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Prepare Budgets Before you Cultivate your Farms

Farmers in the country have been advised to carefully scrutinize and evaluate the outcome of their investment in agriculture before they start cultivating to avoid incurring unnecessary losses.

Speaking from his office recently, the director of the Traditional Irrigation and Environmental Development (TIP), northern zone, Mr. Ibrahim Kawa, said many farmers had been incurring losses because they did not plan properly. He said in order for a farmer to succeed, it was important that he used a pen and an exercise book and do some draft plans, scrutinize the possible profits and if there was no profit to be made, find out what else he could do.

"The time has come for farmers to change from the old system of engaging in cultivation without evaluating whether there was any profit or not; we have started educating farmers to plan by writing every detail," he said.

The organization, which currently operates in Manyara, Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Tanga regions, has succeeded in providing more than 20,000 farmers with modern skills on agricultural practices in efforts to eliminate poverty.

TIP also educated farmers on contract farming, which ensured farmers of market for their crops even before they start production. Mr. Kawa said in this type of farming, farmers agree with buyers on the kind of crops the buyer would buy from the farmer and agree on price. This assured farmers of fair and sure returns. "We are trying to inculcate into farmers the habit of planning because there is a sure market for the crops they produce, this has already shown some success," he said. However, the director said his organization was now trying to cross borders to search for markets for Tanzanian farmers so that farmers could produce even more.