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Soya ni Pesa

FARMERS IN TANZANIA REALIZE MULTIPLE BENEFITS FROM SOYBEAN PRODUCTION

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), in collaboration with local partners, is implementing the five-year Soya ni Pesa project. Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Soya ni Pesa aims to increase productivity and expand trade for agricultural products in Tanzania. The project is implemented in three regions of Tanzania - Ruvuma, Njombe and Morogoro. The project has reached over 14,000 male and female soybean producers of different age groups in its first four years.

As a result of this project, soybean has increasingly becoming one of the high potential cash crops to small holder farmers in Tanzania and has been attracting the government of Tanzania and local and international investors and donors.

The project mobilizes farmers into producer groups, trains them on Skills for Marketing and Rural Transformation (SMART), which include group organization and management, financial management, sustainable production, marketing, and innovation. Over 140 demonstration plots were set throughout the project's three regions to demonstrate to farmers on use of improved techniques and technologies such as appropriate spacing, use of improved seeds, rhizobia and fertilizers, crop rotation and timely weeding. The project promotes soybean-maize rotation as a means of improving soil condition and yield and about 5,000 farmers have been practicing rotation of soybeans with maize. Through application of crop rotation farmers have increased maize production and been able to improve their food and livelihood security and income in general.



HEZRON MHAHDLIZA

Hezron Mhahdliza is a farmer in Tagamenda village in Njombe. He is married and has six children, three of whom are already independent and three who are still living with him. Through Soya ni Pesa, Mr. Hezron joined Mshikamano group. He is one of the farmers who has benefited from participating in Soya ni Pesa. Mr Hezron said:

“I joined Soya ni Pesa project in 2013 after learning about it during a sensitization meeting and that the crop could be a cash crop to us replacing maize; we can keep maize as a food crop to enable us have enough food throughout the year. I decided to start with giving my 1.5 acre farm as a demonstration farm for soybeans production so that we can lean together with my fellow farmers. After learning in 2014/2015 I decided to use it for maize production; I could not believe the results because normally I get up to four bags of 200 kg on every acre of maize but this time I got twice that and harvested 2,400 kg from 1.5 acre. I have learnt that apart from being able to double maize production by just doing crop rotation, soybean has a known market, and its cost of production is low compared to other crops so it is a good source of income to us smallholder farmers. I have decided to sensitize more farmers to join production of soybeans and make sure that they rotate soybean with maize production so that we can increase yield for the two crops. We were only 42 farmers last year but now we are 110 farmers at Tagamenda because I want them to enjoy project benefits like me. From last production season I kept two bags of maize for family consumption and 100Kgs of soybean for seeds. From sales of maize and soybean I got TZS 1,830,000 (\$870) which enabled me to paint my house, buy a solar pannel, pay school fees for my children and pay for production costs like purchase of fertilizer, herbicides and labour costs.”





Ujasiriamali SILC group showing their Community Health Fund member card. Photo by Philemon Chiputa/CRS

The project also facilitated the formation of 969 Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) groups in the three regions that have 21,135 member farmers, whom are 72% women. The farmers were trained on savings, loans and financial management skills and facilitated to save and lend monies from their groups. These SILC groups have saved a total of \$797,589 and provided loans of over \$900,000 to their members (loans are shorter than the savings cycle) over the four years. 301 groups have been linked with financial institutions and have bank accounts where they safely deposit their savings and also take loans when their internal funds are not sufficient.

Ujasiriamali is a SILC group in Msimba village, Kilosa District, Morogoro region. The 22-member group saved TZS 7,000,000 (\$3,330) in one cycle (9-12 months) and generated a social fund of TZS 500,000 (\$238). At the completion of the savings cycle, the group shared-out their main savings and decided not to share the social fund. Instead, they used the social fund to join a National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) in order to make sure all its members are getting medical services. Through a Community Health Fund (CHF), the group joined the NHIF and in 2015 all members and their dependents started accessing medical services.

When asked about how they feel regarding their decision to join the health insurance scheme, Theresia Maulid, a member of Ujasiriamali group and a mother of four said: *“As members of Community Health Fund we feel so valued, we have been given priority in getting medical services and we have been accessing all needed services like consultation and medicine. We are happy because before joining the scheme we used to pay TZS 2,000 (\$0.95) every time we wanted the services but ended up getting only pain killers; now we get all the services. Even better, we are served together with our loved ones and dependents. I am now not stressed when my kids get ill, because I can easily take them to the dispensary and get treated”.*

SOYA NI PESA SO FAR

- **143 demonstration plots** and **3,765 farmers' trials** were established and used to educate farmers on improved soybean production techniques and technologies.
- **410 producer groups** have been organized with 9,477 members (3,580 women), trained on improved soybean production and supplied with inputs for trial and selection of best performing varieties.
- CRS facilitated the bulking and selling of **3,003 MT of soybeans**, generating approximately \$1.4 million revenue to about 5,000 farmers (38% women).
- **2,500 poultry enterprises** have been established (1,721 are owned by women). They generated a revenue of approximately \$203,900 from sale of eggs and cocks.
- **969 SILC groups** have been organized with 21,135 members (73% women). Value of members' accumulated savings: \$797,000; value of disbursed loans: \$900,000.



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Photos by Denista Mbawala, Caritas Songea, for CRS

Sesilia Nyoni, who grew up in Hanga village, Namtumbo district, is 51 years old, married and has one female child. She joined Ukombozi SILC group in 2014. Sesilia saved TZS 100,000 (\$47) in the group. She took a loan of TZS 90,000 (\$45) with 5% interest to her SILC group and bought a soybean processing machine. She started a business of processing soybean milk. She also used other ingredients like vanilla, sugar and salt. She sells one liter of soybean milk at TZS 1,000 (\$0.47). She is also selling *mandazi*, *chapatti* and bread by mixing soybean with other ingredients. Since she started this business, she has earned profits of TZS 308,000 (\$147). She used 20% of her profit on domestic expenses, 40% for savings in her SILC group and the remaining 40% for soybean farming. From last season she managed to harvest 480kgs of soybean and sold 370kgs and kept 110kgs for processing soybean products. From the sale she received TZS 370,000 (\$176) and used TZS 100,000 (\$47) for her child's education and TZS 140,000 (\$67) to make bricks for constructing poultry coops and establish a home garden; the rest she saved for the next season soybean farming. Sesilia is happy with the support she has received from Soya ni Pesa as it has improved the livelihood of her family through increased income and improved nutrition.

She is thankful to Soya ni Pesa project for supporting communities to organize themselves and form soybean production and SILC groups. She said: *"Thanks to Caritas Songea because now I can manage my life and my family and this makes me respected and valued in the community"*.

