

# COUNTERFEIT AGRO-INPUTS RULE



Unscrupulous traders supplying counterfeits capitalise on price-led marketing and false promotions...



## 'Killing the locust'

In this month's issue of Kilimo Kwanza Supplement we highlight the proliferation of fake agro-inputs in the country. I am reminded of a childhood story. In the tale, a small farming village was infested by a swarm of locusts that threatened to destroy the livelihood of the inhabitants. Efforts to eradicate the pests hit a dead end.

The villagers were all but resigned to their fate when one day a big lorry appeared and stopped under a big tree in the market square. The lorry was prominently decorated with vivid, larger than life images of different types of insects, including locusts. Prominently painted on the sides of the lorry was the label "International Master Pest Eradication Services".

Out of the lorry jumped a short, well dressed, important looking, chubby man and his equally well dressed assistant. Without much fanfare, the two threw open the back of the lorry to reveal a load of never-seen-before, strange looking white rocks.

Perching himself on top of a table, the important looking man declared. "Dear villagers! The end to all your locust problems has arrived!" With this he grabbed two white rocks from the back of the lorry and sized them up in his hands. One rock was slightly larger than the other. He then victoriously held both rocks up in the air and impressively started juggling them as he spoke.

"This is it! These specially formulated rocks will instantly kill all locusts and any other insects that dares to destroy your crops! What's more, today I am selling each pair at a special one-off discount! Tomorrow the price increases two-fold!" the man declared. Stopping to wave a folder full of papers the man added, "Plus you have no cause for concern. These special insect killers have passed all necessary lab tests and obtained all required licenses. Anyone who wants to confirm this can check these documents!"

Quite naturally, the desperate villagers crowded around the lorry and soon a scramble ensued. Presently, all the white rocks were gone and the man and his assistant were left counting large wads of money. "But how will these white rocks kill the locusts?" the villagers who were still milling around the lorry enquired.

"Ah that is simple!" the man said with an air of importance. "To ensure that we destroy all the locusts, it is important that we all follow these instructions together. If any one of you deviates from these instructions or starts the eradication before the rest of the team then we will fail in our mission!" he cautioned. "Understood?"

"Yes!" the villagers chorused.

"First," the man said, "you all need to soak these special rocks in a bucket full of water. Do this overnight. However, to ensure that none of you spoils our plans to destroy all the locusts, I will only reveal the next step of this important exercise tomorrow morning".

With this the well-dressed men dismissed the villagers, instructing them to bring their rocks and buckets of water to the market rock the next morning.

Come dawn the next day and the market centre was packed with excited villagers eager to begin the locust eradication exercise. But the lorry and its two well-dressed occupants were nowhere in sight. Presently, someone noticed a piece of paper stuck on the large tree under which the lorry had parked the previous day. Printed on the piece paper were the words:

How to kill locusts: Step One - Grab a locust; Step two - place the locust on top of the larger rock; Step three - quickly grab the smaller rock; Step four - smash the locust with the smaller rock; Step five - wash both rocks in the bucket of water and repeat these simple steps until all locusts have been destroyed.

There are many morals to this story. One is universal - if the deal is too good to be true, think twice. However, the story also warns of the human tendency to make hasty decisions to address emergencies, and of the risks that go with making group decisions.

Finally, it is important for us to always remember not to judge a book by its cover. In this age where there is a fake version to almost everything that is produced or manufactured, it is prudent to take all necessary precautions and to have proper systems that check and provide information on what is a real and what could potentially be a fake product. Farmers, buyers and gatekeepers beware!

Wallace Mauggo  
Editor

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# Milk processors push for zero VAT on dairy products

By Kilimo Kwanza Reporter

THE Tanzania Milk Processors Association (TAMPA) has urged the government to waive the Value Added Tax (VAT) charged on milk and other dairy products. According to TAMPA Chief Executive Officer Edmund Mariki, Tanzania has the great potential of advancing the dairy sector, but its growth has been hampered by unfavourable business environment.

Giving details, the CEO said statistics show that even though Tanzania ranks the third in Africa in terms of cattle population [21.3 million cattle capable of producing 5 million litres of milk a day], only 112,500 litres are being processed.

Surprisingly, he said only 3 per cent of milk produced in the country is being filtered through formal markets, compared to 30 per cent in Kenya and 7 per cent in Uganda. "Tanzania has the lowest per capita milk consumption of 40 litres per person per year, compared to 100 and 55 in Kenya and Uganda, respectively," he said.

"One of the key challenges facing the sector is the tax system that is unfair as compared to other countries in the region. For example, we charge a VAT rate of 18 per cent on processed milk and milk products while Kenya approved the VAT Bill in March 2012, reducing to zero the tax rate for milk and milk products for the purpose of making the Kenyan dairy sector more competitive," he explained.

He noted that in Rwanda, the tax law exempts all milk and milk products processed by local firms from VAT. At the same time, Tanzania consumes the substantial amount of processed milk from Kenya, while the market for the local milk processors is shrinking.

Mariki added that milk processors have been complaining of high cost of production that is largely attributed to stringent regulations, including high taxes, but nothing has been done to redress the situation. "As a result, our milk and milk products cannot be competitive in the market, affecting the competitiveness of the entire sector," Mariki said.

He further said that, as a strategy to promote the dairy sector and ensure that local milk processors compete effectively in the region, TAMPA urges the government to immediately amend Section 9(1) & (2) of the VAT Act of 1997 to introduce zero VAT on dairy products.

"This will make prices charged on dairy products more competitive and make the sector contributes more to the GDP and employment creation. TAMPA challenges the government to ensure that, as we embark on regional co-operation, Tanzanian entrepreneurs are facilitated to compete by negotiating for a level play ground," he said.

He added that it's unrealistic to expect Tanzanian milk processors to com-



pete with their counterparts in neighbouring Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi in the same market if they are paying higher taxes.

"Therefore, it is high time for the government to take immediate measures to review tax laws to enable the sector to become more vibrant," suggested Mariki.

The Registrar of Tanzania Dairy Board, Charles Mutagabwa, admitted that more needs to be done in encouraging the government to adopt from other successful countries zero VAT on milk and milk products.

"Zero rating will enable milk producers and processors to recoup taxes on key inputs like electricity and equipment. At the moment, the milk industry in neighbouring countries such as Kenya enjoys zero rate, a move that makes their products highly competitive in the regional markets, including Tanzania," argued the TAMPA boss.

A previously government owned, now privatised Arusha-based milk processing plant, was in the middle of a

protracted row in which a milk company of Kenyan origin that had initially entered into a joint venture to develop the firm was later accused of using the premises as a milk collection centre.

This amounted to a conflict of interest with the investors in which the initial two-year license was extended to December 2009 before it was finally revoked. The raw milk export ban was

then put in place after an industry audit. Investigations into business undertakings of the firm revealed that the investor was importing milk and milk products into the country on a tax-free basis, as a result more milk was being exported for processing.

However, raw milk exports have dried up now that the East Africa Community (EAC) Customs Union

(CU) allows for tax free and unhindered cross border trading in milk and milk products amongst member states.

The registrar said that with the implementation of the EAC's CU protocol, the firm in question has pulled out of the controversial deal and acquired a separate warehouse from where it now conducts its activities.

Recently, the Ministry of Trade and Industry announced that it is undertaking an audit of privatised firms to determine which of these have been abandoned or are being used contrary to tender agreements with a view to repossessing such institutions.

Within the milk industry, such undeveloped firms include the now dormant Ubungu "Maziwa" Plant in Dar es Salaam. "We don't know what it is being used for," the dairy board's registrar revealed.



Zero VAT will enable milk producers and processors to recoup taxes on key inputs... the milk industry in neighbouring countries such as Kenya enjoys zero rate, a move that makes their products highly competitive in the regional markets, including Tanzania

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# Farmers cautioned on counterfeit agro-inputs

**UNSCRUPULOUS** traders are reportedly colluding with importers and distributors in selling counterfeit fertilisers to farmers. A recent report commissioned by the Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT) has discovered that poor governance and lack of transparency impact negatively on the country's agro-inputs subsidy scheme. The following report unveils more details...



Agricultural inputs suppliers must be conversant with what they sell to customers to avoid counterfeit inputs

**Deception**  
RECENT media reports from Sumbawanga and neighbouring districts in Rukwa region have revealed that over 10,000 50-kilogram cement bags of counterfeit fertilisers were sold to farmers. The reports had it that unscrupulous businessmen repacked Minjingu fertiliser into phosphate 'DAP' bags.

The demand for DAP fertiliser in the area is high and the input fetches a better price. ACT Executive Director Janet Bitegeko said, "The practice is not only dangerous to agricultural production in the country, but also unethical and a threat to innocent farmers".

According to the reports, in Rukwa a bag of subsidised DAP fertiliser sells at between 63,000/- and 70,000/-, while a bag of Minjingu fertiliser, which has proven to be unsuitable for the soil in the region sells at only 14,000/-. In March last year, similar media reports uncovered incidents of counterfeit seeds and agro-chemicals in Marangu ward, Moshi-rural district, Kilimanjaro region.

Likewise, in 2012 agro-dealers in Arusha region reported that packaging materials, worth 23m/-, were stolen and were being used to repack counterfeit seeds (maize grain bought from the market). The culprit was caught, but the case is still pending.

In Mbinga district, Ruvuma region some agro-dealers reportedly mixed DAP and Minjingu fertilisers in order to make huge profits. In Mbinga district, Minjingu fertiliser was being sold at 22,000/- per bag, while DAP fetched up to 85,000/- per bag.

**Fake inputs in circulation**  
The Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) in collaboration with Morogoro-rural, Kilosa and Mvomero district councils discovered counterfeit fertilisers in circulation

after conducting scientific tests.

The organisation defines poor seeds as those expired or counterfeits. These seeds have not been authorised for use or are not registered in the country. ACT member, CropLife Tanzania, which is a local organisation dealing in farmers' affairs, estimates that about 35 per cent of agro-inputs in different markets are counterfeits.

Consequently, farmers lose out by spending more on inputs and getting low yields or losing their crops all together. Furthermore, credibility of brand holders and reputable importers as well as manufacturers is lost.

**Dar not alone**

Tanzania is not the only country affected by counterfeit fertilisers. However, neighbouring countries have

introduced measures to combat this fraud. Other neighbouring countries like Uganda for instance, the Uganda National Agro Dealers Association (UNADA) has resolved to train all certified agro-dealers in detecting fake inputs.

"Poor monitoring of demand and supply of agro-inputs in the region has resulted in uncertainty on actual supply at a particular time," said ACT senior consultant Edmund Ringo. He explained that in case demand is higher than supply, counterfeits and expired inputs are brought into Tanzania to meet the demand.

Highlighting other aspects that contribute to the proliferation of counterfeits, he said, "In most cases, the distribution of inputs is done through ineffective networks, some traders lack



There must be deliberate efforts to review and forge new rules, [and] regulations that will control and remove distribution systems of counterfeit inputs

relevant skills for handling agro-inputs and have poor storage."

**Counterfeits' market**

Smallholder farmers have limited financial capacity; so are price conscious when it comes to purchasing fertilisers. The lack of technical knowledge on the usefulness of genuine fertilisers is also a problem. "Essentially, unscrupulous traders who supply counterfeit products capitalise on price led marketing and false promotion," said Edmund Ringo, senior ACT consultant.

"Inefficient enforcement of laws, incidences of corruption and minimum penalties given to culprits have been unable to make people refrain from engaging in the sale of counterfeits. "The culprits can find their way around the system easily," he stressed.

However, the ACT report states that a few measures have been taken to reduce counterfeit inputs. Some of these include reviewing the Seed Act (2003) and removal of monopolies in the agro-input supply and distribution business.

**Curbing counterfeits**

The Tanzania Farmers Association (TFA) Division Manager Gibson Kisamba has said that due to a lack of a common approach and instruments to promote availability and usage of genuine inputs, the entire value chain faces myriads of challenges. These challenges include joint initiatives for curbing networks of suppliers of counterfeit inputs.

"There must be deliberate efforts to review and forge new rules as well as

regulations that will control and remove distribution systems of counterfeit inputs. Improved safety regulations will impact on transportation and storage as well as on handling of agricultural inputs," Kisamba stated.

He noted that with all the agricultural technologies available, supply chains are directly applicable to agro-input supply and marketing in developing and developed countries. "There should be collective and deliberate efforts to set up an accreditation system coupled with enforcement mechanisms that will see airtight control of rampant production," said the TFA manager.

He added that productivity and effective agro-input markets require investment in research and development on tools that will assist in the enforcement of accreditation rules, access to

market information, as well as efficient transportation and communication networks.

Kisamba suggested the adoption of the Geographical Information System (GIS) to map all primary chain actors for the accreditation system to work. This system has been tried in Kenya, Rwanda, Mali and Nigeria with positive results.

He further said that proper governance will prevent investments from being channelled to rent-seeking groups and will ensure that enforcement of regulations, rules and penalties are in use.

"Improved state capacity to monitor market development will allow governments to anticipate undesirable filtration of counterfeit agro-inputs in the market and devise appropriate re-



sponses to eventual short-term difficulties in a timely and effective manner," he said.

Kisamba explained that although the government has set up a task-force to respond to counterfeit seeds penetrating the market, there is a deliberate need to build on this initiative to cover all agro-inputs in a much more holistic approach.

ACT, as the apex farmer's organisation, in cooperation with donors ought to facilitate a multi stakeholder process of reviewing and developing an accreditation system that will improve distribution efficiencies and reduce incidences of supply of counterfeit agro-inputs.

It is proposed that the joint accreditation development process should observe the following steps: Gaining commitment and ownership of key stakeholders taking into account few ongoing initiatives, analysing pros and cons of all these initiatives, introducing a GIS mapping system, reviewing current accreditation, monitoring and handing out penalties.

**What others do**

Tanzania can learn from other countries by securing recommendations from key stakeholders on how to harmonise accreditation based on best practices. In Kenya: Poor governance and a lack of transparency negatively affect performance of the agricultural

sector. The input supply system is private sector driven and integrated in the Kenya's Vision 2030, which includes specific strategies to improve input supply systems and from the strategy there are clear specific flagship projects.

In Malawi: The Farm Subsidy System (FISP) includes a strong governance system that is driven by very inclusive and transparent multi stakeholder pool of actors (civil society, local and regional authorities) for beneficiaries' identification and support.

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**DON'T MISS A FULL REPORT ON THE STATE OF COUNTERFEIT AGROCHEMICALS IN TANZANIA THAT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE GUARDIAN KILIMO KWANZA PULL-OUT IN AUGUST, 2012.**

# Study faults laxity in weights and measures legislation enforcement

THE Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (TCCIA) in Iringa with the financial support from the Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania - Advocacy Component (BEST-AC) have been implementing a project on enforcement of weights and measures legislation in the region in two phases since 2006. The Impact Assessment Study (IAS) has been commissioned to Match Maker Associates Ltd. In this second part of the article, we bring you more study outcomes. Read on...

**Transaction cost**

THE Impact Assessment Study pointed out that the transaction cost up to the main distribution node of Mabibo in Dar es Salaam is 81/- per kilo, which is about 21 per cent. The increase with potatoes at the same point is 15 per cent. It is estimated that the gain to a potato farmer per acre could be 158,533/- per acre per season.

Apart from economic achievements, the project has improved WMA visibility and justification to strengthen their capacity and has built synergistic collaboration with other government institutions, the private sector and consumers. The TCCIA - Iringa Chapter has enhanced its authenticity and skills in project management and advocacy.

Weights and Measures Act was enacted in 1982 and its operation has been through five regulations. The relevant set of regulations to farm produce is the Weights and Measures (Principal), Regulations, 1960 as amended from time to time.

Under the regulations, the following issues have been taken care of:

Care and custody of standards; verification of weights, measures and instruments; the manner of how weights are made; how the measures of length shall be made; how the measures of capacity shall be made and the types of weighing instruments which are legally allowed to be used for trade.

It is acknowledged that the Act and regulations are long overdue. For instance, the Act clearly stipulates that all farm produce are to be traded in weight, but the same Act is silent on quantities in which farm produce shall be pre-packed. Fresh produce like green peas, tomatoes, and so on, are not specified in the respective schedules. Likewise, the issue of shrinkage in relation to net weight is not provided for.

There has been a concern that costs of acquiring and stamping measuring equipment are relatively high for rural enterprises. Importers have blamed high tax for the higher price and the flooding of sub-standard scales. According to WMA, they had requested for a tax waiver.

WMA's mandate, as the sole insti-

tution responsible for protection of consumers through accurate measurement, has to align with regional and international bodies responsible for weights and measures in order to facilitate trade regionally and internationally.

It has subscribed to International Organisation of Legal Metrology, Southern Africa Development Cooperation in Legal Metrology, International Organisation of Standardisation, Asia Pacific Legal Metrology Forum, and East African Standards Committee.

The regional managers are responsible for implementing the Act and regulations in their respective regions. Furthermore, there is a provision which provides discretionary powers to the Chief Executive Officer to delegate to the Manager his or her powers to compound some offences.

**Short of resources**

WMA has a huge capacity gap. It is short of resources in terms of finance, technology, technical equipment and manpower. According to Public Service

Commission's study on WMA establishment, WMA needs a total of 700 staff (80 per cent technical cadre) as compared to only 200 in the establishment in 2008. The institution needs financial and technical assistance to acquire the necessary capacity.

The study recommends that the TCCIA - Iringa Chapter should consolidate the project experiences to maintain the momentum by improving the training materials used, editing, printing them in a durable form and disseminating to villages.

It also recommends that the Iringa regional authority should set up accountability and coordination arrangements to harmonise districts' efforts, especially when formulating by-laws and further monitoring and sharing of the success or failure factors. WMA Head office should make a follow up in Njombe to draw lessons that will guide the support of other LGAs during roll out phase, it says.

Given the importance of timber to the economy of Mufindi, Njombe and Makete districts, and the high prevalence of use of non-standard measure-

ments (use of planks instead of cubic metres), the study recommends an intervention targeting smallholder tree farmers and traders. TCCIA and WMA could take a lead in sensitization, it says.

"The WMA is mandated to spearhead the enforcement of the Weights and Measures Act and Regulations. At present, WMA's capacity is inadequate. WMA should seek strategic collaboration with public and private sector partners," notes the study report.

The issue of availability of weighing scales is a typical area that would require partnership with private sector actors as long as demand is well articulated.

"In the long run all chain actors have to work on win-win principles and here is where voluntary compliance to standard measures across the chain will be instrumental. A national roll out strategy should be targeted at raising awareness and advisory services to all chain actors from production to the market," it adds.

The process of reviewing the Act is ongoing. WMA plans to consult around



## ...About the WMA

THE Weights and Measures Agency (WMA) has advised members of the public to cooperate closely with its offices in all regions to enable it contribute to building the nation more efficiently and effectively. An official of the agency, Peter Masinga, who spoke on behalf of the WMA Chief Executive Officer, said that the agency works to improve efficiency and quality service delivery. The agency was established on May 13, 2002.

He said that the agency is headed by the CEO and has two governing directorates – one for commercial and another one for technical issues. It has four units - Auditing, Procurement, Legal services and Planning. At the moment, it has 24 offices headed by Regional Managers in each region in Tanzania Mainland. It has 193 permanent staff.

According to the WMA official, the agency's vision is to ensure that it achieves international standards in service delivery to the community through appropriate use of modern and highly professional tests by 2025.

He said the agency intends to implement changes that would enable the use of commercial and financial leadership to contribute to the growth of the national economy by reducing operating costs in the government system. Previously, functions of the agency were being handled by the Department of Measurements under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

The WMA official said the role of the agency is to ensure that tests all dimensions used in the sectors of trade, health, safety and environment are accurate and clear; and that the Tanzanian society is educated on the importance of proper use of tests.

The agency also aims to ensure that legislations on tests are implemented and managed appropriately by all stakeholders. In addition, the agency seeks to increase public awareness on issues related to measurements, especially in the sectors of trade, security, health and environment, and increase efficiency, transparency and accountability in service delivery to citizens.

Masinga explained that the agency would operate in accordance with Chapter 340 of the Measurements Act as amended in 2002 and the Executive Agencies Act Chapter 245, as amended in 2009. "Under these laws, the main role of agency's tests is to ensure accuracy of measurements and use it to bring about trade justice. Also, according to the direction of regional and international role in the industry, improving health, safety and environment," he said.

He further stated that the agency is charged with inspection, verification, testing and measurements and also provides advice in the business sector, health, safety and environment involving scales and trucks carrying fuel. It also involves vehicles carrying sand, pebbles and stones, measuring oil pumps as well as large and small tanks of oil storage places, he said.

Masinga said that the agency would also manage and provide expert advice to people engaging in the manufacturing, formulation and importation of various dimensions in the business sector, health, safety and environment. It also seeks to conserve measures of medium level (secondary standards) to ensure accuracy at national and international levels.

He explained that the agency is also charged with the duty of inspecting and reviewing packed products and goods, verifying the volume of oil imported from abroad, controlling of invalid measurements as well as 'lumbesa' and providing education to stakeholders.

"Despite critics, the agency's measurements strategy has sustained the objective of educating the public through participation in local international trade fairs - Sabasaba, Nanenane, public service week, and SIDO shows as well as providing education through the media to stakeholders and the general public to be aware of their rights through appropriate use of tests, and increasing their communication with the agency's nearest test offices," he said.

Masinga concluded by saying that the WMA would continue protecting consumer rights and ensuring equity in the business sector, health, safety, environmental and other sectors that use measurements with a view to improving community life.

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50 stakeholders. This is based on their meagre resources. It is proposed that resources should be sought to broaden the consultation process, hence ownership to at least a zonal level.

The study further recommends that the WMA should look into possibilities of reviving the national working



In the long run all chain actors have to work on win-win principles and here is where voluntary compliance to standard measures across the chain will be instrumental

group (focusing on weights and measures in agro produce trade) that was initiated previously. The momentum was lost due to lack of ownership of the review agenda. The WMA is expected to be the custodian of the agenda, it says. Due the ever increasing role, it is important that a thorough organisational assessment of the WMA is undertaken which will lead to review of a strategic plan, and updating the human resource plan. The strategic plan should clarify the market for WMA services, infrastructural requirements, financial mobilisation and sustainability strategy, it recommends.

It also points out that there is a need for a study to take inventory on weighing scales in the country; arguing that such information will establish the gap that may attract investors. The WMA should dialogue with manufacturers and importers of packing materials for them to support the move, it recommends.

It is also recommended that the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI) should be involved, as it represents the medium and larger sector in manufacturers of packaging materials,

and have got innovative solutions and promotional services will be done through organised farmers and traders around market centres. Organisational strengthening of farmers is the foundation for instilling the discipline of adherence to standard weights and measures in the country.

"Strengthening of Farmers Capacity is ongoing in different parts of the country. Farmer's organizations are linked to Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives, Warehouse Receipt System, SACCOS, and Grain Banks," the study notes.

Access to weighing instruments and promotional services will be done through organised farmers and traders around market centres. Organisational strengthening of farmers is the foundation for instilling the discipline of adherence to standard weights and measures in the country.

The IAS has referred to application of proper weights and measures in trading activities of agricultural produce, as a legal requirement and a critical basis for sound business practices. The measures and weights in use in the country leave a lot to be desired and often have resulted into farmers receiving lower than market compensation for the sale of their produce. Equally, the same may have happened to the other trading partners.

# State of food in East Africa: Where do we stand?

## This side of Africa

By Nicolas Begisen



**A**FRICA is crying, an unfathomable empty and aching cry for something to be put in her belly. The continent sheds tears for her population, but sadly no one bothers to listen to this cry for help. We can go around all self important and proud of being the birthplace and beginning of everything, but the reality is that the food situation in our beloved continent is worsening as days and years go by.

From extremely wet conditions to seared ones, from deserts to plains to jungles, from soaring mountains to lands below sea level, a contrast in population, wealth and government resources amongst different African countries to the tribes, religions, colour, cultures and practices, Africa is painted as a continent of contrasts.

Amongst these entire differences one thing is prevalent in almost all African countries, and that is agriculture. The agricultural industry cuts across the continent and agricultural/food problems that affect one area, for example the North, are expected to affect the South too although they might differ a little bit.

According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s Global Information and Early Warning Service of the United Nations February 2012 report, countries within Africa requiring external assistance for food are likely to lack the resources to deal with reported critical problems of food insecurity. Food crises are nearly always due to a combination of factors, but for the purpose of response planning, it is important to establish whether the nature of food crisis is predominantly related to lack of food availability, limited access to food, or severe, but localised problems.

Mid last year saw the worst ever witnessed food crisis in East Africa, mainly Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. There were successive failed rains, which resulted in an unimaginable famine that ravaged most parts of

northern Kenya stretching all the way towards Somalia and southern Ethiopia.

Despite some improvement in East Africa, the food situation of vulnerable groups remains a serious concern, especially in pastoral areas affected by earlier drought. Furthermore, the food security situation in the Sudan and South Sudan has significantly deteriorated following poor harvests.

Many have condemned this and claim that it could have been avoided. They say that this food crisis was man-made due to the fact that this state of affairs had been forecasted by international warning systems many months before they actually took place.

In West Africa, adverse weather conditions last year caused a sharp drop in cereal and pasture production across large parts of the Sahel. This, banded together with high food prices and civil strife, has led to high food insecurity and increased malnutrition amongst the poor in several countries, notably in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

The situation of food in Africa, especially in east Africa which is closer home, is grim, notwithstanding the efforts being done to reverse these effects. In Kenya alone, an estimated 3.75 million people (plus about 520 000 refugees) are food insecure in agro-pastoralist areas in the northern and north eastern districts that had two to three consecutive dry weather seasons resulting in a nationwide call for donations to feed hungry fellow brothers dubbed "Kenyans4Kenya".

Further north, the protracted effects of the 2011 drought left close to 3.2 million people in need for relief food in southern and southeastern pastoral areas of Ethiopia.

Somalia itself is witnessing about 2.3 million of its population in need of emergency assistance due to the past severe drought, the ongoing civil conflict and limitations in delivering humanitarian assistance.

These are just some instances of

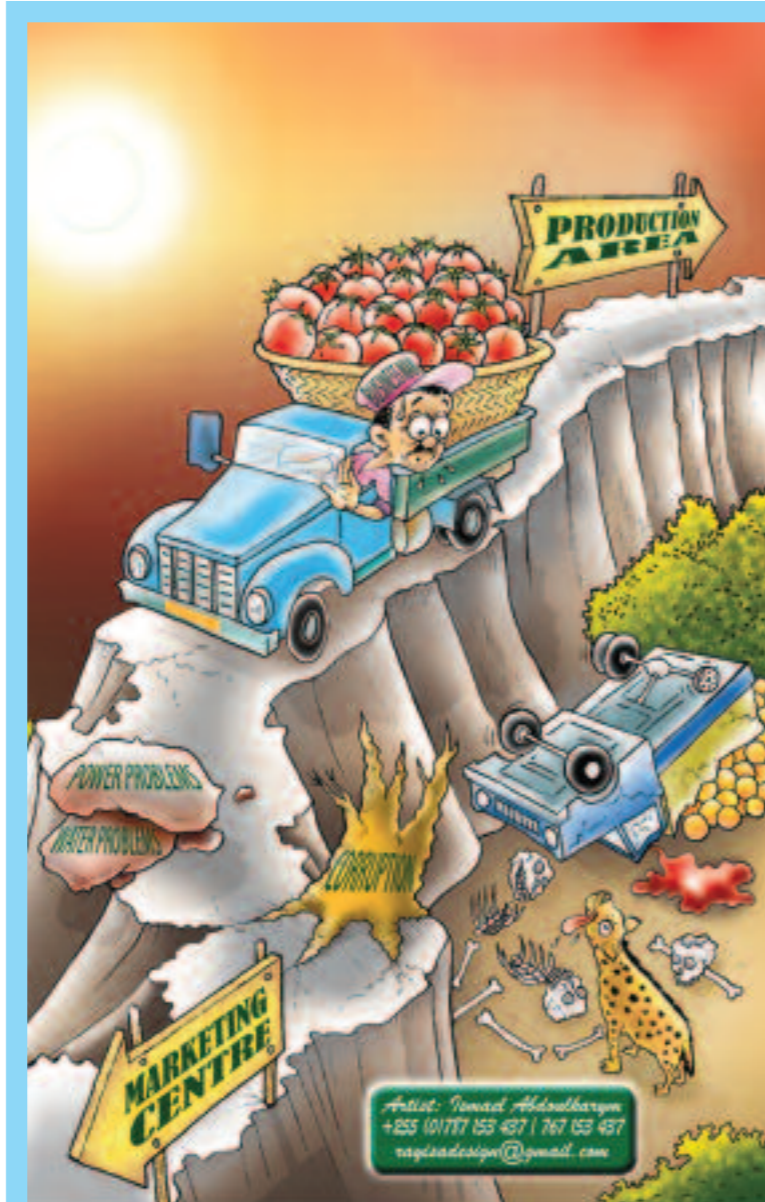
the reality on the ground. Other parts of the larger eastern Africa region especially in Sudan and South Sudan, the situation is deteriorating. In South Sudan about 1 million people are estimated to be food insecure due to low production of cereal, civil insecurity, trade restrictions, high food prices and increasing demand by IDPs and returnees last year.

Sudan on the other hand, faces close to 4.2 million people in need of food assistance. This takes into account about 2 million IDPs in Darfur. The rationale behind this is as similar to that in South Sudan with civil insecurity being felt mainly in South Kordofan, the Blue Nile region and Darfur.

Back home here in Tanzania, our country is blessed to not have gone through the harsh conditions felt by our

brothers across the border. To achieve what the Rio +20 Conference set out to do, which is a sustainable future for all human beings, Tanzania can capitalise on its agricultural prowess in the region and work on feeding both its population and the eastern Africa population.

Sustainability is critical for the world's majority to develop without following the environmentally damaging processes of the world's currently industrialised nations. This will ensure that third world countries are able to feed themselves and also have environmentally friendly development taking place. Samuel Johnson a great English poet and essayist (1708-1784) once said, "Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation, but the only riches she can call her own".



**BARRIERS TO BUSSINESS**

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- Rural Livelihood Development Company (RLDC) Tel: +255 26 2321455
- Tanzania Cotton Board Tel: +255 22 2122564, 2128347
- Horticultural Development Council of Tanzania (HODECT) Cell: +255 789 222 344; Fax: +255 27254 4568
- TATECO Ltd – Tel: +255 784 427817

#### AGRO-PROCESSING

- ERTH Food - Tel: +255 22 2862040
- MUKPAR Tanzania Ltd Tel: +255 28 250038/184
- ASAS Diaries Limited - Tel: +255 26 2725200
- Tanga Fresh – Tel: +255 27 2644238
- NatureRipe Kilimanjaro Limited Tel: +255 22 21 51457

#### EQUIPMENT

- Gurudumu Tatu Limited Tel: +255 22 2865632 / 2863699
- National Service Corporation Sole (SUMAJKT) Cell: +255 717 993 874, 715 787 887

#### FINANCE

- Private Agricultural Sector Support (PASS) Tel: 023-3752/3758/3765
- Community Bank Association Tel: +255 22 2123245
- Bank of Tanzania P.O. Box 2939, Dar es Slaam, Tanzania

#### AGRO-INPUTS

- Minjingu Mines & Fertilizers Ltd Tel: +255 27 253 9259 250 4679

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