



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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Feed the Future Helps Smallholder Farmers in Tanzania Access Water



Fintrac Inc.

Technicians in Tanzania use low-cost hand drilling techniques to install tube wells for irrigation.

Consistent access to water can make all the difference in the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Investments to improve water access technologies and infrastructure in Tanzania have opened the door to year-round crop production, resulting in a big payoff for smallholder farmers.

A U.S. Agency for International Development program under the Feed the Future initiative works with teams of skilled young men to install shallow wells that ensure farmers have reliable water sources. The teams use low-cost hand drilling techniques that require limited materials and construction time. Costs are shared between the program and farmers, with the program providing technical expertise and other specialized services, while farmers provide additional labor and materials. Farmers then make subsequent investments in pumps and irrigation systems.

With these investments, farmers can expect income of more than \$2000 per acre from just one horticultural crop cycle – a return that far exceeds the initial cost of installing the wells.

Members of the Kazi Yangu Farmer Group have already seen firsthand the benefits of dry-season production. Group chairman Daniel Ntili sees their new well as the game-changer: “We have left our old practices behind. We don’t wait for the rains anymore, because dry-season production is where you find the real profits.”

Other farmers can use water from nearby springs or streams, but inconsistent access leads to plant stress and underuse of potentially productive farmland. To reclaim these missed opportunities, 241 farmers have invested about \$8,500 worth of labor to install small-scale reservoirs on underutilized farmland for their 14 group sites. The reservoirs allow for use of drip irrigation systems, which maximize the efficiency of water use and alleviate farmers’ labor burden by allowing for direct application of fertilizers.

For the most entrepreneurial farmers, this stimulates additional investment. Soon after their reservoir was installed, two farmers from Upendo Inyala Farmer Group invested \$8,110 to purchase 6.5 hectares of nearby farmland, which will be irrigated by the reservoir. They plan to reinvest profits from their first production cycle to build their own reservoirs so other members can get the same head start on production.

Introduction of these water technologies and adoption of good agricultural practices have improved productivity and reduced water use and stress on unconverted farmland. With horticulture becoming a profitable business, smallholder farmers in

Tanzania will continue reaping the benefits made possible from improved access to water and other environmentally sensitive agricultural investments under Feed the Future.