

VBAAs in Mvomero district establish businesses to help small-holder farmers gain access to the appropriate yield-enhancing farm inputs

Update: August 2015

With assistance of the NAFKA Programme, FIPS-Africa has developed the capacity of 50 Village-based Agricultural Advisors (VBAAAs) in Mvomero district to promote the appropriate farm inputs (e.g. seed of SARO 5 rice variety, fertilizer, herbicides) to advise farmers how to improve their rice crop productivity.

As a result of the promotions, demand for inputs has increased. VBAAAs are taking advantage of increased demand by producing and selling Quality Declared Seed (QDS) of improved rice varieties, and opening farm input shops to supply seed, fertilizer, and crop protection chemicals to farmers in their Villages.

Melkioli Muhagama is a VBAA who is advising more than 500 farmers in Dihinda village in Mvomero district. He has distributed small (100 g) packs of seed of the improved SARO 5 (TXD306) variety to enable farmers to experiment with the variety on their own farms in a low risk way. He has also advised farmers on how to apply the *Yara Mila Cereal* fertilizer, and herbicides (pre- and post-emergent), and how to improve seed spacing (20 cm x 20 cm). These interventions are helping farmers to improve their rice crop productivity by up to 400 % (from 5 to 20 (100 kg) bags per acre).



To meet the demand for inputs in his village, he opened a shop to supply his farmers (image left). He is selling a wide range of products including seed, fertilizers and agrochemicals. FIPS-Africa has linked him to input companies to empower him access the inputs demanded by farmers in his village.

Image: Melkioli at his shop in Mvomero district.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Melkioli has also been taught how to produce Quality-declared seed (QDS) of improved rice varieties to sell to farmers in his Village. In the 2015 growing season, he planted 2 acres of the SARO 5 variety to produce QDS for sale to farmers in his Village (see image left). He expects to harvest at least 4000 kg. If he sells the seed for TZS 1,500 per kg, he will earn TZS 6,000,000 (USD 3,000). He says that the

demand for the seed is so high that in the 2015-16 planting season, he is planning to increase the size of his QDS farm from 2 to 5 acres.

Mr. Samuel Fabian is another VBAA who is advising about 600 farmers in Lukenge village in Mvomero district. He is producing seed of QDS of improved rice varieties over 3 acres (1 and 2 acres of the Supa and SARO 5 varieties, respectively). He estimates he will harvest at least 25 bags of seed per acre (approximately 7500 kg). If he sells the seed for TZS 1500 per kg, then he will earn TZS 11,250,000 (USD 5625). Samuel has also recently opened a shop to sell inputs to farmers in his Village. T

These activities have increased his household income and he is now able to meet most of the needs of his family.



Images: Samuel at his shop (left), and at his farm (right) where he is producing QDS.