



Feed the Future iAGRI Project Update

April-September 2014



iAGRI operates in Tanzania within Feed the Future, the US Government's global hunger and food security initiative. Feed the Future works to improve food security under the guidelines of Tanzania's CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program) Compact, prepared by the Government of Tanzania in 2010. Primary stakeholders of iAGRI are Sokoine University of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Research System of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Cooperatives. For more details see www.iagri.org.

Delivering Degree Training. iAGRI now has 130 post-graduate students in training or already graduated. Many are staff persons from SUA and MAFC, while others are from local governments, NGOs, and the private sector. **Cohort 1:** the last of the 6 MSc students in this cohort has now completed his degree. **Cohort 2,** the 29 MSc students in this cohort are now finishing their thesis writing and some have already defended; the 19 PhD students in this cohort are at various stages of coursework, data gathering, and analysis in the US and Tanzania. **Cohort 3:** the 26 MSc students in this cohort are now finishing course work, and those studying outside Tanzania are preparing to return for fieldwork. **Cohort 4:** the 59 students in this cohort are about to begin studies; 26 are studying at iAGRI Consortium universities in the US, 10 at African universities outside Tanzania, 9 at SUA, and 4 in India (Punjab Agricultural University).

Sponsoring Collaborative Research. 8 iAGRI-funded collaborative research projects involving teams of researchers from SUA, MAFC, and iAGRI Consortium universities have delivered their 2nd progress report and have reached the halfway mark. Topics include rice productivity, crop nutritive content, conservation agriculture, tomato productivity, drip irrigation, and maize extension. iAGRI has recently commissioned new collaborative research projects on rice marketing and maize productivity and is in the process of developing a project on agricultural risk management.

Building Institutional Capacity. iAGRI builds institutional capacity at SUA through collaborative "organizational experiments" that engage partners throughout the university. These collaborative learning activities provide SUA personnel at all levels opportunities to adaptively seek and implement "new ways that work" in the production and delivery of educational and research services. Hands-on experience with organizational innovations paves the way for changes in formal processes and structures to help SUA become a more effective incubator of economic growth in Tanzania. Below is a description of 4 "organizational experiments" (out of a total of 16) underway at SUA:

- **Innovation Portfolio.** iAGRI's Innovation Portfolio aims to match "research demand" with "research supply" by coaching researchers at SUA and the Ohio State University Consortium on how to engage with the private sector to conduct research commissioned and funded by businesses. Currently, iAGRI is brokering dialogue between 6 companies and SUA researchers on research projects designed to address knowledge needs of these companies.
- **Sokoine University Graduate Entrepreneurs Cooperative.** SUGECO was begun by SUA staff as a cooperative in 2011 to train young entrepreneurs, place interns in businesses, link entrepreneurs with credit providers, conduct entrepreneurship workshops, and advocate for improved business policies in Tanzania. iAGRI has provided technical assistance to SUGECO to develop a strategy for organizational sustainability. For the next year, iAGRI has agreed to provide funds to SUGECO for two professional staff persons, an Executive Director and Operations Manager. These staff persons will help SUGECO develop and implement entrepreneurship programs that generate revenue so that SUGECO can self-sufficiently cover the costs of staff and operations.
- **Commercial Horticulture Unit** – SUA, iAGRI, TAPP (another USAID Feed the Future project), and Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA) have joined together to create a Commercial Horticulture Facility within the Horticulture Section of the Department of Crop Science and Production at SUA for practical demonstration and training for the commercial horticulture industry. iAGRI is providing funding for a Coordinator and Farm Manager for the first 6 months, after which the Facility will be sustained by revenues from commercial sale of horticultural produce.
- **Convocation** – with iAGRI's assistance, SUA Convocation is implementing a new strategy of communication with its alumni throughout Tanzania and the world. The Chief Operating Officer of the Ohio State University Alumni Association visited SUA for a week to help the Executive Council of Convocation develop the strategy.

Strengthening Tanzania's International Linkages. iAGRI sponsored 3 SUA staff members, two of whom are SUA administrators, to attend the biennial conference in Maputo, Mozambique of Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). RUFORUM, headquartered in Kampala, Uganda, has 43 university members in Eastern and Southern Africa and has become an important mobilizer of initiatives and funding for agricultural higher education in Africa. Three presentations at the conference featured joint activities of iAGRI and SUA.

Facilitating Outreach. iAGRI was an exhibitor at Morogoro Nane Nane Agricultural Show, where iAGRI student trainees and collaborative researchers demonstrated technologies or methods developed in their research on soil moisture and water control in drip irrigation, tomato grafting for drought tolerance and disease resistance, weaning foods fortified with orange-flesh sweet potato, and improved grain storage. iAGRI staff persons also visited Nane Nane show locations in Dodoma and Arusha to market the Innovation Portfolio to companies with applied research needs.