

Tanzanian Blog; March 2014

By Anne Dennig

This week Clive, Cherryl, Declan and myself travelled to Tanzania to meet Ueli and Bahat in Magunguli, where we were very well looked after by Bahat's wife Eva. Bahat (energetic as ever!) has plans for three new value chain opportunities for his network, Southern Highlands Biashara Mapema. However it has not been the easiest week as we experienced the frustrations of bad weather, delaying a deal that we had hoped to follow, and poor 3G access for training on Salesforce; challenges that are all too common for Bahat.

Bahat's Home Village, Magunguli



Magunguli is a stunning spot with spectacular views over the hills and valleys, but as Bahat says "you can't eat beautiful views".

This remote village has about 5,000 inhabitants who make their living primarily through agriculture. It is a very fertile area mainly producing, potatoes, beans, maize and tomatoes. However the principal challenge in Magunguli is getting this produce to the market. The road from Magunguli to Makambako consists of 45 km of dirt road; when it rains this road can be impassible and transport is often delayed. Buyers need to be able to rely on produce arriving at the arranged time, and disappointments due to the weather and poor transport facilities,

have led to marketing problems.

The RAPP Collection Centre



RAVI has raised financing from RAPP (a Swiss company) and IFAD, in order to build a collection centre just outside Magunguli. Here produce can be collected, checked, bagged, and held securely until trucks can transport it to the buyers. The RAPP building has been built under Bahat's supervision and is close to completion. Although it will start purely as a collection centre, there are plans and space for various small businesses to use the facility and to make it a focal point for the farmers of the four neighbouring villages. However there is one missing link, which Bahat has been working on. The farmers of the four villages need a tractor to get their produce from the fields to the centre, but this is in hand due to an innovative new enterprise, GRACOMA.

GRACOMA

GRACOMA stands for Green Asset Collateral Management. A mixed forest surrounds the village, and the villagers are planting acacia, pine, and wattle, which they are then using as collateral for loans to improve the services to the village. One of these services will be transport to the RAPP collection centre, and for this they have secured a loan for a reconditioned tractor. Other services planned are irrigation for the fields and piped water to the houses.

Three Main Value Chains

Ueli and Clive worked with Bahat on his network plans on three value chains: potatoes, beans and sunflower oil. These involve a delivery service to kiosk owners,

chip sellers and small restaurants along the road to Dar. After this, Southern Highlands Biashara Mapema will open its own kiosk in the market in Mbeya to demonstrate the delivery service to other BOP outlets in the surrounding area and then extend these kiosks to the road to Dodoma and Dar. Value addition, with chipped potatoes and Fairtrade branded crisps, is also planned.

Internet, TSS Deals and the Tablet



Bahat's office is under a tree a few hundred metres from his home. Here he can get the best 3G signal to his modem. But the Internet reception is slow and erratic and sometimes it rains! Staying in Magunguli gave us a reality check, allowing us to see how difficult it can be to register and manage deals in a remote area. Cherryl had come with us to train Bahat and some of his TSS agents on using Salesforce and the TSS App. After many attempts she was able to train them, but the slow Internet connection made it extremely difficult. Bahat thinks that until there is a better connection it would be better to register his upcoming deals through sms messages.

Video Diaries

T4T gave us a tablet for Bahat to use for convenient access to Salesforce and as a tool to record his network activities in a video diary. Declan worked with Bahat who started by filming his TSS agent at

Makambako market, Lucy Kyando. Bahat picked up the filming quickly and intends to enter his diary for the COBsters; the competition is hotting up.



A BIG Thank You to Cherryl!

Finally, a big "thank you" to Cherryl. It is typical of Cherryl that on this trip not only did she do the Salesforce and TSS App training under very difficult and trying circumstances, but she also worked with Declan as our Swahili interviewer and even managed to give advice to James K on his mango deal and to register Moses' next cassava deal while sitting in the back of the Land Rover! We are very happy for Cherryl, who has an exciting new job as program assistant to an IFAD project; but we are very sad that we will be losing her from the T4T office, where she has done such a great job helping the Network Managers and all those involved with TSS. However, we are pleased that she will continue to be involved with TruTrade.



I know that everyone who has worked with Cherryl will wish her well in her new job.