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NIGERIA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY

NEWSLETTER - FIFTH EDITION

OCTOBER 2021



Chief of Party's Message

One of the key strategies of the Activity in achieving its lofty objectives is by building sustainable partnerships with relevant private and public sector partners and stakeholders. In this fifth edition of the Newsletter, we bring to you some of the great partnerships that the Activity has built since inception; in developing sustainable seed system and inputs supply to smallholder farmers, enhancing nutrition, empowering youth and women in enterprise development etc., and the wonderful results achieved through such partnerships.

PRAKASH KANT SILWAL
Chief of Party,
Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity,

IN FOCUS

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION



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Activity field officers inspecting one of the IAA-NASC supported seeds demonstration plot in Adamawa State

Forging Partnership with NASC to Create a Sustainable Seed System in Northeast Nigeria

Farmers need timely access to quality seed and other essential agricultural inputs to ensure optimal yields in crop production that contributes to improved household level food security. According to the International Seed Federation (ISF) “the world’s long-term stability rests on several pillars, one of which is food security. Seed is the starting point of the food system and farmers everywhere depend on access to quality seed to grow healthy crops. However, according to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations FAO, “in many developing countries (including Nigeria), farmers have not yet been able to fully benefit from the advantages of using quality seed due to a combination of factors, including inefficient seed production,

distribution and quality assurance systems, as well as bottlenecks caused by a lack of good seed policy on key issues such as access to credit for inputs” <https://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/thematic-sitemap/theme/seeds-pgr/seed-sys/en/> Therefore, to adequately address the issue of quality seed and its availability, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) under the Activity established an effective partnership in September 2019 with the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC). NASC is an agency of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development charged with the overall development and regulation of the seed industry in Nigeria. The partnership was specifically established to develop a sustainable seed system that will produce quality seeds and make those seeds available at the local level, in Northeast Nigeria. The Community Based Seed Enterprise (CBSE), seed companies, IITA and NASC are the stakeholders of this seed system. Under the partnership, the Activity facilitates foundation seeds from IITA and other relevant research institutes to CBSEs who are trained and supervised by the Activity and NASC officers to produce seeds that are certified by NASC. The partnership facilitates the selection, training

and development of 1,185 Community-Based Seed Producers (CBSP) from the Producer Groups of Farmers and promotes sustainable production of certified seeds at the community level.

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A recent evaluation study (Integrated Agriculture Activity 2021 annual survey) result indicated that a total of 33,165 smallholder farmers are accessing 529 tons of certified seeds from the established community-based seed producers across the two implementation states of Adamawa and Borno through this partnership.”

This partnership has created access to high-yielding varieties, developed greater climate resilience, and generated income through employment creation for smallholder farmers.

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Partnership with the Candel Agrosciences Limited for Sustainable Supply of Agro Chemicals and Liquid Fertilizers

To adequately address the sudden ban of granulated Urea and other nitrogenous fertilizers within the Activity areas of operation (Adamawa and Borno states) due to insurgents' activities, the Activity have signed an MoU with Candel Agrosciences Limited to test applications of liquid fertilizer on selected crops on demonstration plot for the possibility of scale up to other farmers. The partnership started with Candel contributing these inputs for free in the first year 2020 farming season for our demonstration plots for rice and groundnut crops. The success observed in the 96 demonstration plots has been encouraging. To further the partnership and to initiate a more extensive involvement of Candel, the Chief of Party Mr. Prakash Silwal, Mr. Bassey Archibong, Market Systems and Livelihood Specialist and Mr. Munir Ahmad the Financial Advisor visited the factory site in Lekki Free Zone, Tiye Town, Akodo- Lagos. As an outcome of the visit, Integrated Agriculture Activity agreed to revise the existing MoU with Candel FZE in the light of new partnership. IAA will also identify the locations where dry season farming will be done and liquid urea will be required. In addition, the Activity will identify farmers that are willing to participate in the dry season farming as well as agro chemicals requirements for the farmers.



Chief of Party, IAA inspecting facilities at Candel Agrosciences Limited company

Enterprise Development through Partnership with National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI)

The National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI) was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria to implement Technology Incubation Programme (TIP) throughout the federation. The Technology Incubation scheme involves business and enterprise infrastructure development to nurture and grow new and small businesses. Consequently, the Activity is collaborating with NBTI through its Technology Incubation Centre (TIC) in Yola, under the youth and women enterprise development intervention.

This partnership has produced two young and unique female entrepreneurs, namely Yeshee Simon (Tomapepo production) and Linda Alfred (briquette production), from Yola south LGA, Adamawa State, for business incubation services. The partnership is currently set for expansion to accommodate more budding entrepreneurs under other platforms of the enterprise incubation model, including non - resident incubation, community incubation for women and youth in remote/rural areas, post incubation services, and direct commercialisation of products and services, in the Agrifood, Farm machine fabrication, Chemical processes, Essential oils, and Waste recycling sectors. Youth and women entrepreneurs under the partnership stands to benefit/ are benefiting from technical support, product design and development, free access to physical resources/infrastructure such as shops/offices, fabrication machines, laboratory for quality checks, product standardization and registration, facilitation of access to markets and finance, and business mentorship. The incubation centre also provide platforms for incubating entrepreneurs to attend exhibitions/trade fairs for business development.



Activity Staff and Beneficiaries (Yeshee Tompepo & Linda Alfred) and the National Board for Technology Incubation Team



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NLOs conducting step down of micro processing of legumes and cereals in Sakwa community, Hawul LGA, Borno State during a nutrition food demonstration session

Addressing Malnutrition in Rural Communities Through ADSPHCDA Collaboration

Malnutrition is a major health issue in the Northeast part of Nigeria with 55.3% occurrence of underdeveloped children recorded in Adamawa and Borno states (source: Integrated Agriculture Activity baseline study 2019). To address the issue of malnutrition the Activity is implementing various nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions as well as forging partnerships at the national and local level with relevant actors. Since 2019 the Activity has been collaborating with The Adamawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency (ADSPHCDA). The ADSPHCDA is a government agency entrusted with the responsibility to provide community

health care services and promote health care sector human resources development. This partnership was established to jointly implement nutrition counseling and practices which would ensure that women of reproductive age and their children under five years remain healthy. To date, through the IAA-ADSPHCDA partnership the 36 SPHCDA staff (12 nutrition focal persons and 24 community mobilizers) have benefited from Training of Trainers (ToT) on IYCF conducted by UNICEF trained nutrition personnel in the state. This training was thereafter cascaded to over 700 nutrition promoters across the 12 implementation LGAs in Adamawa and Borno states. The nutrition promoters carry out nutrition counselling and food demonstration sessions in the various intervention communities. This partnership has led to the acceptance of referrals made by the nutrition promoters to health facilities offering community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM).

Addressing Women & Youth Enterprise Financing Through Partnerships

Economic opportunities for youth and women are at the core of the Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity. The Activity has consciously identified opportunities for youth and women in the agribusiness and non-farm micro enterprise clusters. The Activity is therefore developing the women and youth in the region through trainings and capacity building in enterprise and vocational skill development. However, a huge gap in this is financing of the beneficiaries, who upon completion of their trainings are unable to access finance to set up businesses. Financial institutions are unable to provide the much-needed finance or where it is available the conditions are too stringent to be met by the beneficiaries. To bridge this gap, the Activity is collaborating with the Borno State Government, through its ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism. The Senior Management Team of the Activity led by the Chief of Party met with the Borno state government on September 2nd

and 3rd 2021 and had a high-level meeting on the collaboration that will result in linking the youth and women who have been trained in various farm and non-farm enterprises in the State to an affordable soft loan. The Activity's partnership with the Borno state government in this regard is expected to facilitate access to finance for Borno State youth and women trained under the Activity through the Borno State/BOI Matching Fund for Enterprise Development. 2,260 Youth and Women trained by the Activity across the 5 implementing Local Government Areas of Bayo, Biu, Hawul, Kwaya-Kusar and Shani of Borno State are expected to benefit directly from the partnership when eventually finalized.





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IAA Explores Partnership Opportunities with ASRI

The Integrated Agriculture Activity is intensifying her efforts to ensure that farmers and entrepreneurs in the Northeast have access to appropriate inputs through engaging in partnerships and expanding options on access to finance aside government promoted programs. One of such potential partners identified was AbdulSamad Rabiu Initiative. AbdulSamad Rabiu (ASRI) Initiative is a philanthropic USD\$100 million annual Africa fund for social development; USD\$50million allocated to Nigeria while USD\$50million is allotted to the other countries in the continent.

The Chief Party Integrated Agriculture Activity led a delegation of staff from the Activity to the ASRI office in Abuja in September 2021 to explore possibilities for partnership. The interaction of IAA with management team of ASRI provided deep insights into areas of collaboration which could be activated to improve the livelihood of vulnerable populations in the Northeast. The delegation learned about the ASRI's operations, what their priority focus was for this year and beyond. The partnership when eventually finalized is expected to improve incomes of households in Northeast Nigeria.



The Activity Team meeting the management of the Abdul Samad Rabiu Initiative

Sequencing, Layering and Collaboration: FTF Activities in Northeast held Inaugural FTF-Northeast M&E meeting

In furtherance of the Sequencing, Layering and Collaboration approach of the USAID, the Integrated Agriculture Activity Kicked off the Inaugural collaboration meeting of M&E leads implementing in the Northeast part of Nigeria. At the first edition of the rotatory meeting organized by IAA M&E unit and held in the Activity head office in Yola, Adamawa state in September 2021, all the four Feed the Future Activities were in attendance and appreciated the Collaboratory efforts of IAA M&E unit and support to other Activities. In his opening remarks at the meeting, the Activity's Chief of Party, Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal welcomed the participants and hoped that the collaboration will also happen at the COP level. He mentioned that IAA has been supportive to partners in sharing the IAA platform and its devices for surveys and willing to do more. The objective of the collaboration meeting is to set a good platform for cross learning and synergize to

solve common issues affecting all the FTF Activities in the Northeast. In attendance and full participation are the IAA Chief of Party and his deputy, Water for Agric Activity deputy chief of party, as well as M&E Leads and Officers from Integrated Agriculture Activity IAA, Water for Agric Activity WFA, Rural Resilience Activity and Building Sustainable Livelihoods Activity. The participants at the meeting resolved to work together to solve common issues ranging from beneficiary double counting to reporting issues.



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Integrated Agriculture Activity Setting the Pace on Security Collaboration in the Northeast Nigeria.

In the past decade, the Northeast has experienced a barrage of attacks from the insurgent group Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād popularly known as Boko Haram. The group's activities in the region caused several people to abandon their homes and livelihoods. As government is trying to restore peace in the region, there is also the need to support the affected people's livelihood and contribute to the economic recovery of the region which has been seriously battered by the crisis. In view of this, USAID and other international and Local donors have intervened and supported with several development and humanitarian projects which also included the Integrated Agriculture Activity which has the objective of supporting selected vulnerable households to get back their livelihoods. Meanwhile, the evolving security challenges in the region have continued to pose a threat in the implementation of the projects in the region. This has made security a top priority for the Integrated Agriculture Activity to secure the staff and contribute to intelligence and security information gathering



Chief of Party, IAA, with the commanding officer 231 brigade command



Group photograph of the Commanding officer, 231 brigade command and senior officers with the Activity's team in army barracks, Yola, Adamawa state

that will help the smooth implementation of donor funded Activities in the region. To this end, the IAA in collaboration with the government of Adamawa state, other INGOs and relevant security agencies in the state organized the Northeast Safety and Security Seminar which was aimed at generating ideas on how best to implement development and humanitarian projects in the Northeast amidst the rising security and safety challenges in the region. The seminar tagged "Safety and Security for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture in North-East Nigeria" adopted the methods of Prevention, Detection and Response in dealing with the security challenges and to achieve this, it has become paramount to have a joint platform where security and safety information with the peculiarity of the Northeast can be shared as noted and jointly agreed at the seminar.

The seminar which was coordinated by the Integrated Agriculture Activity Security Coordinator was held at the Adamawa state government secretariat in August 2021 and was well attended by representative of USAID, NURU Nigeria, British Council, American University of Nigeria, Department of State Security, FAO, CARITAS, GIZ, OXFAM, IITA, and National Association of NGOs, Adamawa State chapter.



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About Integrated Agriculture Activity IAA

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity issued under the US Government's Global Food Security Act was awarded by USAID Nigeria to International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and its partners in July 2019 as part of USAID's contributions to the economic recovery in North-East Nigeria, in the wake of the devastation caused by the ongoing insurgency in the region. It supports vulnerable populations in 12 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Adamawa and Borno States to engage in basic farming activities and improve food security, increase agricultural incomes and improve resilience among smallholder farmers through strengthening institutions and market networks, youth and women in agribusiness activities.

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CONTACT

PRAKASH KANT SILWAL

Principal Specialist/Chief of Party,

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity,

IITA-Abuja, Beside Old Water Works, Kubwa, PMB 82, 901101,

Abuja, FCT, Nigeria. Mobile: +234-9062927839.

Email: p.silwal@cgjar.org



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