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TANZANIA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP ON RICE POST HARVEST MANAGEMENT CO-FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Monday, 2 December 2019, Morogoro: Today, the Assistant Director of Postharvest Management in the Ministry of Agriculture. Ms Josephine Amolo, together with representatives from the European Union (EU) and the Ministry of Finance officially opened a two days workshop that brings together key stakeholders of the rice value chain, including private sector and public institutions, non-governmental organisations as well as the main development partners involved.

Rice is the second most important food and commercial crop in Tanzania after maize. It is among the major sources of employment, income and food security for Tanzanian farming households. Despite the high potential for rice production in Tanzania, the rice value chain remains constrained by a number of factors. Yet, it is one of the priority value chains identified in the Agriculture Sector Development Programme II.

In line with Government's initiatives, three projects funded by the European Union for a total amount of 4.5 million EUR (11 billion TZS) are supporting smallholder farmers in Morogoro and Iringa regions to address some of these challenges. The projects are implemented by FAO, HELVETAS, the Aga Khan Foundation and their respective partners. The active involvement and contributions of all stakeholders of the value chain, including smallholder farmers, private sector and public institutions are essential to consolidate the achievements of these projects and make them sustainable.

The objective of the workshop is to document best practices in the rice value chain that can be replicated, and identify solutions to common challenges faced by smallholder farmers, especially women and youth. While lessons learnt from the three projects funded by the European Union will be discussed, JICA, Norway, USAID and World Bank have also been invited to share their experiences from the sector. Focus will be on solutions and actions that the farmers, private sector and public institutions can work together on in order to unlock the full potential of rice production, processing and trade in Morogoro, Iringa and beyond.

During his speech the Guest of Honour, Ms Amolo, the Assistant Director for Postharvest Management Division in Ministry of Agriculture said: *This platform provides good Avenue for all stakeholders to learn and provide contribution to address rice value chain challenges in inclusive approach. This would in turn contribute to food security, reduce poverty, and spur economic growth.*

The representative of the European Union to Tanzania said that: *"Our goal is to bring rice from farm to fork in a sustainable way with the ultimate aim of reducing poverty and improving food security in this region. We hope that this workshop will help to identify key lessons learnt that can be used to improve rice post-harvest management and the value chain as a whole".*



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Background:

Over the past 10 years, a lot of efforts have been deployed by the Government of Tanzania to boost agricultural productivity, improve food security, reduce poverty and ensure environmental sustainability through the commercialization of smallholder agriculture in the Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT). Since its establishment in 2010, the SAGCOT Initiative has served as a catalyzer in bringing together private sector, public institutions, NGOs and development partners to support inclusive and sustainable development in this area. Joint investments have been mobilized to develop agriculture while protecting the wetlands and to improve infrastructure, such as the Kidatu-Ifakara road and a new power substation near Ifakara to ensure reliable electricity supply and grid extensions.

Since 2013, the European Union has contributed to SAGCOT for a total amount of 74.5 million EUR (188 billion TZS) and will continue to support agriculture in the Southern Highlands and in Zanzibar through its new programme worth 100 million EUR (253 billion TSZ) called AGRI-CONNECT. The main focus of this new programme will be on the Tea, Coffee, and Horticulture Value chains, and on creating an enabling business environment for the sector.

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