

## **FANRPAN salutes the best in agriculture**

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) announced the winners of its annual excellence awards at the Tanzania Dialogue in Dar es Salaam.

The annual awards are made in four categories – the Policy Leadership Award, the Movers and Shakers Award, the Excellence in Journalism Award and for the first time this year the Youth in Agriculture Award.

### ***FANRPAN Policy Leadership Award***

The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dr Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, is the winner of the FANRPAN Policy Leadership Award for 2012.

Ever since he took office in 2005, President Kikwete has been striving to put programmes in place that would bring change to the majority of Tanzanians. These programmes cover various sectors that have direct impact on people's lives, be it in agriculture, health, education or economic empowerment.

They include the promotion of democracy and good governance, like a national strategy for growth and reduction of poverty, a five-year development plan for the Tanzania development vision 2025, and the establishment of the University of Dodoma, the Tanzania Women's Bank and the economic empowerment funds.

Agriculture-specific initiatives include the formulation of the agricultural sector development programme soon after he became president. This is a 14-year programme to support and transform the agriculture sector through interventions like irrigation, input subsidies, the development of markets, a livestock development programme and the establishment of the Agricultural Development Bank.

Of particular importance is the formulation of Kilimo Kwanza, Tanzania's green revolution to transform its agriculture into a modern and commercial sector. This public/ private partnership initiative raises agricultural productivity through enhanced investments in rural infrastructure such as roads, irrigation, high yielding seed varieties, fertilizer and technology.

The real agricultural growth rate has averaged four percent over the past six years. The trend over the last decade shows that the country is slightly above a safe margin of food sufficiency. Agricultural value-add increased by four per cent per year during the last decade.

### ***FANRPAN Youth in Agriculture Award***

The Shambani Graduate Enterprise receives the FANRPAN Youth in Agriculture Award for 2012. The enterprise is a milk processing enterprise co-owned by three Sokoine University graduates.

Established in 2003, the enterprise's graduates started with one milk supplier, initially processing 30 litres of milk per day. Today the plant receives milk from over 200 suppliers and has a processing capacity of 750 litres of milk per day. It also produces up to three different products – pasteurised cultured milk, pasteurised fresh milk and pasteurised flavoured milk. It supplies processed milk and other dairy products to retail outlets within the municipality as well as to Dar es Salaam, which is 120 miles away.

### ***FANRPAN Mover and Shaker Award***

The FANRPAN Society Mover and Shaker Award for 2012 goes to MVIWATA - Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania – a network of farmers' groups in Tanzania.

MVIWATA was founded in 1993, initially by 22 innovative farmers from the Morogoro, Iringa, Tanga, Mbeya and Dodoma regions as a farmer-farmer exchange forum. Its initial formation was guided by the Sokoine University of Agriculture. It strengthens groups of peasants as one voice to defend their rights. The organisation's slogan is Mtetezi wa Mkulima ni Mkulima Mwenyewe - defender of the farmer's interests by the farmers themselves.

MVIWATA has been playing a major role in empowering small-scale farmers through representation and participation in planning and decision-making processes in the district agricultural development plans. The organisation has established farmers' networks at district, ward and village levels, which talks with local government and private service providers.

MVIWATA plays an important role in innovation and links up with national and international actors relevant to rural development and agricultural innovation. In the drought-prone Dodoma region, farmers have adopted techniques such as rainwater harvesting and agro-forestry, and are addressing soil fertility issues by leaving crop residues in the field and incorporating them into the soil to encourage nutrient recycling.

MVIWATA has also addressed issues related to smallholder production in rural areas. For instance, it has facilitated the organisation of smallholders into groups, and has enhanced confidence-building among the farmers through awareness creation and networking. It advocates for strong organisations of smallholder farmers, the existence of reliable markets for their farm produce, sustainable financial services and technical assistance, and representation of farmers at all levels. Furthermore, it has facilitated the strengthening of local groups and networks, enabling farmers to develop sound relationships with extension staff at both local and district levels. As a result, farmers in Tanzania now effectively participate in local meetings at ward and village levels.

### ***FANRPAN Excellence in Journalism Award***

The 2012 FANRPAN Excellence in Journalism Award goes to the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation.

The corporation has been in the forefront in promoting agriculture, natural resource management and in communicating developments in these fields - through its different franchises TBC1 and TBC2 television, TBC Taifa and TBC FM radio and TBC International radio and TV.

TBC1 was among the first TV channels in East Africa to go digital. Its international outreach programme can be traced back to the early 1960s when the then Radio Tanzania - External Service aired programmes in support of Africa's liberation struggle.

The corporation has facilitated the dissemination of programmes prepared by the agriculture sector, including a weekly radio programme Ukulima wa Kisasa - Modern Agriculture, which has been aired since 1955. Currently there are two weekly programmes, one on crop farming and another on livestock.