



## CHAMPION STORIES

### **Tanzanian President Recognizes Student Internship Program**

USAID's Africa Lead was honored to be recognized by President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania along with Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), USAID Development Credit Authority and Cooperative Rural Development Bank (CRDB) for our work with young entrepreneurs. The President recognized this proactive partnership between these organizations which is supporting SUA's graduates from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness in applying their studies through internships in East Africa. Africa Lead has been contributing to this partnership since early 2012, working with SUA to match interns with host agricultural-based companies.

On April 10, 2013, after a briefing by CRDB Bank and SUA, the President expressed his support for this program that is empowering recent young graduates while expanding their employment opportunity through hands-on training and experience. The President pledged to contribute \$3.5 million (Tsh 5 billion) to the initiative, asking the partners to prepare a plan for scaling up the program which will be submitted to the Ministry before it will be presented to the cabinet. This internship program builds on the existing agribusiness entrepreneurship program which included support to the recent graduates who are interested in incubating business ideas and are competing for loans from banks supported by USAID. Over the past year, Africa Lead has been arranging internships for these SUA students in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda while the CDDDB bank has provided guaranteed 10 loans worth \$310,000 for an agribusiness owned by SUA Graduate Entrepreneurs Cooperative (SUGECO) members.

These internships are 8-week placements designed to immerse these young professionals in a hands-on business environment to guide the development of start-up agribusiness enterprises. Many of the host business are owned or managed by Africa Lead's trained Champions for Change for Food Security. The total number of interns that have been placed to date is twenty-four. ■