water. The kit has shown promise in improving household nutrition, increasing incomes and market access, and reducing dependency on rainfall. Thanks to this initiative, project farmers across the country have now taken to the adoption of irrigation schemes and are investing in drip kits. One recent

example is the Mwasiliano Farmers Group of the Kilimanjaro region who have invested in two acres worth of drip irrigation. They are currently using one acre to cultivate beans, on which they were able to harvest 480kg of beans, earning a profit of Tsh 1,200,000 (\$764). Before joining USAID-TAPP in March 2013, the group members used to harvest the same amount of dry beans on a three and a half acre plot of land for the same profit. The group's success demonstrates that with simple, improved production practices such as drip irrigation, smallholder farmers can use less acreage space to cultivate equal or higher yields to that which was produced using traditional methods.

Another farmer benefiting from low-cost drip irrigation is Mr. Sebastian Sanga of Mlandizi, Pwani region, who invested Tsh 3,600,000 (\$2,293) for two acres worth of drip irrigation to produce onions. After being impressed with the improvement that this technology brought to other farmers' yields, Mr. Sanga decided to implement drip irrigation in his cultivation of onions. Previously, Mr. Sanga grew watermelon and paddy rice under furrow irrigation. He is now looking forward to the improved results drip irrigation will bring not just to his production but to his livelihood as well.

### Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

#### "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](http://www.tanzania-agric.org) for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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