

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE THIRD PHASE GOVERNMENT 1995 - 2005

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture occupies a very important place in the lives of Tanzanians as well the national economy. It provides full time employment to over 70 per cent of the population as well as the bulk of the food we consume. It is estimated that Tanzania enjoys 100.55 per cent self-sufficiency in food and, in better years, is a net exporter of grains and cereals.

Agriculture's contribution to GNP averages 50 per cent while bringing in approximately 66 per cent of foreign exchange apart from providing raw materials for local industries.

Available data indicates that rural Tanzanians are poorer than their urban compatriots, and since agriculture is the main activity there, it can be used to alleviate poverty in the country. For the sector to fulfil its role of feeding the nation and fighting poverty, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security estimates that it must grow by 10 per cent annually.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FROM 1995 TO 2005

The sector has grown at an average of 3.1 per cent per annum in the past two decades. Policies and strategies to develop the sector designed by Government in collaboration with investors have made it possible for agriculture to embark on an impressive growth rate from 1999. The following data shows this increasing trend with the growth rates in brackets: 1999 (4.1%), 2000 (3.4%), 2001 (5.5%), 2000 (5.0%), 2003 (4.0%), and 2004 (6.0%). Bad weather did affect the growth of the sector.

In 1997, the ministry completed preparation of the National Policy on Agriculture and Livestock as a guideline to agricultural activities in a free market environment, which led to the formation of endorsement by Government of The Strategy to Develop the Agricultural Sector in August 2001, a major step in implementing the Policy on Agriculture and Livestock as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategic Programme (PRSP). District authorities and crop marketing boards have similarly completed preparations of their own development strategies. Achievements made in Agriculture are as follows:

IRRIGATION

In September 2002, the ministry completed the preparation of the national Irrigation Master Plan. Tanzania boasts of 29.0 million hectares suitable for irrigation, out of which 2.3m ha have highly development potential, 4.8m ha of medium development potential and 22.3m ha of low development potential. A total of 227,486 ha had been developed for irrigation by 2003/04, with 143,000 ha expected to be covered in 2005/06.

Government through the District Agriculture Development Programme (DADPs) has set aside in FY 2005/06 Tsh 181.09m, equivalent to 5 per cent of the total DADPs budget for irrigation. Comparative figures for areas developed for irrigation are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Comparative figures for areas developed for irrigation since 1995

YEAR HARVESTS	AREA DEVELOPED	RICE
	IN HECTARES	IN TONNES
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1995/96	143,000	572,000
1966/97	150,000	600,000
1997/98	157,000	628,000
1998/99	175,000	
700,000		
2001/02	191,900	
767,600		
2002/03	200,895	803,580
2003/04	227,486	
909,914		
2004/05	249,992	999,968

Peasants in areas under irrigation schemes have three harvests a year and paddy production per hectare has increased from an average of 1.8 to 5.0

tonnes expected to increase to 6.0 to 8.0 per ha. Between 1995 and 2003/2004, eleven irrigation projects were completed.

CROP PRODUCTION

Cash Crops

Production of major cash crops, particularly sugar, tea, tobacco, sisal and cotton increased by varying degrees from 1994/95 to 2004/05. Sugar production increased by 119.48 per cent from 104,600 to 229,000 tonnes while cotton production increased from 122,300 to 344,210 tonnes, equivalent to 181.45 per cent in the same period. Production of tobacco, tea, cashew, pyrethrum and sisal increased by 81.71, 25.49, 28.7, 108.33 and 7.11 per cent respectively in the period under review.

Food Crops

Production of food crops increased from 7.7 million tonnes in 1994/95 to 9.79 million tonnes in 2004/05, equivalent to 27.14 per cent, while that of cereals and grains increased by 43.75 per cent from 4.7 million to 6.9 million tonnes in the same period. Non-cereal production rose from 3.0 million tonnes to 8.7 million tonnes, an increase of 190 per cent. Food production has increased by an average of 8.8 per cent per annum.

Non-Traditional Crops

Vegetables, Fruits and Flowers

Price fluctuations for major cash crops on the world market, particularly from the 1980s, forced the nation to look for alternative crops with better prices and stable markets. That has led to an increase in the production of such crops as vegetables, fruits, spices and flowers.

The Ministry has continued to research better vegetable, fruit and spice seeds with the view to distributing the same to farmers. The results are encouraging. For instance, in 2003/04 vegetable production was estimated at 603,000 tonnes up from 542,700 tonnes produced in 2002/03.

In the 200/05 season, the Ministry continued to distribute improved seedlings for vegetables, fruits, banana trees and spices to farmer in various parts of the country. By May 2005, a total of 200,000 banana seedlings had been planted and distributed to farmers in Coast, Morogoro, Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Manyara regions. A total of 108,255 seedlings for coconuts and spices were planted in nurseries run by the Ministry and distributed to farmers in Coast, Kigoma, Tanga, Mbeya, Morogoro and Dar es Salaam region. In addition, in the same period, 6,868 tonnes of flowers were produced, out of which 4,479.79 tonnes worth Tsh 15.0 in foreign exchange were exported.

FOOD SELF SUFFICIENCY

Experience has shown that in seasons with enough rains, Tanzania produces enough food for its needs with surplus for export, but this is reversed during droughts, floods or other natural disasters.

Analysis from Food Self Sufficiency Ratio (SSR) in the ten years from 1995/96 indicates the country was self sufficient in food by between 88 per cent and 101 per cent. This is the highest internal food production figure anywhere in Africa.

EVALUATION OF FOOD POSITION

Evaluation of food position in the country continued, categorising projections on food crop production, consumption, requirements, reserves and the population's preparedness to withstand famine. From 1997/97 such evaluations have been improved and their accuracy increased by expanding the national sample from 540 villages to 3,051 being monitored today. A national campaign to mobilise wananchi to keep enough food reserves for emergencies has been on since 2004 in Dodoma, Singida, Tabora, Mara, Shinyanga, Mwanza, Arusha, Manyara and Kilimanjaro regions, which are vulnerable to shortages, and will continue to other regions until it covers the whole country.

NATIONAL FOOD RESERVES

For the past ten years, Government has prioritised purchasing and storage of food, which has been used to feed people in drought, affected areas of the country. In addition, Government in 2001/2002 donated 2,000 tonnes of maize to Malawi and another 2,000 tonnes to Zambia while the following year and Zimbabwe was the recipient of another 4,000 tonnes. Impressive achievements have been made in this area.

In 2004/05, government intends to purchase 100,000 tonnes of maize, out of which 97,842.106 had already been purchased.

AVAILABILITY OF AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

Better Seeds

Government in collaboration with the private sector has been involved in production and distribution of seeds. Availability of better seeds for grains, cowpeas and oil seeds has increased by 287 per cent from 2,750 tonnes in 1995/96 to 10,650 in 2003/04. This amount is equivalent to 35.5 p.c. of the country's needs. In the same period, companies involved in seed business increased from two to 18, while farmers produced 192 tonnes of vegetable, cereals and cowpeas seeds, an increase of 291 p.c. from 49 tonnes produced at the beginning of the programme in 1999. Patenting for producers of new type of seeds was legislated in 2002 to motivate researchers.

Fertilisers

For the first time in 12 years, Government reintroduced in 2003/04 subsidising fertilisers for grain-producing Southern Highlands Zone by setting aside Sh 2 billion to meet some of the transportation costs of 33,277.41 tonnes of DAP, Urea, CAN and SA fertilisers earmarked for regions in the zone. In 2004/05, this was increased to Sh 7.244 billion, or 250 per cent, to subsidise transportation of 80,389 tonnes of assorted fertilisers to cover all regions, an increase of 142 per cent over the previous year.

Fertiliser distribution points increased from five in 2003/04 to 17 in 2004/05, while the number of distribution agents has risen from 250 in 1995/96 to over 1,000 in 2004/05, equivalent to 300 per cent. This has also increased tonnage per hectare in the area concerned.

Farm Implements

Reviving ox-pulled plough centres

The third phase government has dedicated itself to improve ox ploughing and tractor farming to enable farmers enlarge their farms as well increase their output. In the past ten years, a lot of efforts has gone into reviving plough centres with 53 oxen revived and fully equipped to train farmers in better ploughing, the aim being to enable them sever their reliance on the hand hoe.

The private sector has contributed to improving the availability of ox ploughs in the country through importation, thereby increasing the number of ploughs from 20,000 in 1995 to 44,811 in 2003/04. Between 1995 and 2000, Sh 61,350,328 worth of loans were given to Southern Highlands Zone farmers to purchase ploughs and other farm implements.

Expanding Use of Tractors

Government has issued 152 loans worth Sh 616,430,000 for tractor repairs. The Agricultural and Livestock Inputs Fund has also Sh 504,050,000 in loans for the purchase of new tractors, with the private sector highly encouraged to set up tractor hire services. The fund has also disbursed Sh 113,731,178 to set up one such hire centre at Songea and Sh 175,000,000 for a privately owned centre in Kilimanjaro region. Another eleven applications have been approved by the fund for the four councils of Kigoma Region and seven other applications from private operators in Kilombero, Masasi, Mtwara/Mikindani, Kilosa, Sengerema and Geita districts.

Similarly, the Tanzania Cotton Association has purchased 100 tractors on behalf of 22 ginneries, which will be hired out to farmers at reasonable charges to enable them increase their acreage for cotton and other crops. A total of 230 hand-pulled tractors and accessories were distributed to farmers at reasonable prices guaranteed by their respective district councils. Private companies are strongly encouraged to import this type of tractors, and so far 150 have been sold in two years from 2003.

LOANS FOR AGRICULTURAL INPUTS AND EQUIPMENT

A total of 619 low interest loans worth Sh 12,646,694,900 were issued through the National Fund for Agricultural and Livestock Inputs between 1995/96 and 2004/5. The interest on the loans taken between 1995/96 and 1998/99 was 20 per cent, dropping to 12 per cent for loans issued from 2002/03 to 2003/04, further dropping to 10 per cent in 2004/05. Government has continued to ensure that loans for input are given out on easier conditions than those of the banks. For instance, in the 2003/04 season, the Fund provided 84 loans worth Sh 1,753,830 to individual farmers or their SACCOS and other registered groups for purchasing inputs and livestock. Similarly, 35 loans worth Sh 128,450,000 for purchasing coffee shelling machines.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

In the ten years from 1995 to 2005, impressive progress has been achieved in research services, with major successes in crop research, particularly in the fields of seed production for various crops, improvement of research methodology, purchasing various research equipment and providing short and long term training to personnel in different disciplines.

Impressive success was also recorded in research conducted with the view to improving seeds for maize, paddy, cassava and sweet potatoes, sorghum, coffee and soya beans with scores of high yields seeds developed.

During the ten years under review, much has been done to improve the general infrastructure of research centres, including repair of buildings and purchase of vehicles and other equipment.

EXTENSION SERVICES

Extension services to farmers have been greatly improved through participatory programmes, including the application of the concept of 'shamba darasa' (the farm as a classroom), which has enabled farmers to realise the opportunities available to them, their problems and how to make their own strategies for solving them.

Consequently, 70 per cent of farmers/livestock keepers are now more knowledgeable about better farming methods thus more productivity than they were in 1995. Similarly, the number of farmers preparing their land in time has increased from 60 per cent in 1995 to 77 per cent in 2003;

correct planting from 62 to 76 and using better seeds from 29 to 55 per cent.

The Ministry has also enabled district councils to provide better extension services by supplying them with the necessary tools, including vehicles, cinema vans, computers, extension kits, buildings, office furniture, printing machine, generators, photocopiers, video cameras and laboratory equipment.

PEST CONTROL

The Ministry has consolidated its control over pests harmful to crops by increasing its budget from Sh 945,000,000 in 2003/2004 in 1995 to Sh 2,252,473,450 for the year 2004/2005, an increase of 138.4. Pests falling under this category include red locusts, desert locusts, quelea quelea, armyworms and rodents. Diseases include cassava mealy bug, cassava green mite and banana wilt while the question of water hyacinths in Lake Victoria has been dealt with in 93 of the shores of the lake.

Other areas in this field included the introduction of 49 techniques of Integrated Pest Management and the enactment of the Plant Protection Act of 1997.

TRAINING FOR EXPERTS AND FARMERS

Between 1995 and 2005, the Ministry's institutes produced 2,214 graduates of long-term courses while providing varying agricultural training to 42,137 farmers, among whom 1,876 men and 1,297 women received training in paddy farming through irrigation. This training, conducted at Uyole, Igurusi, Ilonga, Ukiriguru, Mlingano, Mtwara, KATC-Moshi, NSI Kidatu and Tumbi, has helped raise production from 2 tonnes per ha to 6 tonnes per ha. The number of trainees in all the institutes increased from 299 in 1995 to 778 in 2004.