



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/tanzanian-agronomist-inspired-%E2%80%9Cmama-clinton%E2%80%9D>

Tanzanian Agronomist Inspired by “Mama Clinton”



Kimberly Flowers/USAID

Secretary Clinton (left) joins Halima Saleh (center) in Tanzania to plant a sweet pepper at the Feed the Future launch.

The following is a guest blog post by Halima Saleh, an agronomist with Fintrac Inc. in Tanzania.

This week I had the distinct honor of being invited to support Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton as she was recognized for her work in food security by the World Food Program USA at the [George McGovern Leadership Awards Ceremony](#).

It is my first time to visit the United States, but I don't see this trip as just about me—I represent all of the female farmers and agronomists in [Tanzania](#) who are working to transform the way we grow and market crops.

It is a true privilege to be an agronomist in a country with as much potential as Tanzania. There aren't a lot of female agronomists and I find that female farmers—who make up the majority of farmers in Tanzania—are more open with me. I am very happy to see that agriculture is gaining more attention, but we must do more to engage females as leaders in agribusiness. Many women don't study science, but I knew that I could do it. I encourage every female student to study agriculture because it is the only sector where you can become self-sustaining.

When I was studying agricultural economics, I never dreamed that I would one day be asked by the United States to visit Washington, DC, to speak at a food security award ceremony or to meet with leaders in agricultural policy. I first met Secretary Clinton, or Mama Clinton as we call her, in June 2011, when she [visited](#) a women's farming cooperative to launch [Feed the Future](#), the U.S. global hunger and food security initiative, in Tanzania. I explained to her how I was teaching new technologies to farmers such as the use of greenhouses and drip irrigation as part of the [Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program](#).

Mama Clinton not only listened to the female farmers of the cooperative, but also showed that she could be a farmer, too. She planted a sweet pepper plant that day—even with a suit on!—and each person in the cooperative has been taking care of that sweet pepper plant since then.

The Secretary has proven that she is deeply committed to food security and understands the impact agricultural development can make. As an agronomist who works with farmers every day to increase their yields and incomes, I can promise you that agricultural development is making a tremendous difference in the lives of Tanzanians. I am thankful for all of my colleagues at the Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program, whose work is making a big impact on the lives of smallholder farmers.

I have been inspired by Secretary's Clinton's commitment to agriculture and will continue to work hard every day to increase the incomes of farmers to end hunger and poverty. My hope is that more and more women will be inspired by her leadership and that someday we will see as many women as men studying agriculture and working to improve agricultural production.