

SUCCESS STORY OF KEEDO CLUSTER (Mpanda Municipal)

How it all started

The Katavi Empowerment and Entrepreneurs Development Organization (KEEDO) is a social, non-governmental organization that aims to facilitate and develop entrepreneurs in the Katavi Region. KEEDO introduced the opportunity of hot pepper farming to the farmers in the region. Despite initial challenges in recognizing and accepting this opportunity, the organization successfully empowered 94 farmers within Mpanda Municipal, including 26 females and 68 males.

With support from Rikolto, KEEDO expanded the base of chili farmers in Tanganyika DC, Mpanda Municipality, Nsimbo DC, Mpimbwe DC, and Mlele DC.



Trade and quality as drivers of success

KEEDO secured a contract with JFS, a buyer company that purchased dried chili from the farmers through KEEDO. The organization played a crucial role in facilitating the trade and ensuring the quality of the produce. The contract with JFS Pepper LTD was for one year, from 2020 to 2021, with a price of Tshs 4,500/= per kilo of dry pepper.

In the 2020/2021 farming season, a total of 94 farmers cultivated 35.5 acres of land and harvested an average of 6.5 tons of pepper. They sold 6,458 kg (6.45 tons) for Tsh 35,519,000 at a price of 5,000 shs per kilo. The price increased to 5,500 shs per kilo in September.

Currently, with the support of the national coach, KEEDO has facilitated the formation of MKONDWE AMCOS, which improves trade between buyers and farmers while ensuring KEEDO's role as a business development service provider for quality assurance of chili in the Katavi region.



Mid-of-project data

			Total
	MALES	FEMALES	
Coaches	1	0	1
Farmers	116	51	167
Finances		2	2
Inputs dealers		2	2
Market		3	3

Agribusiness partnership development in practice

By 2022, the number of farmers increased to 167, cultivating a total of 165 hectares of ABE chili in the entire region for the 2021/2022 season. However, a delay in the buyer's ability to off-take chili caused difficulties. Farmers faced a surplus of chili with no market, leading them to report the issue to the Katavi regional commissioner.

To address this, KEEDO worked with the national coach for Katavi and the project regional coordinator to attract new buyers. This resulted in a partnership with Data Green Investment. MKONDWE AMCOS entered into a contract with Data Green Investment, which involved buying from farmers, providing quality seeds, and KEEDO monitoring the quality and providing technical support. This arrangement allowed farmers to resume selling chili and earning income from the value chain.



KEEDO played a major role in attracting the new buyer, Data Green Investment, by providing detailed data about the chili farmers they worked with in Katavi. The organization led the negotiations with Data Green. The National Coach worked closely with KEEDO and the farmers to harmonize the situation and build trust. Data Green Investment became an important stakeholder in the agricultural business as they entered into a contract with MKONDWE AMCOS to buy hot pepper crops for export. MKONDWE AMCOS, a farmer-based organization, represented the farmers in the business, replacing KEEDO.

Results and lessons learned

The major lessons learnt during the chili market crisis in katavi between KEEDO and JFS are:

- I. KEEDO to remain the trade facilitator between business partners and playing a major role on post-harvest handling of chili in Katavi
- II. NKONDWE AMCOS become the business entity representing the farmers in the business instead of KEEDO

- III. The National and Local coaches strengthen the capacity of NKONDWE AMCOS on partnership development and management.
- IV. Transparency is among the key ingredient on building trust and strengthening relationship.

Quote Swedi Wamansi – secretary KEEDO

“Asking for help has been always the best choice we did on rescuing the market crisis situation, the guidance from trainer, coaches and regional coordinator helped a lot on resolving the contract issue with JFS and get into contract with GREEN DATA investment, we real appreciate the move to have open conversations with farmers about the situation that led to delayed payments and pick-ups it help a lot with the organization reputation”.

Plans for the near future

The cluster plans to construct a warehouse with a partial contribution from RIKOLTO. This initiative, part of RIKOLTO's project to build inclusive and competitive horticulture businesses in Tanzania's southern highlands regions, will facilitate organized logistics for MKONDWE AMCOS and ease aggregation for the buyer.

Overall, the success story of the KEEDO Cluster in Mpanda Municipal showcases the transformative impact of partnerships, effective facilitation, and resilience in empowering farmers and strengthening the chili value chain in the Katavi region.