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**Title:**

TAPE Evaluation Tanzania 2023: An evaluation of CROPS4HD Project beneficiaries on their agroecological transition and multidimensional performance in the frame of SWISSAID's thematic evaluation on agroecology 2023

**Abstract:**

Agriculture is the main economic activity in the Lindi and Mtwara regions located in the southern part of Tanzania along the Indian Ocean, which employs about 90 percent of the economically active population. SWISSAID has been actively working in Lindi and Mtwara regions for over 10 years on agroecology. TAPE<sup>1</sup>, the Tool for Agroecological Performance Evaluation developed by FAO, was used to assess the multidimensional performance of agroecology in a sampled number of farming households in SWISSAID's programme area in Tanzania. Beneficiary groups (200 households) that were involved in this evaluation are those who participated in the two most recent projects aiming at improving smallholder farmers' livelihood through agroecology. The comparison group (56 households) were selected from the districts where SWISSAID has no interventions in agroecology. The analysis of the first step of the TAPE evaluation reveals that SWISSAID's interventions foster the agroecological transition. With an average CAET score of 58% beneficiary households are at the stage of incipient transition, compared to the comparison group with an average of 38%, to be considered non-agroecological. However, about 25% of beneficiary farmers have a CAET score lower than 50% and thus haven't started the agroecological transition yet. This indicates that while there is a gradual improvement in terms of income generation, and environmental and health benefits, agroecological **transition takes time** given the fact that the beneficiary farmers have been supported by SWISSAID for at least five years. By examining the statistical links between the 10 elements of agroecology and the CAET, we could see that for successful agroecological transition one crucial factor stands out: resilience. This is a very important element, especially given climate change and other economic shocks.

The second step of the TAPE evaluation provides important evidence that **agroecology works**. As the agricultural system advances to agroecology, it can bring about a positive change in transforming farmers' livelihoods. The evaluation shows that transitioning to agroecology is a way to increase productivity and especially income, while reducing production costs. Agroecology can increase food security and nutrition and by the reduction of the use of chemical inputs, both fertilizers and pesticides, food safety is fostered, and health hazards are reduced. Finally, even though the evaluation does not show clear positive data for soil improvement, the transition to agroecology is beneficial for the environment and agrobiodiversity increases. These positive effects of agroecology are more pronounced the more advanced a system is in the transition towards agroecology.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/agroecology/tools-tape/en/>