

Monthly Update – July 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.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SMALLHOLDERS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Agriculture experts and finance professionals formed linkages with agribusinesses during the Agribusiness Finance Fair in Arusha from July 19-20. The joint venture was aimed at linking agribusinesses from Northern Tanzania to financial service providers, increasing public awareness on services and products offered by financial institutions and reducing financial challenges, such as financial literacy, that the agribusiness community faces. The event saw an enthusiastic crowd, including a large number of farmer representatives from around the region. USAID-TAPP brought together project farmers from Arusha and Kilimanjaro to the finance fair, where they benefited from panel discussions, face-to-face interactions with financial and agriculture exhibitors supporting agribusiness, vital information on different interest rates for loans from different financial service providers, and trainings on how to write bankable business proposals.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Together with trainings on GAPs, such as trellising for sweet pepper production (pictured), USAID-TAPP equips farmers with business management skills for the improvement of their agriculture production.

USAID-TAPP conducts weekly trainings on business management skills as part of its initiative for agriculture development in Tanzania. This month, 20 farmer groups from Mbeya, Njombe, and Iringa were visited by USAID-TAPP's business development specialist. Out of this number, 15 groups were trained on business development management skills, while the remaining five groups had introductory meetings with the project's business development specialist. A total 163 beneficiaries from the 15 groups were trained, of which 107 were male and 56 female. From these trainings, farmers were able to understand the basics of business and agribusiness, and with this knowledge farmers have made better decisions on agricultural production. As a way of bridging the gap between smallholders and financial institutions, USAID-TAPP will continue providing business management trainings, as well as reach out to financial institutions country-wide to work with project farmers in different regions, providing them with regular information on different interest rates so farmers can decide which financial institutions to access credit from.

NEWLY AWARDED GRANTS PARTNERS BEGIN WORK WITH USAID-TAPP

In the month of July, USAID-TAPP welcomed seven new partners to assist the project in accomplishing its objectives of increasing smallholder incomes, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through value-chain development and agricultural innovation. The grants program is used to support mainly private sector partners who are looking to expand their business and engagement with smallholder farmers. Through these partnerships, USAID-TAPP is helping create sustainable growth in the horticultural sector and providing better opportunities for smallholder farmers. New partners include PACT, Green Rain, Africado, EcoAgriConsult, ZAIDI, Global Services Corps Tanzania, and Rungwe Smallholder Tea Growers Association. The partnership types are broken down into three main categories. In the first category, a company sources produce from smallholders using an outgrower model, where a secure and profitable market is made available to farmers and where

smallholder production is improved so that both parties benefit from higher volumes and improved quality. Of the seven new partners, three fall into this category. PACT, an export company that has secured a market for dried African Birds Eye chili, will work with farmers in Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions to secure the raw product. Green Rain is a new company based in Dar es Salaam that has a goal of supplying various horticultural products to diverse export markets. Africado is a company supplying Europe with Hass avocados. In its short time of operations it has already made a name for itself in delivering a quality product. This partnership will expand the supply of smallholder-sourced Hass avocados and allow for exports to be made directly from Tanzania rather than trans-shipped via Kenya. The second partnership category focuses on the delivery of transformative technologies. EcoAgriConsult and ZAIDI are helping us accomplish this. EcoAgriConsult is the first private sector tissue culture laboratory in Tanzania and they will provide clean banana and sweet potato planting material to rural entrepreneurs who will sell field-ready material to smallholder farmers in areas where USAID-TAPP is working. ZAIDI, which is based in Zanzibar, will promote appropriate technologies to farmers in Unguja and Pemba. The technologies include high quality seedlings, hybrid seeds, greenhouses, drip irrigation, and safe and effective crop protection products. The third types of partnerships are designed to improve the health and nutrition of the communities in which USAID-TAPP works. Global Services Corps Tanzania and Rungwe Smallholder Tea Growers Association will be working in the north of Tanzania and Mbeya, respectively, to train communities on improved nutrition and HIV/AIDS prevention/mitigation. Their work will not be limited to training as they will be establishing home gardens, tree nurseries, and water harvesting systems to bring practical support to the communities.

USAID-TAPP HOLDS COMMUNITY-BASED NUTRITION TRAININGS



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

USAID-TAPP Health & Nutrition specialist, Alice Mwambambale (2nd from right), training farmers from the Kilimanjaro region on the importance of eating a balanced diet.

In July, a total of 253 farmers from Arusha, Babati, and Karatu were given trainings on health and nutrition by the project's specialist. Topics covered included essential nutrients found in food and their importance in the human body; malnutrition and diseases; food safety; and hygiene and food preservation. Under USAID-TAPP's framework for improving the livelihood and nutritional status for smallholders in the country, orange flesh sweet potato (OFSP) is widely promoted through its community-led nutrition program. Project health experts and agronomists work hand-in-hand at guiding farmers on the use of good agricultural practices for the production of this carotene-rich crop. The use of proper spacing, seed selection, and harvesting techniques has led to several home gardens harnessing OFSP as a piecemeal asset for home consumption or income generation. USAID-TAPP sensitizes farmers on the establishment of kitchen gardens and OFSP plots. Farmers were given introductory trainings on sack, keyhole gardens, and OFSP plots, for the establishment of easily accessible vegetables in their households. Sacks and keyhole gardens offer an alternative solution for

households that have an insufficient water supply and space for gardening. The program has established two OFSP multiplication units on a half an acre plot in Moshi and another one on an acre plot in Mkuranga to ensure that quality disease-free vines are available to program beneficiaries.

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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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