

MVIWATA Newsletter #48



CAPACITY BUILDING TO LEADERS OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS GROUPS THROUGH TRAININGS.



From Top left: MVIWATA Executive Director Mr, Stephen Ruvuga addressing smallholder farmers' participants of training. Top Right: Ms, Theodora Pius, MVIWATA, training officer facilitating training to participants at MVIWATA Headquarters.

Smallholder farmers in Tanzania constitutes about sixty eight percent of the workforce in farming, both in rural and urban areas. However, eighty three percent of all holdings are run by small family farmers who dominate the agricultural sector by contributing around seventy five percent of the total agricultural output. Livestock, poultry and fishing play an important role in the economy of a Tanzanian small family farm; the second source of income.

Smallholder farmers are placed at the centre of almost all agricultural policies and strategies in Tanzania, and in order to effectively utilise such opportunities and overcome structural and policy challenges, smallholder farmers' awareness as a working class towards impediments they face is really vital.

To effect this role of awareness creation and capacity building to smallholder farmers leaders, Mtandao wa Vikundi Tanzania (MVIWATA) a member based organization is organizing trainings to leaders of farmers groups at regional and district levels.

The trainings focuses on mobilising and leading farmers groups, advocacy at grassroots level, understanding the essence of class struggles in the society, political economy and modes of production, the philosophy, vision and mission of MVIWATA, government strategies and priorities in agriculture and lastly smallholder farmers' formation and management of financial services (VICOBA and SACCOS).

Speaking before Morogoro District Commissioner Hon, Regina Chonjo during a closure of six days training to 42 smallholder farmers from Dodoma, Manyara and Morogoro regions organized at MVIWATA Headquarters, MVIWATA Executive Director Mr, Stephen Ruvuga said such trainings are party of MVIWATA's strategy to capacitate smallholder farmers with awareness of issues surrounding their production systems. [More >>>>](#)



Hon, Regina Chonjo, Morogoro District Commissioner addressing smallholder farmers' participants of the training during her visit at MVIWATA Headquarters.

LAND LAWS, POLICY AND GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING TO SMALLHOLDER FARMERS.



Top Left; Advocate, Jasper Sabuni facilitating a training on land use planning to smallholder farmers. Top right: Advocate, Kuyunga Yango, MVIWATA Legal officer facilitating a training on land disputes settlement procedures.

Land remains a major means of production in all walks of life. Been the major means of production, land has attracted interests to people from all scopes of sectors thereby leading to disputes in areas where proper understanding of land laws and policy is minimal

or absent at all.

Smallholder farmers who reside in rural areas are the most prone and vulnerable to land disputes due to lack of awareness on land laws and policies.

In recognition of this challenge MVIWATA has been organising various training related to land rights, laws and policies and gender equality to smallholder farmers residing in rural areas and who are involved in production of various produces through their groups so that they may know their land rights and defend.

A training to 21 smallholder farmers from Kondoa and Kiteto Districts (10 women, 11 men) whereby 30 percent were youth was conducted at MVIWATA Headquarters for seven (7) days. This one week training was preceded by a training on preventive measures against the COVID-19 disease to participants by a medical doctor. [More >>>>](#)



A group photo of smallholder farmers and trainers after completion of six days training on land laws, policy and gender equality held at MVIWATA Headquarters.

MVIWATA'S STATEMENT ON COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE PEASANT'S STRUGGLE. 17th APRIL 2020.

Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA) joined hand with the world wide

movement of small-holder producers in commemorating the International Day of the Peasant's Struggle.

The International Day of the Peasant's Struggle celebrated on the 17th day of April each year reckons the memory of the 19 farmers killed by the Brazilian state whilst defending their rights to their land.

We, smallholder farmers, being the main national producers of food hereby unite with the small-holder producers worldwide in offering our condolences to the families and friends of those who have lost their dear ones and to all those hit and affected by the COVID_19 pandemic.

This catastrophe, bearing no boundaries, affecting the urban and rural residents reminds us of our long due and essential urge and call to the governments on strengthening and improving the social services such as health, water, education, extension services, communication and infrastructure in both the rural and urban areas. We insist on the government to ensure for the equitable distribution and refrain from continued commoditization of the respective essential services.

In this time when the world pleads more for solidarity, we are more than saddened by the trends, actions and inactions of some of the states, led by the United States of America, who keep on extending economic embargoes to states like Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Cuba, Iran and Palestine. Such a stance not only intensifies the economic hardships in the respective victim states, but also it derails the collective efforts in tackling and dealing with this COVID_19 pandemic.

Specifically however, we are more than disappointed by the recent action of the government of the United States of America of withdrawing its financial support to the World Health Organization (WHO) in this time when all resources is required in preserving our lives and livelihoods against COVID_19. We are however adamant that other states and non state actors shall uphold to the task in support of the WHO and further ensure that the economic embargoes and financial withdrawals are lifted for the sake of promoting our welfare.

Moreover, we again plead to the government of the United Republic of Tanzania to further uphold and champion for the realization of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas](#), adopted late in 2018 and supported by the government with an approval vote. We insist that the government take note of the contents therein and incorporate such in our policies and ensure on their implementation.

As small-holder farmers we are dedicated:

- To stand in solidarity and support of the health care providers and all the working people in the forefront battling against this pandemic – COVID_19.
- To further understand on the origin and history of the peasants and essential producers worldwide and strengthen our learning system to adhere to our actual environment and realities.
- To continue engaging in production that respects and preserves the environment.
- To denounce exploitative and oppressive production systems that expropriate the knowledge and resources of the farmers and instead champion for a less nutrient food system.

- To keep on taking precaution against the COVID_19 pandemic and raise our voice against all the ills directed to and affecting the welfare of the working people worldwide.

#STAYHOMEBUTNOTSILENT

The Defender of the Farmer is the Farmer

CASHEW NUT DISTRESS TO FARMERS CONTINUE IN LIWALE AND MKURANGA DISTRICTS.



A cashew nut farm in Liwale District, Lindi Region.

Cashew nut production in Tanzania provides up to fifteen percent of foreign currency and ranks fourth in Africa. Tanzania has been engaged in the production of the cash crop since before independence however, poor regulation and lack of reliable payments to farmers have posed significant challenges to the Cashew Nut farming industry in Tanzania.

The cash crop is usually cultivated in the southern coastal regions of the country, specifically in Mtwara, Lindi and Dar es Salaam regions. The south has always been a major producer.

The origin of the seed, however, was in South America, particularly Brazil. The Portuguese brought it from here to Europe. They also introduced it to Tanzania in the 1500s. The sale and marketing of the product in Tanzania is run by the Cashewnut Board of Tanzania, through various farmer co-operatives.

In April 2020 Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA) members in

Mtwara, Lindi and Pwani regions met and organized a meeting among themselves to discuss and resolve cashew nut challenges they face. MVIWATA members in such regions are producers of cashew nut and also members of farmer co-operatives.

Meetings were organized in Liwale, Masasi, Newala and Mkuranga Districts by famers accompanied by MVIWATA staffs. In these meetings critical challenges facing cashew nut producers were revealed and discussed in Liwale and Mkuranga Districts. These challenges ranged from local farmers' co-operatives, main co-operatives, and government interventions in cashew nut market.

Lack of on-time delivery of bags for storage of cashew nut and sluggish with inefficient system of cashew nut collection in local farmers co-operatives, sabotage of farmers through changing of cashew nut grades without their presence and approval and late payments for cashew nuts already sold in collective markets, were revealed as critical challenges that needs immediate solutions in Liwale District, Lindi region for sustainable production. [More >>>](#)



Hon. Omari Mgumba, Deputy Minister for Agriculture in a consultative meeting over cashew nut challenges facing farmers with MVIWATA Chairperson Mr, Abdul Gea (left) and MVIWATA Executive Director Mr, Stephen Ruvuga (right).

TRAINING OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS ON FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT OF MICROFINANCE SERVICES (VICOBA & SACCOS).



Top left, MVIWATA Executive Director, Mr Stephen Ruvuga addressing smallholder farmers participants of the training during the opening session. Top left, Mr Remy Urio, MVIWATA officer responsible for Marketing and Financial services facilitating the training held at MVIWATA Headquarters.

A training to 20 smallholder farmers from Morogoro, Dodoma and Manyara was organised and effected by MVIWATA for six days. The training focused on creating awareness and capacity building to smallholder farmers' promoters in formation and management of microfinance services by smallholder farmers in their respective areas.

Trainings to promoters of formation and management of microfinance services of smallholder farmers is part of strategies of MVIWATA to capacitate smallholder farmers with skills and knowledge in forming and managing their microfinance services like Village Community Banks (VICOBA) and Servings and Credit Co-Operative Society (SACCOS).

Speaking during the opening remarks, Mr. Stephen Ruvuga a MVIWATA Executive Director said, having microfinance services formed and managed by smallholder farmers themselves is a reliable alternative against exploitative financial systems of commercial banks to smallholder farmers and the working class at large.

He further urged smallholder farmers to be honest and protect at all cost their micro-financial services because failure to that, they will always be dragged to adhere to exploitative systems of commercial banks. [More >>>](#)



Participants of the training on formation and management of microfinance services of smallholder farmers (VICOBA and SACCOS) sharing their experience during the training.

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ORGANIZED TO DISCUSS AND RESOLVE CHALLENGES FACING NYANDIRA MARKET.



Pictured above are smallholder farmers members of MVIWATA and stakeholders discussing to resolve Nyandira market challenges.

Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA) organized a consultative meeting at Nyandira, Mvomero District, between members of MVIWATA to discuss and thereby resolve market operation & management challenges facing the Market that has hindered smooth, safe and sustainable benefits to smallholder producers in the respective areas.

Nyandira market is located about 50kms from Morogoro town, north of Uluguru Mountain, in Mgeta area. It is managed by a market board, established under the partnership between MVIWATA and Tchenzema SACCO (the owners and chief regulators of the company), and in agreement with Mvomero District Council. The produce sold in Nyandira market is mainly composed of vegetables and fruits.

Nyandira Market is one of the ten markets constructed by MVIWATA, other markets includes Kibaigwa, Tandai, Tawa, Igurusi, Mkata, Kasanga, Matai, Igagala and Malolo.

The overall potential impact of these markets is that most of the producers and traders are committed and willing to use them because they open up vast economic benefits to the producers, traders and the local government. The markets are creating business opportunities around markets, creating employment to the local populations as well as in the whole marketing chain.

Moreover markets have provided important links and ingredients to Tanzanian government strategy to promote agriculture and gain revenues through tax collections.

Nyandira market is facing governance and management challenges where by the day to day management of the market is lacking due to inefficient performance of the market board and Mvomero district council.

Currently among the services that are inefficiently available at the market are Buying and selling of agricultural crops and manufactured goods, Having the day's price information at the disposal of the rural farmers and traders, Weighing of crops prior to being sold,

Cleaning and drying of crops, Storage of sold and unsold produce, Security for farmers and their goods, Access to eating places, clean water and toilet facilities within the market, albeit at a small fee, Availability of other products within the market which farmers can use their earned money to buy, such as clothes and flour. This has led to the lack of collection of revenues from market stakeholders using the market infrastructures. [More >>>](#)

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