

Vegetable Availability and Consumption in Northern Tanzania: Opportunities and Challenges of a value chain approach

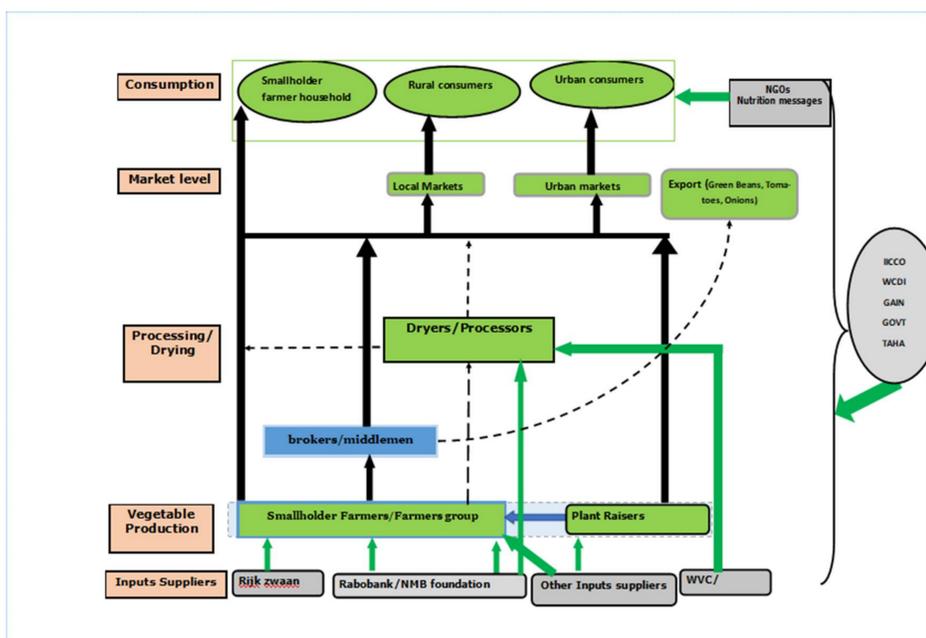
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The Intervention

- Increasingly, nutrition sensitive agricultural projects are seeking to work across the value chain. In this project, production of (nutritious) foods is supported in tandem with building the enabling environment. We work with public and private partners in improving access to vegetable seeds (Rijk Zwaan) and to finance (NMB foundation), in building capacity of traders (GAIN), linking farmers to information about the markets (TAHA), and in stimulating consumer demand (WUR).
- The V4A project sought to strengthen the value chain of selected vegetables through a package of trainings. A mass media campaign, and NGO trainings targeting schools and community were undertaken to improve nutrition awareness about the benefits of vegetables.
- The ultimate aim of the project was to increase dietary diversity through increased consumption of fresh and dried vegetables by base of the pyramid consumers.

Table 1. Diagram of the Vegetables for All Overall Approach



Picture 1. Solar vegetable dryer used by farmer groups to process dried vegetables.



Picture 2. Prosper Tira, a lead farmer in Nguvukazi cooperative in Moshi, Tanzania.



Project Results

- Farmer Training:** 5,462 farmers were trained in a combination of good agricultural practices, financial literacy, good governance and/or solar drying.
- Financial Literacy:** 14 farmers groups were able to access loans, which benefited 312 individual farmers.
- Solar Drying:** 530 farmers benefited from training on solar drying.
- Processing, Marketing and Distribution:** 20 support agents were supported to develop their businesses to reduce post-harvest losses
- Nutrition Education:** 103 nutrition radio messages reached over 4 million people in project areas (close to 60% of the population) with engagement in schools reaching an additional 46,786 pupils.

Impacts

- The combination of finance, production and nutrition related interventions was more effective than separate interventions.
- The VfA project seems to have contributed to an increase in the availability of fresh vegetables.
- However, markets for selected vegetables like tomatoes, sweet peppers, cabbage and eggplants are not well linked to farmers.
- This has a effect on accessing loans, without market access, farmers are unable to get loans.
- Nutrition messaging was effective in increasing knowledge about vegetable consumption.

Insights

- The value chain approach worked to increase production and consumption of vegetables.
- The V4A project introduced a plethora of complexities in changing skills/knowledge, attitudes/awareness and behaviours among various value chain actors living and working in varying context.
- More efforts should be made to expand nutrition behaviour change to reach broader age and gender demographics.
- Projects working on a value chain need to consider how to better engage with intermediaries who connect producers and consumers.

