

Monthly Update – March 2014

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.

ZANZIBAR FIELD DAY A SUCCESS

The field day held by Mshikamano III farmers group in Unguja Ukuu in Zanzibar has proven a massive change in farm yields of the farmers by using simple interventions promoted by USAID-TAPP. The field day gathered nearly 150 farmers from nearby towns and was attended by Mohammed Rashid, Director of Research and Training at the Kizimbani Agriculture Training Institute (KATI).

Thanks to good agricultural practices in their eggplant production, the farmers have been promised a ready market for their produce from the Director of Agriculture at the Institute of Agriculture of Zanzibar. This will be assisted by the government's efforts to open up markets for local products.

The technology on their farm has attracted frequent visits from other smallholder farmers who wish to learn the simple interventions promoted by USAID-TAPP. Much of the attention has been stimulated by the tangible results of the Mshikamano III farmers in sales of their produce which has been increasing steadily.

The availability of hotels in Zanzibar pushes up the prices of vegetables mostly in the high season in the months of June to October and December to March when there is an influx of tourists. This has been a significant boon for the Mshikamano III Farmers group as they improve their incomes through the increased price on horticulture products.

NUTRITION WORKSHOP BRINGS TOGETHER OVER 50 PRACTITIONERS

This month, USAID-TAPP organized a joint nutrition workshop for Feed the Future partners that was conducted in Morogoro on March 25th – 27th, 2014. The main objective of the workshop was to bring together stakeholders to discuss how nutrition activities can be improved upon through interventions.

The workshop was comprised of sessions discussing how each implementing partner can contribute to the four pillars of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. By ensuring these four components are effectively integrated into activities, capacity is strengthened at the local level for good nutrition practices.

USAID Senior Adviser, Tom Hobgood, encouraged each implementing partner to ensure implementation of "nutrition sensitive interventions" that facilitate food production at home and improve food diversity, water sources, and sanitation. Part of the goal of the three day workshop was to ensure the interventions are met.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

At the field day in Zanzibar, USAID-TAPP participants learn about the modern techniques of planting watermelon.

The workshop focused on changing the behavior of individuals through effective communication, including issues related to working with rural communities and monitoring and evaluation of nutrition initiatives.

Mwanzo Bora a program funded by USAID/FtF which is aimed at improving nutritional status of children, pregnant and lactating women. A focus of the meeting was to help finalize their Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Kit for agricultural extension workers. Partners in attendance agreed to share relevant materials on facilitating nutrition availability to build on and improve the toolkit.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Dorothy Magesse, USAID-TAPP's Health and Nutrition Manager, explains home gardens to the workshop participants.

USAID MISSION DIRECTOR VISITS FARMERS GROUP IN IRINGA

In March, USAID Mission Director Sharon Cromer and delegates from USAID visited the Azimio Kitowo farmers group in Kilolo, Iringa. The plot was one of several stops in her tour of smallholder farmer activities. The envoy was also accompanied by Kilolo District Commissioner, Gerald Guninita.

"The American people will be glad to see the efforts done on the plots, this is a very good work" said Mission Director as she was talking with the farmers pleased with the efforts of Azimio Kitowo. In improving their living standards through farming the group has committed themselves in commercial farming through USAID-TAPP technologies.

On their plot, the group planted clean potato seed from Mtanga Farms, one of the firms coordinating activities with USAID-TAPP. Previously, most smallholder farmers were using local seeds which are vulnerable to diseases and pests. To avoid weak future harvests, USAID-TAPP is helping smallholder farmers access clean seed and improve their yields.

In addition to the farm visit, the Mission Director visited Mtanga Farms, a producer of clean Irish potato seed, maize, sweet potato and other crops. The party was able to see first-hand the technology being used to produce the clean seeds using a combination of greenhouses and open fields. The collaboration with Mtanga Farms has enabled smallholder farmers to grow disease-free potatoes in the Iringa region which gives the farmers over Tsh, 2,000,000 (\$1,534) in profits.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

USAID Mission Director Sharon Cromer poses with the Azimio Kitowo farmers group in their Irish potato plot in Kilolo District, Iringa.

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 for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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