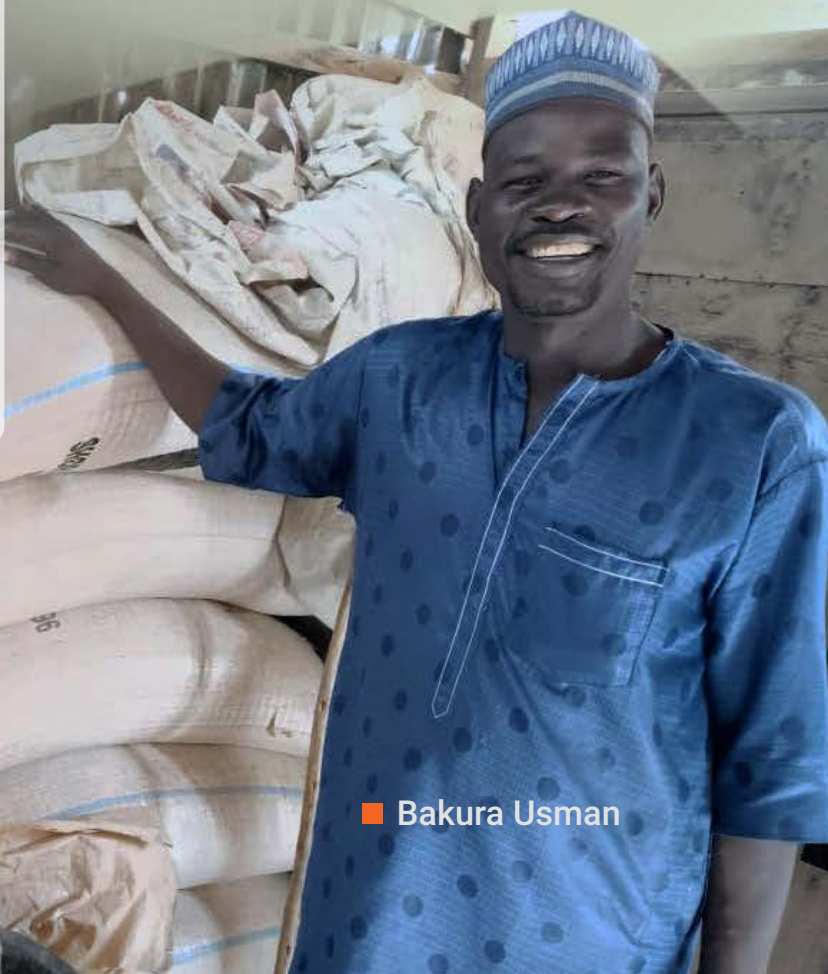




▶ From a Displaced Person to a Property Owner

39-year-old Bakura Usman of Senegere Community of Yola South Local Government Area (LGA) in Adamawa State was an internally displaced person from Gwoza, Borno State. Read how the Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity changed his story.

- ▶ **Mamuda Yinusa: A PWD's Journey to Sustenance**
- ▶ **How Improved Seeds Helped Isa Jahadi's Farming Venture**
- ▶ **Thriving Babies in the CBSP households.**
- ▶ **IITA hosts USAID Special Objective Implementing Partners in Yola**



▶ Bakura Usman





Dear Readers,

As we approach the close-out phase of the USAID-Funded Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity after four and half successful years of implementation, I am pleased to share some remarkable success stories that highlight the positive impact our intervention has had on individuals and communities in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe states in this issue of the newsletter.

First is the story of Bakura Usman, a 39-year-old internally displaced person from Gwoza, Borno State, who defines the transformation that can happen from challenging circumstances, given the right opportunities. Displaced for six years due to the Boko Haram insurgency, Bakura's life took a turn for the better with the intervention of the Activity.

Mamuda Yinusa, a seasoned farmer from "Ba'awu," Song LGA, Adamawa, is another story which specifically focuses on the inclusive nature of our intervention. As a Person Living with Disabilities (PwD), Mamuda's success is a good example of our commitment to inclusivity, providing opportunities for growth and prosperity to all. Due to the challenges with traditional crops, Mamuda's journey took a positive turn with the adoption of our improved seeds, particularly the Sammaz 15 maize variety. His harvest increased from five bags to an impressive 29 bags on a quarter of a hectare of farmland.

We also bring to you the story of Isa Jahadi, a 56-year-old farmer from Loko Town, Song LGA, who exemplifies the difference that improved seeds can make in a community's farming efforts. Isa transitioned from casual farming to using our improved seeds, particularly those provided by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) through our program. Notably, Isa's maize harvest increased from 8-15 bags to an impressive 32 bags.

Our commitment to sustainability is evident in the recovery of seeds from Community-Based Seed Producers (CBSPs). As part of our Seed System intervention, seeds initially distributed as input loans are being recovered during the harvest period. This ensures the continuity of the seed system and supports the long-term success of our intervention. These success stories are just a few of the many impactful stories we have seen in this Activity. As we round off our intervention later this year, we celebrate the lives transformed, the communities empowered, and the sustainable impact we've made together. I extend my deepest gratitude to the entire team, our partners, and the communities we've had the privilege to serve.

Best Regards,
Mr. Prakash Kant Silwal
 Chief of Party
 USAID-Funded Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity

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Mamuda Yinusa: A PWD's Journey to Sustenance



▲ Mamuda Yinusa, a CBSP farmer in Ba'awu, Song LGA, Adamawa State.

"Ba'awu", a name that means "a town where there's no hunger at all" is a farming community in Song LGA of Adamawa, one of the local governments where IITA is implementing the USAID-funded Feed-the-Future programme in Adamawa State. One of the farmers, Mamuda Yinusa, a seasoned farmer with 35 years of experience, has witnessed a remarkable transformation in his farming practices, thanks to the intervention.

Mamuda's journey began with traditional crops like maize, rice, and groundnuts, but despite his years of dedication, he struggled to secure a bountiful harvest, often yielding just five bags of produce from a quarter of a hectare of farmland. However, his story took a positive turn when he became a participant in the USAID-supported program, implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and its partner, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

Before Mamuda's encounter with the program, his harvests were insufficient to meet the needs of his family, even with an increased land size. The turning point came with the adoption of improved seeds and invaluable knowledge gained from IITA. The maize variety, Sammaz 15, proved to be a game-changer for Mamuda and his fellow farmers.

Mamuda proudly shared, "Since I joined this Activity, things changed. I got a lot of knowledge and improved seeds from IITA."

The impact of the improved seeds was evident as Mamuda's harvest skyrocketed from a modest five bags to an impressive 29 bags on his quarter of a hectare farmland using the 25kg loan seeds from the Activity.

As a member of the USAID-funded Community-Based Seed Producers (CBSPs) initiative, Mamuda expressed his aspirations for the future. "We want USAID to keep supporting us and give us more improved seeds, fertilizers, and chemicals, these have made lots of difference between what we earn now and what the harvest used to be" he emphasised, highlighting the ongoing relationship between the farmers and the program.

In the spirit of inclusivity, Mamuda's success story becomes even more inspiring as he represents Persons Living with Disabilities (PWD). The Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity, recognising the importance of inclusion, has supported individuals like Mamuda, making a strong statement that everyone deserves an opportunity for growth and prosperity.

Looking ahead, Mamuda envisions surpassing his current success, aiming to contribute even more to his community and family. His journey exemplifies the broader impact of the USAID intervention in Adamawa and neighbouring states, underscoring the program's commitment to advancing inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led economic growth.

“ In the spirit of inclusivity, Mamuda's success story becomes even more inspiring as he represents Persons Living with Disabilities (PWD). ”

How Improved Seeds Helped Isa Jahadi's Farming Venture



▲ *Isa Jahadi, Loko Town, Song LGA, Adamawa State.*

Isa Jahadi, a 56-year-old farmer from Loko Town in Song LGA, Adamawa State shares his inspiring journey of transformation from casual farming to bountiful harvests, thanks to the USAID-Funded Feed-the-Future intervention.

Isa Jahadi, like many others, used to engage in casual farming, primarily cultivating rice and maize. However, his harvest was modest, ranging from 8 to 15 bags, leaving him and his family facing challenges. Everything changed when he embraced the improved seeds provided by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and its implementing partner, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) through the Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity.

"After using the improved seed this year, I got as much as 32 - 50kg bags of maize harvested much more than the 8 to 15 bags of maize I used to harvest previously on about half a hectare of land," shares Isa. His excitement is evident as he narrates how the improved seeds have not only increased the quantity but also the quality of his harvest. The key moment for Isa came when he applied fertilizers to his crops, even though it was done late due to financial constraints. The combination of improved seeds and diligent farming practices resulted in a remarkable yield that

surpassed his previous experiences. "I had more harvest than I used to have because of the improved seeds," Isa emphasizes. Looking ahead to the next farming season, Isa expresses his eagerness to expand his efforts. "If they give us the seeds in good time, we will put more effort into farming larger hectares since we saw how bountifully we harvested this year," he states. His optimism is a testament to the impact of the intervention on both the individual farmer and the community at large.

He continues, "Our present seed harvest has been very encouraging" he explains. Isa plans to keep half a bag of the original seeds for replanting, emphasizing his commitment to maximizing the benefits of the improved seeds. Isa is part of the Community-Based Seed Producers (CBSP) associations being supported by the IITA for them to get the statutorily required certificates from the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) which will enable them to become certified seed producers of these improved seeds and ready access point for improved seeds for farmers in the communities and region.

As Isa shares his success story, he proudly expresses his gratitude, "I am thankful for this improved seed; we appreciate it." His gratitude reflects the positive impact of the USAID-funded intervention on individual lives within the Northeast states. In the broader context, Isa's story is just one among many success stories we are receiving across Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, and Gombe states, where the Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity is making a difference. The program's objectives of advancing inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led economic growth, strengthening resilience, and promoting a well-nourished population are manifesting through stories like Isa's.

“After using the improved seed this year, I got as much as 32 - 50kg bags of maize harvested much more than the 8 to 15 bags of maize I used to harvest previously on about half a hectare of land ”



■ Bakura Usman, (3rd from right) with his two wives, child and father.

From a Displaced Person to a Property Owner

39-year-old Bakura Usman of Senegere Community of Yola South Local Government Area (LGA) in Adamawa State was an internally displaced person from Gwoza, Borno State. For six years, he has been displaced from his community through the activities of the ravaging Boko Haram insurgency. His story shows the change brought about by the intervention of the USAID Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity.

Bakura reflects on a time when crude farming methods were the norm for him and others in his community. Before the Activity's intervention, traditional farming was the order of the day in the region. Bakura, who started farming in 2007, struggled to yield more than 5 bags of grains (500kg) from a hectare of land. Due to the challenges of displacement and limited resources, his agricultural endeavours were hindered, making it difficult to provide for his two wives, nine children and an elderly father.

With the arrival of USAID on the scene through the Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity, being implemented by IITA, Bakura received comprehensive training on modern agricultural practices, innovative farming techniques, and insights on soil management, his farming fortunes took a turn for the better. From 2020 and consistently till 2023, Bakura has steadily improved his yields and by implication, his livelihood. He planted the Sammaz 27 maize variety, an improved maize variety developed by researchers at the IITA, on a half-hectare of land. In his own words, "Since I started receiving help from USAID through IITA, I am proud to say that I now harvest an average of 40 bags (4000kg) per hectare—an eightfold increase from my previous yield." With newfound agricultural success, this positive development has its ripple effects, touching every aspect of his life. Formerly burdened by the challenge of feeding his

large family, the increased profits from his bountiful harvests enabled him to send seven children to a private school, providing them with better educational opportunities.

He had acquired skills in phone repair in 2009, but the lack of funds hindered him from setting up shop and practising it. With the financial stability gained through his successful farming, he has since established and expanded his phone repair business. Remarkably, he has also trained eight young individuals from his community in the art of phone repairing, empowering them to become self-reliant entrepreneurs, and creating a positive cycle of community development.

Bakura is no longer constrained by the limitations of an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp as he utilised his earnings to construct a four-bedroom flat for his family. In an inspiring display of



- ▲ Bakura Usman, posing with part of his seed harvest kept in store
- ◀ Bakura Usman, inside his phone repairs shop.

determination, he is currently working on a second building—a one-bedroom block of four flats that will serve as an additional income stream through rental, complementing his existing revenue sources from a phone repair and accessories shop and farming.

Bakura is excited about the future. He expresses gratitude to the USAID-funded program for showing up for himself and other farmers in his community who were

once hopelessly whiling away their time in the IDP camps. His story not only highlights the impact of USAID's intervention in agriculture but also showcases the indomitable spirit of individuals determined to rebuild their lives. As Bakura looks forward to the future with gratitude, he becomes a beacon of hope, illustrating that even in the most challenging circumstances, positive change is possible with the right opportunities and support.

“ From 2020 and consistently till 2023, Bakura has steadily improved his yields and by implication, his livelihood. ”

Thriving Babies in the CBSP households.

We bring you reports of our Nutrition intervention from the households of farmers we are working with within the Dawasa community in Nagere LGA, Yobe State. Among the many success stories is the story of Fatima Adamu, a 7-month-old who is evidence of the impact of dedicated nutrition interventions within the USAID-funded Feed-the-Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity.

The Nutrition promoters have been embarking on home visits across the four implementing states, conducting step-down training on Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) key messages. The focus was on ensuring mothers and caregivers adopt and practice the 21 nutrition key messages, promoting improved health and nutritional well-being.

This noteworthy success was recorded in the Dawasa community of Nagere LGA, Yobe state, a story of Fatima Adamu, a 7-month-old previously identified as malnourished with a MUAC measurement of 11.0cm. Fatima has undergone a remarkable transformation. Poor hygiene and inadequate nutritious food intake were identified as contributing factors. However, with targeted community interventions, particularly the cooking demonstrations for caregivers with children aged 6 – 23 months, Fatima's health took a positive turn.

Critical to Fatima's success was the cooking demonstration attended by her mother, Malama Zainab Saidu. During this Activity, Zainab not only acquired valuable nutritional knowledge but also learned various meal recipes on complementary foods for infants. The adoption of these practices significantly contributed to the improved nutritional status of Baby Fatima.

Fatima Adamu's story shows the power of community-based nutrition interventions. Her journey from malnutrition to thriving health is proof of the broader success of the Nutrition programme within the Activity. The dedication of the Nutrition team and the active participation of caregivers like Malama Zainab Saidu are shaping a future where health and happiness go hand in hand.

“ Critical to Fatima's success was the cooking demonstration attended by her mother, Malama Zainab Saidu. During this activity, Zainab not only acquired valuable nutritional knowledge but also learned various meal recipes tailored for infants. ”



▲ The progress of Fatima. On the left, Baby Fatima Adamu is pictured with an initial MUAC reading of 11.0 cm before the intervention. 47 days later, on the right, Fatima boasts a MUAC reading of 13.5 cm after the implementation of nutrition interventions.

SPECIAL REPORT

Fostering Collaboration and Impact: IITA hosts USAID Special Objective Implementing Partners in Yola

In a convergence of minds and missions, the Adamawa office of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) played host to a crucial monthly coordination meeting for USAID Special Objective Implementing Partners. The meeting, held on January 31, 2024, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders both on-site and online, reflecting the broad spectrum of efforts aimed at supporting Adamawa State's development.

Notable attendees included representatives from various implementing partners such as PHI/ICHSSA4, IRC/HERON, Society for Family Health, DAI/USAID-State2state, Mercy Corps/ RRA, AHNI/ACE1, and, of course, IITA/IAA. Each implementing partner provided updates on their current priorities, offering insights into the multifaceted projects underway. From health initiatives to agricultural interventions and policy-driven programs, the diversity of activities showcased the

comprehensive nature of USAID's support across various sectors.

Reviewing the shared calendar and collaboration matrix, Zainab Shaibu (USAID) opened avenues for potential collaboration. Partners were encouraged to explore avenues of collaboration in their activities, thus fostering transparency and providing a consolidated view of the collective impact.

In closing, Mr. Kayode Faleti, Deputy Chief of Party for IITA-NIAA, expressed gratitude to all participants and underscored the significance of collaboration. He emphasized the shared responsibility towards the development of Adamawa State, reiterating that collaboration is the key to unlocking the full potential of the USAID interventions. Society for Family Health graciously volunteered to host the next meeting, emphasizing the collaborative spirit that defines the partnership.



▲ Group photograph of Implementing Partners' Representatives at the meeting.



FEED ^{THE} FUTURE

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

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 18 Local Government Areas of Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Yobe 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.

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated
Agriculture Activity IITA-Abuja,
Beside Old WaterWorks, Kubwa,
Abuja FCT, Nigeria

Mobile: +234-9062927839
Email: P.Silwal@cgiar.org

