Maji SASA! - stewardship action for smallholder farmers in Africa

Project Summary - June 2017

1. Introduction

This project will run to March 2018 with support from Diageo/Serengeti Breweries Ltd (SBL), Water Witness International-Shahidi wa Maji and German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) in partnership with farmers, communities, local government, universities and NGOs in Manyara, Arusha and Kilimanjaro Regions of Tanzania. The work results from implementation of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) Standard by SBL which has identified that suppliers of barley to their breweries face serious challenges relating to water, climate and sustainable business. The objective of this work is therefore:

To work together to address the water, climate and business risks facing farmers in the SBL supply chain

This will involve: (1) design, implementation and evaluation of six modules of support on key challenges, and; (2) using experience in Tanzania to develop a method which can be used to support farmers across Africa and globally.

2. What has happened so far?

The project team has met with over 50 farmers, community leaders, government and NGO staff in Siha (W.Kilimanjaro), Katesh/Basotu (Hanang) and Likamba (Arusha) to investigate problems and potential solutions, and found that:

a. **The current situation is not sustainable for the barley farmers or SBL**. Severe climate and water related risks undermine production, and the viability of barley. Support for farmers is limited and new effort is needed.
b. **Water, agronomy, soil fertility, productivity, tenure and climate resilience are closely inter-related**. Productivity can't be improved without addressing water/climate risks and wider farm management.
c. **Support should be cost-effective and tailored**. Problems facing farmers, their causes and solutions vary from place to place, and so support needs to be targeted accordingly.
d. **The main water/climate problems facing farmers and their communities are:**
   - × **Water availability and erratic rainfall:** Late onset, low totals, coupled with limited groundwater availability, soil water availability and low potential for irrigation. Regular impact on yield, loss of seed crop and harvests.
   - × **Agronomy:** Need for improved farming techniques and seed to build climate resilience, productivity, and to protect soil and water. Improved use of fertilizers and pesticides.
   - × **Resource degradation and conflict:** Insecure tenure, lack of mechanisation, and overgrazing cause problems with organic matter and water retention, and erosion. Farmer/pastoralists conflict over water and land.
   - × **Farm business planning and risk management:** Planning of finance and land-use to spread rainfall risks and maximise resilience, production and profit. Improved financial advice, planning, services and contracting.
   - × **Access to water supply, sanitation and hygiene:** In some locations, a lack of access to drinking water and sanitation in the community and at field level leads to lost time fetching water, or due to ill health.
   - × **Land tenure:** insecure land use rights or short-term land leasing agreements limit investment in soil, land and water stewardship.

4. What happens next?

a. Farmer questionnaires: To establish the evaluation baseline, a small team will visit each group of farmers between 12th and 23rd June 2017 to complete a detailed questionnaire survey with each farmer. The team will also explain the next steps and ensure farmers have adequate representation and are happy with the project.

b. Stakeholder launch and planning meeting: Strong stakeholder ownership and partnership are central to the success of this work. A meeting on **Thursday 29th June** at MSTDC training centre, Usa River will bring together:

- **Farmer groups and community representatives**: 2 each from Hanang, Siha, Arusha.
- **District Authorities**: 1 representative from each District likely to be the agriculture/water lead.
- **Basin Water Boards/Ministry of Water/WUAs**: 1 staff/representative from Internal Drainage Basin
- **Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries**: 1 x national level / senior leads

- **SBL/Diageo**: 2 x key staff to support coordination with farmers, communication and delivery
- **2030 WRG/Kilimanjaro Water Stewardship Platform:** 1 x coordinator, **Mandela University**: 1 x researcher
- **Shahidi wa Maji/WWI**: 2 x staff to manage and coordinate delivery
- **IWaSP/GIZ**: 1 x staff, **DFID**: 1 x strategic advice and networking/communication with donors
- **Agricultural experts and farmer support initiatives (VECO, SAT); WASH NGO's (Oikos, DMDD); Financial and insurance experts (ACRE)**.

The meeting will be a chance for stakeholders to: 1) review design and content and flag any queries; 2) input to the detailed design of the workplan, and establish a Project Advisory Committee which will oversee the work.

c. Development and testing of six support modules: The core of the work will be the development of farmer support modules which will include training, advisory services, demonstrations, development of new services and advocacy. These will require expert input but farmers will play a key role in design and will lead evaluation to improve relevance. Support modules scoped out with farmers include:

I. **Conservation agriculture training and support** – minimum tillage, contour ploughing, rotation, stubble retention etc. Erratic rainfall is the most significant water related risk facing farmers and SBL, leading in to lost harvests, asset reposition and lost revenue/production. In most sites irrigation isn't viable. Conservation farming retains organic matter and soil moisture which can sustain seed crop through dry periods or late onset of rains. We will therefore work with providers to design and deliver tailored training and advice for how conservation farming can be implemented most effectively.

II. **Financial/business training and support** – This will include advice and training on business planning, financial literacy and managing financial risks. Careful production planning and spreading investment risks can play a big role in reducing vulnerability to erratic rainfall. We will therefore work to design, deliver and assess the most useful forms of training and support on these issues with farmers. Analysis will also provide advocacy messages on the barriers to improved financial sustainability.

III. **General agronomy training and support** – to include sowing, fertiliser application, moisture retention, soil fertility, reducing harvest losses, safe use of agricultural chemicals etc. Improved agronomic practices will help address both the rainfall and soil degradation risks, alongside pollution risks.

IV. **Access to weather indexed insurance** – weather indexed insurance, where in return for an annual premium, farmers receive a pay out if rainfall is lower than expected is now a viable way of mitigating farmer climate risks. This module will work with insurance providers and farmers to scope the terms and premium costs for weather insurance, so that informed decisions can be made about affordability and the most suitable strategies. This will include training so that farmers fully understand the implications.

V. **WASH and healthy communities** – Access to water supply and sanitation was seen to be a problem at farm, household and community level, though severity and nature of the issues varied. We will therefore work with providers to design and implement suitable responses which will likely include: water safety planning; COWSO/water committee support and training; innovative action on field level access; community training; construction of demonstration VIP latrines/rainwater harvesting and support for advocacy on water issues.

VI. **Empowerment, rights and obligations** –some of the problems observed stem from complex issues which can be best solved by farmers and communities themselves with external support where needed. For example: insecure land tenure prevents investment in conservation, irrigation, stock fencing, long term planning; conflicts over land and water; lack of enforcement of environmental management bylaws, or compliance with national laws. We will support communities to analyse the current situation, understand policy and legal frameworks, statutory rights obligations and help them to plan for change.

Each of these modules will be developed with farmer, community and expert input, and evaluated by farmers themselves between July 2017 and March 2018. Note that not all farmers will receive all modules as these will respond to expressed needs. This work is globally pioneering, and the results and the methodology will be shared in Africa and internationally.

The work is funded by SBL/Diageo and GIZ and will be managed by Water Witness and Shahidi wa Maji. For further details please contact Nick Hepworth nickhepworth@waterwitmess.org (0785 964249) or Pendo Hyera pendohyera@shahidiwamaji.org (0784 435808)