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The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity Newsletter, 10th Edition, March 2022



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IAA Recognizes 169 Partners on World Agriculture Day 2022

In commemoration of this year's World Agriculture Day held on March 22, USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity honored 169 partners in Adamawa and Borno States. These partners include government officials, lead farmers, community-based seed producers, seed companies, field agents, extension agents, community development officers as well as nutrition liaison officers who have supported the Activity's efforts since its inception in 2019 in ensuring food security in Nigeria's northeast. The various award categories included awards for excellence, best smallholder farmer, best extension agent, farm waste to wealth technology award among others.

In his opening remarks, Chief of Party, Integrated Agriculture Activity, Dr. Prakash Kant Silwal, spoke on the theme of this year's celebration: "Growing a Climate for

Tomorrow". He particularly appreciated the partners for their unrelenting support in seed production, crop production, nutrition interventions alongside youth and women enterprises. "The Activity will not stop at helping to make food available in the northeast and contributing to the livelihood of the people", the Chief of Party emphasized.

The Adamawa State Commissioner for Livestock and Aquaculture, Hon. Umar Diyajo who was also a recipient of the award for excellence commended the Activity on various feats in agriculture. He reiterated the state government's commitment to ensuring that smallholder farmers receive the needed assistance.

The event also included an exhibition by partner agriculture seed companies and producers.



Some award recipients with staff members during the World Agriculture Day Celebration in Yola



Healthy Children, Happy Mothers: Benefitting from IAA's Nutrition Interventions

Veronica Absalom, 30, and Theresa Paul, 35 have a lot in common. They both have 4 children. They reside in Demsa LGA of Adamawa State. Both women are rice farmers. Their youngest children are 6 months old. Ultimately, they learned the importance of breastfeeding through the USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity while pregnant. Both have been on exclusive breastfeeding since the birth of their chubby children, Kewapwa and Annabel.

Since its inception in July 2019, IAA has reached about 60,000 under 5 children with various nutrition interventions.

From training mothers on how to prepare nourishing meals (e.g., Tom Brown) to the use of Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) for screening children, the Activity has contributed immensely to reducing malnutrition among the teeming children population in the 7 and 5 implementing LGAs of Adamawa and Borno States respectively.

For almost three years, the Activity has taken the campaign on Infant and Young Children Feeding (IYCF) seriously. Nutrition Liaison Officers (NLOs) in each of the intervention LGAs work with nutrition promoters who meet fortnightly with a group of 25 to 50 people (expectant mothers

inclusive) with messages on hygiene, micro-processing of cereals, and legumes, homestead farming, and exclusive breastfeeding. They emphasize the early initiation of breast milk and help debunk local myths about breastfeeding.

“I had a very nasty experience with my third child”, Veronica said. “Tradition has always condemned giving a baby the first substance from the breast after delivery. This caused me a sore breast that landed me in the hands of a traditional healer. I learnt that you

start breastfeeding a child immediately he is born and that is exactly what I did. No regrets whatsoever.”

Exclusive breastfeeding presents a whole new motherhood experience for these mothers who were influenced by the constant campaigns. “My last child is the healthiest”, explained Theresa. “I am not experiencing the supposedly usual baby sicknesses with Annabel. My baby has turned into a star that everyone wishes to carry”.



IAA's Nutrition Liaison Officer, Ngunan Samuel Ukor and volunteer nutrition promoter, Itapwa Teneke explaining effective nutrition patterns to the mothers.

Taking IAA Nutrition Interventions to the Barracks

On Saturday, 26th March 2022, USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Activity flagged off a nutrition campaign tagged "Improving Food Diversity and Nutrition for All" at 23 Armoured Brigade, Yola, Adamawa State. The event which was organized in collaboration with Nigeria Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA), had in attendance military men and their wives at the Gibson Jalo Cantonment.

At the flag-off ceremony, the Activity displayed improved variety of seeds, poultry, cosmetics, and briquettes. The nutrition team also demonstrated several meal production procedures including the production of the signature orange-fleshed potato juice.

Delivering the opening remark, the Market Systems & Livelihood Specialist, Mr. Bassey Archibong explained that the Activity's aim of bringing such intervention to the Barracks is to help improve the lives of soldiers' wives who may not have a steady source of income. He stated that subsequent to the flag-off, the women will be trained in home-gardening and other nutrition-beneficial processes which will assist them economically.



23 Armoured Brigade Commander, Brigadier-General Aminu Garba (right) and his wife, Mrs Fauzihat Garba inspecting one of the nutrition stands at the flag-off of the campaign, "Improving Food Diversity and Nutrition for All". They are accompanied by CoP, Dr. Prakash Kant Silwal and Field Security Coordination, Captain (rtd) Palash Abul-Kawser.

The Chief of Party, Dr. Prakash Kant Silwal, who declared the event open praised the collaboration and hopes that the joint effort will produce lasting financial results for the families of the women at the cantonment. The NAOWA 23 Brigade Coordinator, Mrs. Fauzihat Garba expressed her excitement about the partnership.

She promised to ensure that the women benefit maximally from the intervention. The Brigade Commander, 23 Armored Brigade, Brigadier-General Aminu Garba was also present at the event to support the women of the cantonment.



23 Armoured Brigade Women waiting to visit the exhibition stands during the flag-off ceremony



CELEBRATING
International Women's Day 2022
@ Integrated Agriculture Activity



WHEN NUTRITION MEETS INNOVATION



Rebecca (Becky) Tumba is the Nutrition Officer at Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity. She was appalled when on a certain day, a young child went to a community drinking pot and dipped a dirty container to obtain water. She felt the child had not only contaminated the water for himself but also for the community. The water could spread diarrhea and other water-borne diseases.

“From that moment, I continued to ponder on a cheap way a rural community can access safe, clean healthy water”, Becky said. “That was how Becky’s Pot was birthed”.

Becky’s pot is a water container made out of clay. Call it Clay Water Dispenser (CWD) or ‘Claypenser’. Unlike the traditional water pots,

Becky’s pots do not have a wide opening. The smaller opening has a clay covering with a tap by the side for dispensing water.

Clay pots are generally alkaline in nature. This alkalinity interacts with the acidity of water thereby improving the PH balance. In fact, clay pots are not only natural but eco-friendly. Their use guarantees proper hygiene and convenience in water storage. They are preferred by rural dwellers because of their cooling ability even in the absence of electricity. With just N3500, a claypenser can be purchased.

“People in urban centers are now demanding Becky’s pot. It is no longer for just rural communities. Everyone desires a good source of clean water”, Becky stated.

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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