



# FEED THE FUTURE

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



NIGERIA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY  
**NEWSLETTER**  
THIRD EDITION  
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**IITA**  
*Transforming African Agriculture*

The recent State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 report of FAO finds that more than one-third (282 million) undernourished are in Africa. New projections confirm that hunger cannot be eradicated by 2030 unless bold actions accelerate access to food. In Nigeria, hunger affects 21.4 percent of the population, while it is also grappling with conflict and climate extremes as primary drivers of the high level of acute food insecurity. The report suggests the need for increased investment for transforming the food system, innovative financing mechanisms, and enabling legal and regulatory frameworks in social protection programs apart from innovations in science.

In another report, the FAO estimates that 83 percent of the seeds used by Nigerian farmers in 2015 were sourced from the informal seed sector. The opportunity in the Nigerian seed industry is valued at around \$1 billion. In 2018, the value of required certified foundation and breeder seeds for Maize, Rice, Sorghum, Groundnut, Cowpea, Millet, and Soybean was unmet. The National Agricultural Seed Council NASC, Nigeria, states that the Nigerian seed market is a bundle of opportunities with an estimated population of 500 million by 2050 (IITA, 2019).

*539 Demonstration Plots developed in 12 LGAs of Adamawa & Borno states of Nigeria as field training models.*

The Integrated Agriculture Activity is promoting the sustainable production of certified seeds of the seven focus crops; Rice, Sorghum, Maize, and Millet as staple crops, and Cowpea, Soyabean, and Groundnuts as cash crops at the community level. It facilitates the formation and selection of Community Based Seed Producers CBSP from the Producer Groups of Farmers.



**Photo:** an Extension Agent training a Community Based Seed Producer on correct way of demonstration plot development, in Borno, Nigeria

A 'Three-Generation model' is facilitating breeder seeds from relevant research institutes (IITA/ICRISAT/NCRI) to the private seed companies to produce Foundation Seeds for Community Based Seed Producers CBSP to grow Certified seeds. The approach also focuses on strengthening linkages between seed companies and research institutes for continuous access to breeder and foundation seeds.

In collaboration with NASC, trainings were provided to CBSP, Extension Agents-EA (see photo-left), Desk Officers-DO, and Agro-input dealers so that smallholder farmers can access high-yielding plant varieties increase yield, developing climate resilience, and in creating income through employment generation.

The foundation seeds are provided to the CBSP and Breeder Seeds to the private seed producer companies (e.g., Jirkur Seeds, Debiro Seeds, Diliviu seeds, etc.). In IAA the CBSPs are provided with a certain quantity of foundation seeds to grow certified seeds of seven focus crops. The Extension Agents from the Agriculture Development Project ADP provide necessary extension services to the CBSP who are monitored by the NASC and IAA's Field Officers to ensure quality seed production. These CBSP and producer group members who are registered are also eligible to get a loan under CBN's Anchor Borrowers Programme ABP for agriculture inputs.

The program's success can be observed from recently concluded (June 2021) Agricultural Input Fairs in Adamawa and Borno states, where a total of 1,657 Farmers accessed 6 Metric tons of certified seeds from private companies and community-based seed producers. The smallholder farmers from Borno state sold 3.8 Metric Tons of seeds, while farmers from Adamawa sold 2.2 Metric Tons of seeds.

The IAA also provided step-down training to the producer group members to grow the better quality of certified seeds, reaching 52,734 participants in both states, comprising 43 percent women farmers. A series of published handbooks on seven crops have been provided to the producer group members in the project area.



## IAA Efforts In Certified Seed Production

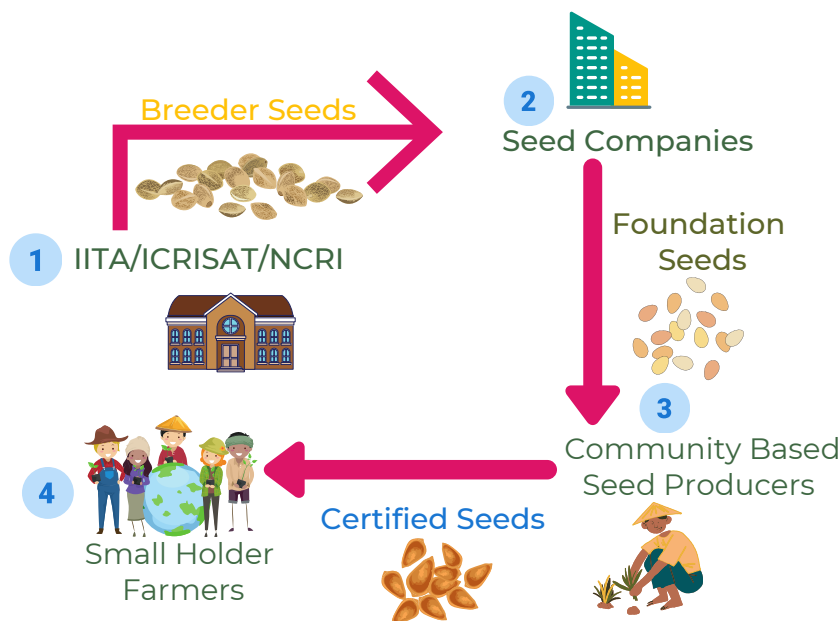
### Promoting Certified Seeds in 7 Key crops for Better Yield

- 62,666** Farming Households containing 104,054 participants registered in on-line database of 12 LGAs of Adamawa & Borno states
- 539** Demonstration plots developed on seven crops across 12 LGAs
- 16,852** Kg. of Foundation seeds provided to CBSP, yielding 537 tonnes of Certified seeds from the seven crops promoted in IAA
- 1,065** Community Based Seed Producers provided Certified Seed Production training in seven priority Crops
- 52,734** Small Holder Farmers trained on climate Smart agriculture and Good Agronomic Practices as step-down trainings

In Integrated Agriculture Activity, during the last two years (2019-2021), many specialized trainings were provided to smallholder farmers, producer groups, women, youth, and prospective entrepreneurs. They ranged from certified seed production, good agronomic practices, crop management, homestead garden, nutritious meal preparation, agri-processing & non-farm enterprise development to livestock management and linking them to Micro Finance Institutions MFIs. The infographics (see left) shows the number of participants and registered businesses.

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture IITA, ICRISAT and NCRI, as scientific institutes, provide Breeder seeds to different seed companies, who produce Foundation seeds and provide them to the Community Based Seed Producers CBSP to grow Certified seeds.

The IAA trainings focus on seed production techniques, modern methods of seed production, spacing, sowing, different attributes of grain and seed, plants growth factors, harvesting and post-harvest management, safe use of agro-chemicals, etc.



Infographics (above): production of Certified seeds from the Breeder seeds in the IAA program.



Photo: Ibrahim Hamidu Selling Certified seeds at his Kiosk



Ibrahim at his soyabean field



## Certified Seed-First Choice and High in Demand among the Farmers of Meerahari, in Borno, Nigeria

**1** Ibrahim Hamidu Hide, 45 years, is a community-based seed producer CBSP and has an Agro kiosk. He is the Chairman of producer group Meerahari Traders Multipurpose Association MTMA, in the Meerahari community of Biu LGA, Borno state in Nigeria. Ibrahim recalls when Integrated Agriculture Activity- IAA team visited Meerahari and discussed seed varieties, good agriculture practices, certified seeds, and group formation. In subsequent meetings, they formed a Producer group of 50 members, of which he is the Chairman. All members got a series of three different trainings on good agriculture practices under IAA.

Ibrahim also received 8 kg of Sorghum foundation seeds from IAA, which he grew on 1 ha land, yielding 22 bags, i.e., 2,200 kg of certified seeds. After selling 21 bags for ₦420,000 (₦20,000/bag) to other farmers, he got a net profit of ₦150,000 during the last crop season. He kept one bag for the next season sowing, returned 8 kg to the IAA, and exchanged it with neighbors for sorghum food grains. A Community Based Seed Producer CBSP, Ibrahim sells certified seeds @ ₦20,000 per bag than other seeds for ₦16,000. He feels the need for additional training in different crops and government financial support for buying fertilizers to expand his farm production and agri-product business. A father of 7 children, Ibrahim has been in farming for the last 20 years, says...

"the certified seeds business has given me much better profit, as they are high in demand, give high yield, are pest resistance and grow early."

"before, I was not able to pay the school fee of my children regularly, during last season after getting good profit I could send my kids to school, bought new clothes to my wives and children." Ali Diwar..

**2** Ibrahim Ali Diwar, 50, also corroborates the fact, as he planted ten measures of Maize, i.e., 25 kg foundation seeds provided by IAA, in one hectare of land last year (2020) and harvested 35 bags. He sold 20 bags to the farmers and two bags during Agricultural Input Fair at Biu (June 2021). He sold 20 bags (₦18,000/bag) of Maize for ₦360,000 and made a net profit of ₦120,000. Ali says, "...before the yield from 25 kg seeds was 18 bags, while from seeds I got, yielded 35 bags, which is amazing."

**3** Baba Abubakar Jali, 55 yrs (photo below), from the neighboring Mirnga community in Biu LGA, is a maize farmer, has shown Maize in 1 ha of land now. He is growing Sammaz-27 variety, an early maturing and high-yielding variety; he uses certified seeds for the first time and is supported under IAA.



Photo: Baba Abubakar Jali, at his Maize field at Mirnga, Biu, Borno, Nigeria

SUCCESS STORY - 1



## Certified Seeds: for Climate Resilience Building and Key Source of Income among Small Holder Farmers in Adamawa, Nigeria

Douwuro Fattening Association Namtari Manga, Yola South, is a farmers producer group formed in June 2020 by the Small Holder Farmers of Namtari Manga. It was registered as Cooperative Society on 6 Feb 2021 with the Local Government office. There are three more similar producer groups, Yelwa, Pathare, and Damare, formed during the same period under Integrated Agriculture Activity-IAA with the help of the Extension Agent. Each group has 50 members, trained under the program in 5 series on good agronomic practices, nutrition, seed production, SILC group management, and demonstration plots.

Abdul Rehman, 50 years (photo-2), is the Chairman of Douwuro Producer group, says "each of our four groups selected four members among themselves and were provided foundation seeds of Millet 2.5kg, Maize 25kg, Sorghum 4kg, and Rice 25kg, to grow certified seeds during June 2020". Abdul received 25kg Maize seeds and produced ten bags of certified seeds in 1 ha land, sold to his fellow farmers. Apart from getting almost 20-30 percent more profit, he says that the seeds provided are early maturing, drought resistance, and high-yielding varieties so the producer group members and farmers have preference over other seeds.

Abdul Rehman is also the Chairman of SILC group, formed in Dec 2020, involved in regular saving and credit. The 25 members contribute to group saving every week (₦100 to ₦5000) and provide loans on a need basis to the member with a monthly interest of 10 percent. The interest earned from the group is divided equally on a six-monthly basis.

Among the group members is a young farmer Ibrahim Lawan, 32 (photo-1), who grows Cowpeas in his 2-ha land; says that he prefers to take certified seeds for Rice and Maize, too, as they are high-yielding varieties that need less water and early maturing. With his last Sorghum produce of certified seeds, Ibrahim says, "apart from feeding my family of 3, I also sell seeds to other farmers and get money for my other family expenses".

Mohammad Bappa Ahmad (53), is Yelwa Producer group chairman, gives the example of Sorghum, which is drought resistant and needs less water to grow, and says that with certified seeds, his yield has just doubled. He says that in long run the group members are looking forward to more agricultural support from the government too.

...I sell seeds to other smallholder farmers in my community and get a decent earning for my family expenses and best seeds for next farming season...Ibrahim



1. Ibrahim Lawan (32) shows Certified Sorghum Seeds



2. Abdul Rehman, shows registration certificate of his Producer group



3. Certified seeds of Sorghum stored by one of the Producer group members

SUCCESS STORY - 2



Photo: Easter Thomas giving feed to her livestock and chickens in Borno

“

*..I grow green leaves at my homestead garden, it's very clean, and I need not go to market, also dry some for the next 5-6 months...Easter Thomas*

”

The cropping season of June-July is crucial for Easter Thomas, 54 (photo above), a mother of eight children who live in the Wakama community of Biu in the Borno state of Nigeria. She is an agri-entrepreneur who understands the importance of nutritious food access in the coming months and increasing climate variability events of low rainfall and droughts in her region. While diversifying her livestock and chickens, she prepares herself by drying vegetables, legumes, and grains when there will be high prices and poor access to these commodities. Easter was trained under Feed the Future Nigeria's Integrated Agriculture Activity program in August 2020 on nutrition, homestead gardening, and enterprise development, including livestock management. During the last cropping season, she sold beans and made a profit of ₦65,000. Additionally, by selling her 25 chickens and four rabbits, she bought a cow for ₦140,000.

WOMEN AGRIPRENEUR OF THE MONTH





**Prakash Kant Silwal**  
Chief of Party

## MESSAGE

In this third edition of the Newsletter, we bring you some significant efforts of IAA in promoting certified seeds, connecting farmers to key seed companies, and starting their own local micro-enterprises in employment creation.

## ABOUT -IAA

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 economic recovery in North-East Nigeria. It supports vulnerable populations in 12 Local Government Areas-LGAs of Adamawa and Borno states by engaging in basic farming activities to 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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