

Monthly Update – December 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.

BALTON HOLDS TRAINING ON GAPs AND FARM INPUTS



Photo by Fintrac Inc
USAID-TAPP's Chesco Ng'ande teaches farmers how potato tubers can increase their yields at the Balton Tanzania training at Kisolanza.

On December 12th 2014, USAID-TAPP partner Balton Tanzania held their first field training on good agricultural practices and farm inputs with more than 100 smallholder farmers at their newly built facility in Kisolanza, Iringa.

With the assistance of USAID-TAPP technicians, the farmers were taken to different plots to learn about technologies and practices such as open field plots, greenhouses, water reservoirs, and farm inputs.

Madati A. Madati, chairman of Tomato and Vegetable Growers Group from Tanangozi Iringa, said that the training gave them new information about low cost water reservoirs and onion planters. "The water reservoir is very helpful in the dry seasons and the onion planter saves a lot of time, labor, and energy when planting onions which is very beneficial to smallholder farmers," said Madati.

Another smallholder farmer from Iringa, Magdalena Nyamolelo, said that the training on the net house and greenhouse gave her the motivation to work hard and acquire capital for the greenhouse. "Before joining USAID-TAPP in 2012 we used to harvest 60 to 100 boxes of tomatoes from less than an acre, but now we get more than 800 boxes from the same land. So when I get the greenhouse from Balton, I believe the yield will be more than 1,000 boxes of tomatoes," said Nyamolelo.

The training brought together farmers from different locations who exchanged ideas on techniques and the challenges they face in their respective areas. The introduction of the onion planter has encouraged many of the smallholder farmers to purchase the machine. The onion planter is a manually operated machine which assists the farmer to sow onion seeds by placing them along the raised bed. Currently, access to the onion planter is provided to farmers who purchase the hybrid seeds from Balton. Farmers who have already prepared their land will be able to try out the planter with no added cost so long as they return it to the center for other farmers to use.

Access to high-quality, affordable inputs is one of the main challenges facing farmers in Iringa. With assistance from USAID-TAPP, Balton Tanzania has opened this new center to provide these to farmers at affordable prices. Now farmers in Iringa have improved access to quality inputs and an opportunity to significantly increase their income by applying good agricultural practices.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS BENEFIT FROM IMO

Iringa Mercy Organization (IMO), one of USAID-TAPP's partners in Iringa, has successfully reached 5,700 community members and 270 orphans, vulnerable children, and people living with HIV/AIDS in Iringa in 2014. Through trainings and the development of home gardens, communities have increased their access to healthy foods and broadened their nutritional diversity.

IMO has successfully established 114 community gardens, 321 home gardens, and 179 individual gardens for beneficiaries in Iringa. This has increased vegetable consumption considerably in more than 4,000 households in Iringa.

Ombeni Sawike appreciates the continued efforts of IMO and USAID-TAPP in nutrition training and advice given to her through the group trainings. In 2014, she managed to establish her own demonstration plot of vegetables. The 0.25 acres of land has generated more than TZS 420,000 (\$262) from the sales of carrot, cabbage, sweet pepper, and other vegetables. "The training I have received has changed the nutritional habits of my home. Now we consume fresh vegetables from the small plot as well as generating income from it," said Sawike.

One of IMO's beneficiaries—Changalawe Group—established their own plot of cabbage, carrots, and Chinese cabbage which generated TZS 485,000 (\$303) from the harvests. The group has benefited from the nutrition trainings and demonstration plot training provided by IMO and USAID-TAPP nutrition specialists throughout the year.

Ubeni Group established a plot of carrot, sweet pepper, Chinese cabbage, kale-keeper (sukuma wiki), orange-fleshed sweet potato, and spinach. The harvests were for home consumption among the group members and the excess produce was sold to the community which earned the group more than TZS 271,000 (\$159).

IMO looks forward to increase the number of beneficiaries in the coming year.



Photo by Fintrac Inc

Farmers chat with a representative from IMO after a nutrition training at their farm on the outskirts of 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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