



FEED THE FUTURE

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

Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity Newsletter, 11th Edition, April 2022



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IITA

Transforming African Agriculture



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More Yield, More Money: Young Community-Based Seed Producer Smiling to the Bank



At 26 years old, most young Nigerians are unsure of the right path to steady income generation. It is therefore not uncommon to find most youngsters at this age frustrated by the level of unemployment in the country. Those who are fortunate to be employed constantly complain about how meager their remunerations are. Hence, in order to survive, the mantra is usually multiple streams of income.

The story is a bit different for Faisal Mohammed, a 26-year-old diploma holder in Sharia and Civil Law from the College of Legal Studies, Yola, Adamawa State. His life began to take a new turn in 2020 when he became a Community-Based Seed Producer for USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture in Wuro Ardo, Fufore LGA.

Before his contact with the Activity, Faisal would harvest 18-22 bags from a hectare of farmland using conventional farming methods. The Activity then trained him in good agricultural practices (GAP) and improved seed production and marketing techniques. The Activity also facilitated an

improved variety of foundation rice seeds for him and supported him with necessary extension and advisory services.

“They taught us how to prepare the land, use the right quantity of seeds, manage the soil, and use fertilizers effectively plus the proper storage and processing of harvest”, explains Faisal.

During the last farming season, Faisal harvested 40 bags of rice seeds to his amazement.

“In fact, I am not only grateful for the GAP training, but I am also thankful for the improved variety -Faro 61- which is preferred in this locality. I have made almost half a million naira with just one harvest. Imagine what I can achieve if I keep at this”, says elated Faisal.

Faisal currently manages his uncle’s local mill. He says his uncle might be a bit disappointed to learn that he plans on starting his own milling business soon. As for farming, he is getting ready for the next farming season. All thanks to Integrated Agriculture Activity for the encouragement and support.



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Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity

invites all to the

2022

AGRICULTURAL INPUT *Fair*

Adamawa	YOLA NORTH LGA	Ribadu Square, Sir Kashim Ibrahim Way, Yola.	<i>May 9 & 10, 2022</i>
	SONG LGA	Presidential Lodge, Song	<i>May 11 & 12, 2022</i>
	DEMSA LGA	Pavilion Square, Demsa	<i>May 13 & 14, 2022</i>
Borno	BIU LGA	Local Government Lodge, Biu	<i>May 21, 22 & 23, 2022</i>
	SHANI LGA	MS Palace, Shani	<i>May 24 & 25, 2022</i>

*9am
-
5pm*

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HOW A TRIP TO IAA AGRICULTURAL INPUT FAIR TURNED QUITE PROFITABLE

“In a day, about 9 to 10 women bring different quantities of groundnut to be processed. I make an average of N10,000 a day. This could be more during festive seasons.”

The gains from the machine have helped Zainab to acquire some other household items like a deep freezer and mattresses for herself and her daughter who is about to get married.

“IAA laid the foundation for this expansion. I am indeed grateful”, says Zainab

When Justina Naphtali (an Integrated Agriculture Activity extension agent in Song LGA, Adamawa State) invited 48-year-old farmer, Zainab Yahaya to the 2021 Agricultural Inputs Fair organized by USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity, she thought she was going sight-seeing. When Zainab got to the fair, she decided to buy three measures (‘mudu’) of maize so she does not return home empty-handed.

On an acre of land, Zainab planted the maize using knowledge of the good agricultural practices (GAP) training she got from the Activity. She harvested 10 bags and sold 7 bags at N22,000 each. With N154,000 as proceeds from sale, Zainab gained the admiration of her husband and of course, the envy of her husband’s second wife who saw Zainab acquiring a lot of items. First, Zainab got herself a bigger groundnut extracting machine.



Zainab shows off her recently purchased deep freezer.



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IAA: Changing the Traditional Bee-Keeping Narrative

Bee-keeping is not for the faint-hearted considering how painful a bee sting can be with its unpleasant swelling and itching. For those who are allergic to bees, the anaphylactic reaction could be extreme. Exactly why an apiarist will advise you to avoid bees as much as possible if you are ignorant of how they live. In this light, beekeeping is typically a man's job, especially in northeast Nigeria. However, USAID-funded Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity decided to change this bee-keeping narrative by training 90 women in Guyuk, Demsa (Adamawa), and Hawul (Borno) LGAs.

The Activity's Market Systems and Livelihood Specialist, Bassey Archibong, explained that women were targeted because of obvious reasons.



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Pictures from harvesting honey in Demsa Local Government, Adamawa State.

“Traditionally, women are not landowners. We realized that with just a little portion of land, you can keep bees. Plus, we were considering diversification of income for the women at the household level. We wanted the women who are usually regarded as good managers to be able to sustain themselves and their families; hence, the training of women in the keeping of bees”.

Prior to selecting the participants for the training, a farmers’ interest analysis was conducted. This helped to facilitate the selection process. After selection, a sensitization exercise was carried out to expose the women to the benefits of bee-keeping.



Surprisingly, more women in the communities are showing interest because of the success of the first training and harvest which they intend to put up for sale at the next Agricultural Inputs Fair. Hoping that Nigeria as a country realizes the potential of this business. In December 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture in a report said Nigeria spends over \$2bn annually on the importation of honey. Sadly, Nigeria produces less than three percent of its potential honey output. This is quite little for a country that has the capacity to generate much more given that bee-keeping can help produce not just honey, but also beeswax, bee venom, and propolis that have industrial use in the pharmaceutical, food, and beverage industries.





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Making a Millionaire Out of a Local Farmer

Rebecca Ezekiel, 45, is a farmer in Song LGA of Adamawa. A wife of a farmer and mother of 10, Rebecca is not a mere farmer. She grows rice, soybeans, maize, and groundnut. Having been trained in good agricultural practices (GAP) by Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity, Rebecca put the training into good use in the cultivation of these crops. She paid special attention to all GAP practices including the use of IAA's improved seed varieties, spacing (a technique she was not used to), and correct fertilizer application.

"I have a big portion of land. Whenever I plant, I harvest so little. I keep wondering what is wrong. IAA taught me how effective spacing will improve my yield. I was in the dark like many others but IAA showed us the light. I tried all they taught us and was so surprised with how many bags I made", narrated Rebecca.

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Rebecca harvested about 80 bags of rice, 20 bags of soybeans, and 5 bags of groundnut. The total sale from the harvest amounted to about N2million with which Rebecca was able to purchase a piece of land and build a house, one with a spacious compound just like she had always wanted. She has also been able to pay her children's school fees, especially those in higher institutions.



Rebecca Ezekiel poses with her undergraduate daughter, Peace, and Extension Agent Juliana Naphtali in front of her new house.



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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 small holder farmers disenfranchised by conflict; and facilitate the engagement of youth and women in economic and entrepreneurial activities

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