

Village-based Agricultural Advisors in Kongwa and Kiteto districts continue to help farmers to gain access to farm inputs in their Villages

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Before the start of the NAFKA Programme, farm input shops existed in only the large towns in Kongwa and Kiteto districts, and farmers would have to travel long distances at great expense to access them. As a result most farmers did not use improved seeds.

Following NAFKA's interventions to rapidly create demand for improved early-maturing and high-yielding maize varieties using FIPS-Africa's small pack methodology, 17 self-employed Village-based Agricultural Advisors (VBAs) in Kongwa and Kiteto districts have established shops to sell farm inputs to small-

holder farmers in their Villages.

The NAFKA Programme also trained VBAs in Business skills and entrepreneurship that helped them to become agro-input dealers. They were also taught to advise farmers on how to use the inputs that they promoted.

Pendael Manupa, the former Kongwa District Coordinator, has emerged to become a wholesaler of farm inputs in Kibaigwa market, and he supplies inputs to VBAs in both Kongwa and Kiteto districts. He is trusted by most partner private sector farm inputs suppliers, who supply him with inputs on credit.



Pendael has been creating demand for seeds by distributing small (50-100 g) sample packs of seed to help farmers to experiment with the new varieties on small plots on their own farms with little risk. This has enabled him to get a lot of customers who are buying inputs from him directly or through VBAs. Now Pendael is a major distributor for inputs and is supplied by companies such as Bytrade, Monsanto, Seedco, Pannar, Iffa Seed, and East West Seed Co.. Companies provide their inputs on credit and Pendael pays them after he sells.

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"I am not only motivated by profit but by a passion for helping my community". He added "farmers are happy and enjoying a bumper harvest which is enabling them to produce enough food for their families and an income from selling their surplus".

This 2015/6 season, Pendaël sold a total of 45,000 kg of seed of improved maize varieties and 30,000 kg of fertilizers direct to farmers and through VBAs in Kongwa and Kiteto districts.

Restuta Mteweke is a VBA from Hembahemba village in Kongwa district who is supplied by Pendaël. She is serving over 1,500 farmers in Hembahemba and nearby Njonge villages. She sells improved maize seeds, fertilizers, herbicides and farm equipment like knapsack sprayers, and hoes.

The VBA believes that more farmers are visiting and buying inputs from her because they get all the necessary information and practical training on how to use them. Last year, Restuta was invited to display maize and fertilizers at the annual agricultural trade fair in Morogoro, commonly known as "Nane-Nane". Restuta started with a capital of TZS 200,000 (USD 87) in her small shop and now has a stock worth TZS 3 Million (USD 1304). She gets inputs on credit from Pendaël which she sells on commission.



Images: Michael Mhila (left) is VBA for Songambe A and Mayasa Ally (right) is VBA for Songambe B village (Kongwa district). Both of them are supplied with inputs by Pendaël.



Images: Yohana Isaya (left) is the Ndurugumi VBAA in Kongwa who is supplying inputs to over 500 small-holder farmers. In 2015/6 season, the VBAA sold 1,400 kg of improved maize varieties and fertilizers supplied to him by Pendael. Enock Magawa (right), Silwa VBAA in Kongwa says that "I am getting a lot of respect in the village because of selling inputs to farmers and advising them how to use them".



Images: Neema Urassa (left), Kibaya VBAA in Kiteto, is another Wholesaler who supplies inputs to 15 VBAAAs who do not yet have shops but are getting orders from small-holder farmers in their villages. Hawa Munga (right) of Kaloleni village in Kiteto district displays seeds she is selling in her village. She expects to sell more inputs next season because she has expanded her advice and services to new villages.

Due to the interventions of the VBAAAs, thousands of farmers are benefiting from increasing their maize crop productivity after adopting the improved varieties and good agricultural practices. Below are some of the farmers who purchased seed of improved varieties from, and who were trained in good agricultural practices by, their VBAAAs.

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Images: Eliah Ehudi (left), a farmer from Majawanga village in Kongwa district planted the PAN15 variety. Esther Sailowa (right) from Majawanga village planted the WH505 variety.



Images: Moleni Magawa (left), a farmer from Silwa village in Kongwa district, planted the SC403 variety. Elina Petro (right) from Silwa village planted the DK8031 variety. They purchased seeds from Enock Magawa, the Silwa VBAA.

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Images: Mpendwa Chiloleti (left) from Lenjuru Village in Kongwa district planted the PAN4M-21 variety. Deo Fredson (right) planted an acre with seed of the DKC80-53 variety. They bought seeds from Emmanuel Chinugula, their VBAA.



Images: Yohana Nembelo (left), a farmer from Lengaji village in Kongwa district, in his plot planted with the PAN4M-19 variety. Betina Chisuligwe (right) from Lengaji village planted the DKC90-89 variety.