

Tractor Training and Research Program (TTARP) Update

The TTARP is a comprehensive training in areas for industry facing skills for SUA students, graduates, farmers, and agripreneurs. In Tanzania today, 70% of crop producing areas is cultivated by hand hoe, 20% by oxen ploughs, and only 10% by tractors. Tanzania is estimated to have about 2 tractors per 1,000 hectares of land against the global average of 19.7 tractors per 1,000 hectares. Many of the existing tractors in Tanzania are in disrepair, creating a need for not only qualified tractor owners/operators, but for farmers, entrepreneurs, and extension agents to be trained in their care.

The targeted skills and knowledge transfer of agricultural mechanization to the participants is an important advancement in increasing farmer productivity, entrepreneurship opportunities, and increasing incomes. The added capacity of the youth, women, farmers, and students participating in the TTARP is part of our commitment to improve agricultural efficiency and food security in Tanzania. The following is an update on the activities of the TTARP and some impressions of the first participants to be involved in the program.



2016 Launch Event

The launch of the Tractor Training and Research Program (TTARP) on April 1, 2016 was a success and marks an important advancement and achievement of all stakeholders involved. Nearly 300 participants attended the event and official handover ceremony. The event was a successful demonstration of the ownership and collaboration of the initiative's stakeholders, a characteristic of the program that we aim to continue throughout its implementation.

TTARP Boot Camp and Training Sessions

Agricultural mechanization is an important element in the strategy to improve food security in Tanzania. The ability of youth to pursue opportunities harnessing the potential of technology, skills, and knowledge and combine these with business skills such as marketing, accounting, and sales. To this end, the first three modules included:

- Developing a business plan
- Marketing and sales strategy
- Financial management and record keeping

Facilitators of the program found that the majority of the participants did not have an understanding of markets and marketing principles from a business point of view. These skills were targeted in order to improve the participants' awareness of how to successfully market their business following the initial skill

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acquisition to fully harness their understanding of how agricultural mechanization can tap into existing markets and feed into the agriculture sector of Tanzania.

The Participants

A total of 120 participants were engaged in this first round of training sessions. These included 90 students, 8 farmers, and 6 MALF staff selected for the first cohort of training. Of these 120 individuals, a targeted group of 60 participants were trained on **setting up and running Agricultural Contracting Services** through intensive training over the course of six days. In addition, 50 participants were trained on **project sales and practical knowledge of tractor implements**. The aim of the targeted selection of participants was to ensure that the trainees are provided with significant knowledge or skills conducted with a planned, structured curriculum and have the greatest potential acquire new knowledge or skills that s/he can translate into action. The following are some quotes from the TTARP participants on what they learned and how this will improve their agricultural practices.

“I now know how to prepare a business plan and have acquired knowledge of off-season planning to maximize the season’s activities” **Josiah Mwemezi**

“We never knew that we can measure the pH of the soil. We were surprised. The calibration of the planter was great training.” **Simon Rwegayura**

“I have learned how to use and handle implements with care and with minimal cost. The whole course has added value to my farming practices.” **Anna Kowange**



Participants were trained in practical areas of agricultural mechanization including:

- Planter calibration
- Boom sprayer calibration
- Soil preparation/ploughing
- Conservation agriculture (CA)
- Tractor implements for CA
- Maintenance and safety on equipment

Next Steps

The iAGRI Team, SUA, USAID, LonAgro, and John Deere are committed to providing opportunities for follow-up training and linkages with other initiatives in the future to help participants to reach their full potential as farmers, contractors, and agripreneurs. The TTARP is an investment in individuals with the aim to improve agricultural mechanization in Tanzania, a critical component of addressing food security, improving livelihoods, and increasing incomes.

In order to fully realize the impact and return on investment of the training, we will continue to assess the feedback from the training as well as gathering information and data on how the participants have utilized their newly developed skills in their work. The Boot Camp and subsequent sessions are the first of what we hope will be many training sessions as part of the TTARP carried out in close cooperation with the program’s partners, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, SAGCOT, TPSF, and COSTECH.

Tutaweza Pamoja!

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