

Family farming in the United Republic of Tanzania

Family farms feed and employ two-thirds of the African population and work 62 percent of the land. Family farmers ensure the future of Africa and are at the heart of food security and sustainable food systems.

The United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF 2019-2028) aims at unleashing the potential of family farmers as key agents of change to transform food systems world-wide. Within this framework, the Yenkasa Africa communication initiative implements a regional campaign to raise awareness on the UNDF and promote improved communication capacities and services for family farming in Africa.

KEY FIGURES

The United Republic of Tanzania is relatively a large country in East Africa with a population of about 60 million, 66,2 percent of which live in rural areas (2018). About 50 percent of all farm households keep livestock, making a large number of farm families being crops livestock producers. Between 85 percent -90 percent of the land under cultivation is used by smallholder farmers, who primarily use the land for subsistence farming. There are about 3.7 million smallholdings farmed by approximately 19 million people. In Tanzanian context, family farming equates to 'small-scale farming' or 'smallholder farming'.



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UNDF in Action

The climate emergency and the pandemic are highlighting that also in the United Republic of Tanzania new approaches are needed to food processing, distribution and trade. Among these, agroecology is a new way for applying ecological principles to agriculture in a holistic manner. Farmers learn about practices such as intercropping, in which several crops are planted together in the same beds, to provide diversified foods while also reducing pests that thrive in monocultures. Such approach, combined with peer-mentoring, was adopted as a pilot in Singida Rural District, the United Republic of Tanzania. As a result, Tanzanian family farmers found significant

improvements in the diversity of children's diets and food security for households after Smallholder farmers decide which agroecological practices they want to adopt, such as environmentally safe botanical pesticides or adding compost and manure to improve soil health. At the same time, they track their diets and foods consumed in each category to arrive at a minimum dietary diversity score. In general, the experience of combining agroecology with attention to nutrition and gender equity leads to improvements in food security and children's dietary diversity for households that were previously food insecure.

United Nations
Decade of
**FAMILY
FARMING**
2019-2028



Contribution to sustainable food systems

The Southern Highlands Food Systems Programme (SHFSP) was jointly implemented in the United Republic of Tanzania by FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives (MAFC) with the participation of the National Farmers' Union MVIWATA and the Tanzania Agricultural Partnership.

The initiative focused on enhancing the capacity of advisory service providers and farmers in the Farming as a Business (FAB) and in marketing approaches, which contributed a great deal to developing inclusive food systems in the country. The FAB approach considers farmers as entrepreneurs who build a farm business by selling quality agricultural products to markets for a profit. Entrepreneurial and management skills are built via a “learning by doing” approach.

MVIWATA, TAP and other Non-Governmental Organizations' staff have been then provided with leadership skills to organize, train and advise other farmers in FAB. Thanks to these trainings, farmers learned to be more competitive and take advantage of the new opportunities arising, to adapt their farm business to market changes and improve efficiency, profitability and income.

Useful links

[FAO in the United Republic of Tanzania](http://www.fao.org/tanzania/fao-in-tanzania/en)

<http://www.fao.org/tanzania/fao-in-tanzania/en>

[Forest and Farm Facility](http://www.fao.org/forest-farm-facility/en)

<http://www.fao.org/forest-farm-facility/en>

[MVIWATA](https://bit.ly/3fuSZVI)

<https://bit.ly/3fuSZVI>

[MVIWATA Facebook](https://bit.ly/2TURHjJ)

<https://bit.ly/2TURHjJ>



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The United Republic of Tanzania: Mviwata FM Farm Radio

“I know that I am privileged to listen and follow different programmes aired through MVIWATA FM,” says Odilia Jiovin, a female farmer from Kilosa District Morogoro region, the United Republic of Tanzania. “I always take the initiative to give feedback to my fellow farmers in our community and apply the knowledge disseminated through the radio in my farms where other farmers come and learn too.”

To improve her knowledge in farming, Odilia relied on listening to the MVIWATA FM radio programmes, and this has helped her as well as other farmers bridge the information gap and allowed them to learn better farming skills. The extension service has been made easy for Odilia and other farmers through MVIWATA FM as they get to learn, ask questions, and gain knowledge that they later apply to their farms.

The various agriculture-related advice and practices learned through MVIWATA FM have significantly helped farmers to bridge the gap between them and extension service - delivery, where the knowledge has been used in farm preparation as well as in pest and disease management thus ensuring high yields to the farmers.



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