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NIGERIA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY NEWSLETTER, 16TH EDITION, SEPTEMBER 2022



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IAA holds Green Field Days in Adamawa and Borno

To further encourage climate-smart and labour-saving agricultural practices among smallholder farmers, Integrated Agriculture Activity held Green Field Days in all the 12 Intervention Local Government Areas in Adamawa and Borno States. Prior to these important farming events, the Activity had established 220 demonstration plots (demo plots) in Borno and 295 in Adamawa. These plots were established with the support of Extension Agents (EAs) and farmers in the localities.

During one of the Green Field Days in Borno, IAA State Coordinator, Mr. Ibrahim Kadafur, explained to farmers the importance of land clearing, seed variety, spacing,

and soil fertility enhancement. Using the demo-plot examples, he reinforced the advantages of good agricultural practices (GAP) as promoted by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and supported by USAID.



Farmers at an IAA Green Field Day in Borno State

In Adamawa, the Senior Agronomist, Mr. Shehu Dandago, enjoined the farmers to embrace the tested and trusted methods seeing that a significant difference is created by these methods. He reminded the participants that the Activity will not cease to support smallholder farmers who specialize in the Activity's 7 focus crops (rice, maize, sorghum, soybeans, cowpea, groundnut, and millet).



Activity Senior Agronomist, Mr. Shehu Dandago addresses Participants during a Green Field Day at Yola South LGA, Adamawa. He is flanked by the Technical Field Officer, Mr. Habibulahi Ibrahim and lead farmer, Mallam Abdullahi Abdullah.



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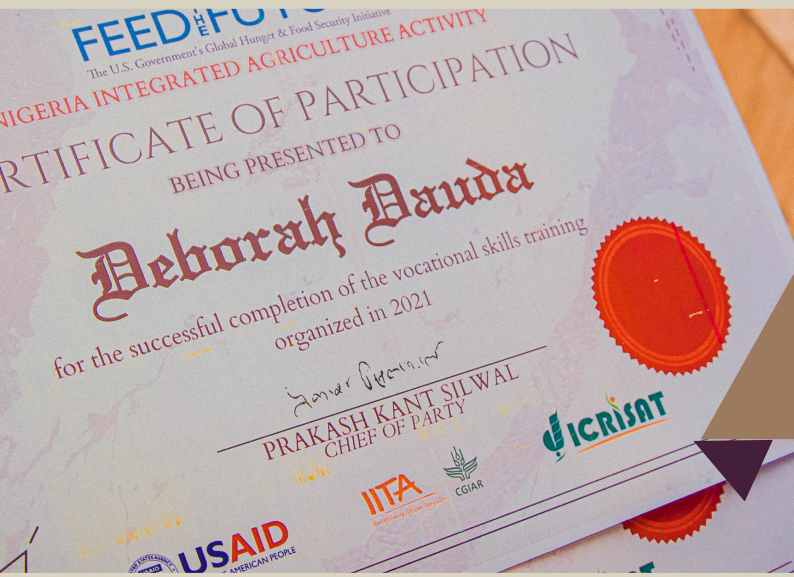
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INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITY GRADUATES 454 YOUTH AND WOMEN VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINEES

At an elaborate ceremony in Yola (Adamawa) and Biu (Borno), Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity has graduated 454 vocational skills trainees. The graduants who were drawn from the 12 intervention local government areas of both states were taught tailoring, barbing, vulcanizing, generator and machine repairs, GSM repairs, shoe making, screen printing, soap making, and knitting between April and May 2021. The graduation ceremonies took place on the 12th and 15th of September 2022 in Yola and Biu respectively.

At the Yola ceremony, the Special Guest of Honour, Adamawa State Commissioner for Entrepreneur, Mr. James Iliya, explained that entrepreneurship is contributing enormously to the economy of Nigeria. He said small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria have contributed about 48% of the national

GDP in the last five years. He also pointed out that exposing young people to entrepreneurship has the capacity to curb youthful exuberance and restiveness in our society. The Commissioner then appreciated the American people through USAID for helping youth and women find their economic footing.

During his keynote address, the Special Guest of Honour at the Borno



Adamawa State Commissioner for Entrepreneurship, Mr. James Iliya presents a certificate to one of the participants. He is joined by the Chief of Party, Dr. Prakash Kant Silwal and the Deputy Chief of Party, Mr. Olukayode Faleti



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Ceremony, Biu Local Government Chairman, Hon. Ibrahim Haruna represented by Director of Agriculture, Biu LGA, Alhaji Ibrahim Sule Hena reiterated the government's support for any programme that supports youth and women in the state. He, therefore, applauded the efforts of the Activity.

The Chief of Party, Dr. Prakash Kant Silwal, on his part, expressed gratitude to the state governments for the privilege to work with the youth and women. "You have been given the training, go make adequate use of it. Train more people and let the knowledge continue spreading. With the help of our donor, other partners like the Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Technology Incubation Centre (TIC), and Micro-Financial Institutions (MFIs), UNICEF, Adamawa and Borno State Governments, we will continue to



Dignitaries and trainees at the Vocational Skills Graduation Ceremony held in Biu, Borno State

support you in whatever capacity we can", the CoP said.

"It was not easy getting a job after I became a Geography graduate. I got trained as a barber courtesy of IAA. I have two apprentices now. The barbing business has been so helpful to me and my family", said Mustapha Abubakar, a trainee from Bayo LGA, Borno.

60 Master Trainers and 24 Community Development Officers also received certificates of appreciation for their contributions toward the success of the training programme. The vocational skills training is geared towards ensuring that the youth and women population in the 12 intervention LGAs of Adamawa and Borno are gainfully employed in farm and non-farm activities thereby promoting income generation and reducing unemployment in the northeast region.



A photograph of invited guests and trainees at the Youth and Women Vocational Skills Graduation Ceremony



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Activity holds Quarterly Meeting with Extension Agents

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity has held its quarterly meeting with its Extension Agents (EAs) and supervisors in Biu and Yola. The quarterly meeting took place in Biu on the 16th of September 2022 while the Yola meeting was held on the 20th of the same month. Part of the objectives of the meeting was to provide an update on the Activity's Year Three Quarter 4 Work Plan Performance, collect Community Based Seed Producer's sale data, and review data entry procedures.

In his welcome address, Deputy Chief of Party of the Activity, Mr. Olukayode Faleti, explained that the quarterly meeting was necessary in order to

keep track of the Activity's field progress. He also said the gathering provided an avenue for staff and EAs to deliberate on important issues.



Extension Agent (Song LGA, Adamawa), Mrs. Justina Naphtali, making a comment during the meeting in Yola, Adamawa State

While the Market Systems and Livelihood Specialist, Mr. Bassey Archibong presented updates on access to finance and business development interventions at the meeting, State Coordinators of Borno and Adamawa, Mr. Ibrahim Kadafur and Mrs. Maryam Halidu announced that 220 and 295 demonstration plots were established in the states respectively, although some plots were encountering flooding.

A question-and-answer session afforded participants an opportunity to discuss with the Senior Agronomist, Mr. Shehu Dandago and other IAA staff challenges faced in their interactions with assigned farmers as well as on the field in general. 18 EAs (13 men, 5 women) attended the Borno meeting while 19 EAs (19 men, 10 women) made the Adamawa meeting.



Mallam Salisu Yerima Dayar, EA Supervisor (Kwaya Kusar, Bayo and Shani) asking a question at the quarterly meeting in Biu, Borno State.



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Training of Trainers on Co-operative Management, Access to Finance, and Micro Credit Administration Hold in Adamawa and Borno States.

Between September 19 and 23, 2022, Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity held some Training the Trainers (ToT) sessions for selected cooperative groups across Adamawa and Borno States. The 120 participants in the training were drawn from the 12 intervention Local Government Areas (10 per LGA) of the two states.

In his opening remarks, the Activity's Market Systems and Livelihood Specialist, Mr. Bassey Archibong welcomed the participants to a unique opportunity that will expose them to the rubrics of Co-operative Management. Ultimately, he expressed confidence in how the training modules will help cooperative societies operate effectively in today's economy.

The Youth and Gender Facilitator, Mr. Shakiru Quadri, while presenting the training objectives and overview said the training was meant to equip representatives/leaders of youth and women registered cooperatives and/or unregistered but functional associations and groups in the states.

"The training will strengthen the groups to commence and/or continue effective and

mentor the associations to become legally registered and functional enterprise groups; introduce/re-introduce the groups to the internal savings and loans mobilization approach to enterprise development as well as guide the women and youth groups on sources and access to finance, and micro-credit administration".

Part of the training modules included Cooperatives Principles and Management, Microfinance/Microcredit Administration, Sources of Finance, Credit-Needs Assessments and Credit Guidelines, Revolving Loan Funds Management, Loan Repayment Scheduling and Management, Loan Risk Funds, Loan Working Papers, Leadership, and Group Dynamics, and Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC). Some of the training modules were handled by Chief Registrar of Co-operative, Ministry of Entrepreneurship, Adamawa State, Mrs. Zainab Idi-Bode, Representative of the Department of Co-operative Economics and Management, Federal College of Horticulture, Dandin-Kowa, Gombe, Mallam Ali Abdullahi and Chairperson, National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, Mrs. Beatrice B. Gangkero.



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*"I am not afraid to diversify.
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-Business Owner*

Not everyone can master the art and craft of entrepreneurship. However, a 31-year-old mother of four, Hajia Maryam Sajo seems to be doing pretty well as an entrepreneur. Maryam was a petty trader who sold pure water and homemade hibiscus-flower (Zobo) drinks. Around July 2021, Maryam was privileged to undergo

cosmetics production training and entrepreneurship organized for women in Kwaya Kusar Local Government Area, Borno State by the Integrated Agriculture Activity. She learned how to make petroleum jelly, hair cream, shampoo, and liquid soap during the training and started production in earnest. To her amazement, Maryam sold everything she had produced within one week!

"That was the boost I needed. I didn't realize there was a market waiting for my goods until I started production. I started the business with N5,000 and within 6 months, I had a N30,000 investment. On a weekly basis, I was making a sale of N8,000, and my profit, N3000!"

Although Maryam complains of debtors who impact her business negatively, she is motivated by wholesale customers who patronize her beyond the immediate environment.

"These are the individuals who encouraged me to dabble in the Danwake business. Danwake (bean flour dumpling) is highly consumed in the north. There is a market for me here. And besides, the entrepreneurial training I received from IAA is enough to start any business in Nigeria. I am not afraid to diversify....I even have a registered business name now so there is no one I cannot market my business to. Who knows what I may be producing next? I mean, the sky is the limit for an entrepreneur like me. Big thanks to IAA, IITA, and USAID for the training in entrepreneurship".



Hajia Sajo's Certificate of Registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission



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IAA Trains Staff on Agronomic Data Collection and Analysis

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity has trained its field and M&E staff on Agronomic Data Collection and Analysis. The three-day training held between the 8th and 10th of September, 2022 in Yola is expected to build staff capacity and improve reporting on the Activity's demonstration plots.

During his opening remark, the Deputy Chief of Party, Mr. Olukayode Faleti expressed the Chief of Party's resolve in ensuring that the Activity presents accurate data at all times. The Monitoring and Evaluation Manager of the Activity, Mr. Kehinde Oteju also emphasized the importance of data in field activities. Mr. Oteju used the occasion to stress the major ingredients of data: validity, reliability, integrity, precision, and timeliness.

The facilitator of the training, ICRISAT Country Representative, Dr. Hakeem Ajeigbe, provided tutelage on strategic data, data needs, data

collection and curation, data cleaning and preparation, data analysis using Genstat software, summary tables, and interpretations. Dr. Ajeigbe concluded the training with practical sessions using data from previous demonstration plots. The team is also expected to produce some research publications from the Activity's existing field data.



Country Representative, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Dr. Hakeem Ajeigbe taking a session on Day 1 of the training



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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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