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Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity Newsletter, 26th Edition, July 2023



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Nigeria integrated Agriculture Activity Newsletter

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IAA Holds Talks with FMARD on Seed System Development

As part of efforts to promote the community-based seed enterprise model and ultimately, food security in Northeast Nigeria, USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity has held talks with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD). Speaking during the meeting in Abuja, the Chief of Party – Integrated Agriculture Activity (IAA), Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal, disclosed the many efforts of the Activity in ensuring that smallholder farmers in the northeast have access to improved seeds in addition to training them in the best agronomic practices. He also provided insight into the structures driving the

community-based seed enterprise model. According to him, under the community-based seed enterprise model, a sustainable seed production and distribution system of climate-smart and nutrient-dense varieties is developed. “We are currently planning a workshop on seed development that will bring together relevant individuals and institutions in Nigeria. It is our hope that this workshop will help chart a new course in this important area capable of affecting food security in Nigeria”, he said.

Receiving the Activity on behalf of the Permanent Secretary-FMARD, Dr. Ernest Umakihle, the Director, Federal Department of Agriculture, Eng. Abdullahi G.

Abubakar acknowledged the dynamism of the Activity in seed system and expressed the ministry's readiness in providing the necessary support for the planned workshop. “We are always excited about workshops such as this. Usually, they help proffer solutions to some of the major problems faced by small holder farmers and assist in laying a solid foundation for sustainable food enterprise development”, he commented. Integrated Agriculture Activity is planning a high-level stakeholder event on seed development before the end of the year. The event is expected to have in attendance important dignitaries from the agriculture sector and beyond.



(L-R) Activity Financial Services Advisor, Mr. Munir Ahmad; FMARD Director, Federal Agriculture Activity, Eng. A.G Abubakar (Director; IAA Chief of Party, Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal FMARD Deputy-Director, Agri-Production, Dr. Nura Abubakar



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IITA (IAA), NASC Hold First Partnership Committee Meeting

USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity, met with the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) on July 21, 2023, at the NASC Headquarter in Abuja to discuss plans on scaling-up seed system development in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

Speaking during the meeting, the Chief of Party - Integrated Agriculture Activity, Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal, highlighted the efforts of the Activity in ensuring the availability of improved, certified seeds to smallholder farmers in the northeast. He also hinted on the painstaking agro-ecological effort of



IAA Chief of Party, Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal making a presentation on the Community-Based Seed Enterprise Model to the National Agricultural Seeds Council

choosing high-yielding seed varieties for farmers in this region as well as the Activity's unique community-based seed enterprise model which if well-utilized can contribute immensely to food security in the country.

Importantly, the Chief of Party informed the gathering of the proposed high-level stakeholders meeting scheduled for October 2023 which will showcase USAID's efforts in developing sustainable seed system in



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Participants at the first IAA- NASC partnership committee meeting.

Northeast Nigeria through the Activity's CBSE model. "Three panel discussions will be incorporated in the event. These will include panels on policy, the market system, and a technical session on community-based seed production. We are hoping that we will get support from NASC and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), Capital Agricultural Development Limited (CADL) and the Activity in these areas", he said. In his response, the Acting Director-General (NASC), Dr. Ishiak Khalid, praised IITA for its remarkable efforts at ensuring food security through modern research.

He stated that NASC partnership with IITA has been a beneficial and long standing one. "NASC is willing to support any good agricultural initiative. We appreciate that a high-level stakeholders' meeting is in the pipeline. We will provide you with the necessary support to ensure the success of the event".

The DG and his team also intimated the meeting of NASC's intention to host a National Seed Planning meeting before the end of the year in Abuja. The meeting is expected to provide reviews on seed production and serve as a ground for fresh ideas on seed development in Nigeria.



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Quarterly Meeting with Extension Agents: Planning for Agricultural Success

Every quarter, Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity meets with Agriculture Development Programme (ADP) Extension Agents (EAs) in the intervention states - Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Yobe. The purpose of this meeting is to review the activities of previous quarters and make robust achievable plans for the new quarter.

At the Adamawa Quarterly Meeting, the Deputy Chief of Party, Mr. Olukayode Faleti encouraged EAs to maintain a smooth working relationship with community-based seed producers and smallholder farmers under their supervision. "The Activity is focused on making improved certified seeds available to this group of farmers. Not only that, training of these farmers in climate-smart good agricultural practices is a major target for the Activity. We encourage you to always support them and help resolve whatever challenges they have especially

with regards to improving yields on their farms".

During the meeting, the Activity received feedback through discussions, question, and answer sessions. The feedback is pertinent as it helps the Activity make further decisions relating to distribution of seeds, establishment and supervision of demonstration plots, field supervision and modalities, data collection/recording, seed recovery and so on. A highpoint of the meeting is the brief on the formation of community-based seed entrepreneurs' cooperative group which will pave the way for community-based seed entrepreneurs. Summarily, the various sessions contribute to improvements in the activities of the small holder farmer in these intervention states. The quarterly meeting was held in Adamawa on July 11; Borno, July 13; Gombe, July 18; and Yobe, July 20.



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IAA Empowers 30 Youth in Spray Service Skills

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity has empowered 30 youth from Gombe and Yobe States with Spray Service (SSP) skills. Participants were drawn from Akko, Billiri, & Kaltungo (Gombe) as well as Potiskum, Nangere and Fika (Yobe). The one-week training was organized in collaboration with CropLife Nigeria. The training started on July 17, 2023, and July 24, 2023, in Gombe and Yobe respectively.



Integrated Pest Management session during the training in Gombe.



A trainee in Yobe State, Ya'u Abubakar, receive instructions from the trainer.

During the training, the all-male participants (females are discouraged from this training because of the negative impact of chemicals on reproduction) learnt the responsible usage of pesticides and its correct application on farmlands through the Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP).

The participants were thereafter presented with pesticides application kits, operational identity card/license, and knapsack sprayers at the closing ceremony. Explaining the objective of the training, Activity Youth and Gender Facilitator, Mr. Shakiru Quadri, said the training would provide the participants with skills in pesticides application,



IAA Senior Business Development Officer, Mr. Sini Luwa, presents a certificate of completion to a participant while the Youth and Gender Facilitator, Mr. Shakiru Quadri, looks on.



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leading to improved environmental integrity, improved handling & reduced abuse of pesticides. "Of utmost importance is the fact that this training would expose youth farmers to lucrative income generating opportunities linked to the agricultural value chain and much-needed expertise in the reduction of field hazards and health risks due to inappropriate exposure to pesticides in the northeast".



Youth-Led Enterprise Development Officer, Ms. Aishatu Ali presenting a participant in Yobe with PPE and Knapsack sprayer.



Closing ceremony in Gombe: Participants fully kitted in their PPE pose with their knapsack sprayers.



Posing with the Representative of the Permanent Secretary, Yobe State Min of Youth, Sport, Social and Community Development, Alh. Ibrahim Garba (in blue) and Representative, ADP Program Manager, Alh. Ali Yusuf (in white).

One of the beneficiaries in Yobe State, Mohammed Usman, appreciated USAID, IITA and IAA for the initiative. "I didn't know that pesticides have such effects, and that extra care should be taken when applying them. We used to buy sprayers, not knowing the correct measurement of pesticides to mix. We don't even use any PPE. Now, we know better. Thanks to the organizers. We are all leaving here more knowledgeable."



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“IAA turned me to a businesswoman” – Beneficiary.

Hyelazra Daniel is a farmer. She belongs to the Ndivana farmers' group in Kwaya Kusar LGA, Borno State. She also volunteers as a nutrition promoter for Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity in her community. In August 2021, Hyelazra joined other nutrition promoters in attending a micro-processing training where they were taught how to process legumes and cereals. “I was so excited about the training especially when I heard I could make money. I needed a source of income before harvest. As a farmer, you must wait patiently for your crops to mature”.

With just a measure ('mudu') of soybeans, Hyelazra started making



Hyelazra happily displays the new utensils she just bought for her soybean business.



‘awara’ (tofu) for sale in September 2021. She spent NGN5500 as capital and made a profit of NGN1800 for sales on market days. In a month, she made NGN7,200 as profit. From 1 measure, she increased her production capacity to 2 measures and made NGN5000 in a day, NGN20,000 in a month.

By November 2021, Hyelazra began making soymilk. From a NGN3000 capital, she would sell thrice a week and make a profit of NGN3000 a week, NGN 12,000 a month. She would save NGN2000 every week with her Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) group.

“Business has been so good. By the time I would reach my stall on market days, customers would already be waiting for me.... Since I started this business, I would say I have made up to NGN192,000.” Late last year, Hyelazra rented for NGN8000 and bought groundnut seeds for NGN8500. She realized four bags of groundnuts after harvest. Recently, Hyelazra purchased a set of coolers, a set of food flasks, a set of pots and a jug costing NGN33,300. These are to help with her soybean business.

“I am grateful for this golden opportunity. IAA turned me to a businesswoman. Thank you, IAA, thank you USAID!”



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About the Activity

The Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (IAA) issued under the US Government's Global Food Security Act was awarded by USAID Nigeria to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and its partners in July 2019 towards the economic recovery of North-East Nigeria, in the wake of the devastation caused by the ongoing insurgency in the region. The Activity supports vulnerable populations in 12 Local Government Areas of Adamawa and Borno states to re-engage in basic farming activities and aims to advance the objectives of inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led economic growth, strengthened resilience among people and systems, and a well-nourished population, especially among women and children in targeted locations.

To achieve these objectives, the Activity works with a coalition of public and private sector partners to facilitate improved agro-input and extension advisory services to serve vulnerable populations; strengthen the institutions that form the market system and the networks that serve smallholder farmers disenfranchised by conflict, and facilitate the engagement of youth and women in economic and entrepreneurial activities.

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