



▶ NIAA Donates 17 tons of Certified Seeds to Borno State Government

Additional 7 tons were donated to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to complement ongoing activities implemented by CRS in Maiduguri and Jere under the THRIVE and the new ER4-DRIVE agriculture-based livelihood projects in Borno State. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between IITA and the Borno State Government to enhance agricultural development in the region.

- ▶ **Group Dynamics and Leadership Capacity Development for CBSE Cooperatives**
- ▶ **The Impact of the 2024 Wet Season Agricultural Inputs Fair**
- ▶ **Fostering Sustainability: NIAA and ADAS Partner to Empower CBSEs**



■ Scene of the Seed Donation event at Maiduguri, Borno State.





As we enter the close-out phase of the Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agricultural Activity (NIAA) this July 2024, it is with a deep sense of accomplishment and optimism that I reflect on the strides we have made together in promoting agricultural productivity and developing a sustainable seed system across Northeast Nigeria. Over the past five and a half years, our collaborative efforts, supported by USAID and executed by IITA and ICRISAT, have brought about transformative changes in the lives of smallholder farmers and their communities.

In May and June, we witnessed remarkable advancements through various initiatives and success stories that exemplify the positive impact of our programs. One of our significant achievements has been the completion of the Group Dynamics and Leadership capacity development sessions for Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSEs) in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe States. This training, facilitated by the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC), has empowered 497 cooperative leaders with essential skills in group work, conflict management, resource planning, and effective leadership. By fostering a mindset of collaboration and strategic decision-making, we have laid a strong foundation for sustainable seed production and entrepreneurial growth.

Our partnership with NASC has been instrumental in aligning our efforts with USAID's goals of increasing access to certified seeds and strengthening the market system. The recent donation of 17 tons of certified seeds to the Borno State Government and another 7 tons to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), which are proceeds of certified seeds recovered from CBSEs after a successful 2023 wet season, underscores our commitment to supporting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and vulnerable populations. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Borno State Government marks a significant milestone in our journey, paving the way for the establishment of the Agriculture Technology and Business Incubation Centre and the scaling up of the CBSE model in the state.

Success stories from our participants highlight the tangible benefits of our interventions. Justina Alhassan from Kaltungo, Gombe State, experienced a tenfold increase in her maize yield, while Mina Simon Ali from Kakli Do Ape, Billiri LGA, tripled her grain harvest. These achievements, enabled by improved seed varieties and modern farming techniques, have not only enhanced food security but also boosted economic stability for their families and communities. Philemon Fada's journey in Kamo Lah, Kaltungo LGA, showcases the profound impact of our initiatives in fostering sustainable farming practices and economic growth.

As we prepare to conclude the Activity, the gratitude and positive feedback from our beneficiaries inspire us to continue advocating for the needs of smallholder farmers. The call for an extension of our support and the need for processing machinery in communities like Kaltungo and Billiri highlight the ongoing challenges and opportunities for growth. We remain committed to ensuring that the benefits of our programs are sustained and that the foundation we have built continues to support the livelihoods of farmers across Northeast Nigeria. I extend my heartfelt thanks to USAID, IITA, ICRISAT, NASC, and all our partners for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we have achieved remarkable progress, and I am confident that the seeds of success we have sown will continue to flourish, fostering a prosperous and food-secure future for the region.

Sincerely,

Prakash Kant Silwal

Chief of Party

Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agricultural Activity (NIAA)

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Group Dynamics and Leadership Capacity Development for CBSE Cooperatives



During the exchange of questions and answers with the beneficiaries in the quarter house Biu Borno state.

The Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agricultural Activity (NIAA) in collaboration with the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) has just completed the Group Dynamics and Leadership capacity development sessions for the Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSEs) cooperatives in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Yobe States. The Group Dynamics and Leadership curriculum is designed to help small groups interact more efficiently and make more strategic decisions. It also intends to encourage equal participation and effective leadership within the

CBSE groups by addressing several key themes. The Group Dynamics and Leadership Training is an interactive and learner-centred curriculum that uses experiential learning methodology to help learners relate new content to their everyday lives. According to the NIAA Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Mr. Sebastian Shikel, this is “learning by doing for easy comprehension and adaptation to improve group dynamic challenges among cooperatives members”

Partnership with NASC

The training which was facilitated by Mr. Idris Dantosh Aliyu, Director of Seed Industry Development, National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) took participants through sessions such as group work mindset, group formation process, conflict management and prevention techniques, using resources for planning and implementation as a group, importance of registration and records keeping and others.

This training aligns with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) indicator that focuses on the “number of farmers accessing certified seeds from Community-Based Seed Production System”. This speaks to strengthening the market system in the seed industry through the Community-Based Seeds Enterprise (CBSE) cooperative model for a sustainable livelihood; and to provide seeds that are competitive, available, affordable and adaptable to specific climate conditions.

It is of note that the training completes the certification process of the 150 CBSE Cooperatives having passed through comprehensive training in best agronomic practices, effective communication (internal and external) business development, financial literacy/management and also getting them duly certified by NASC to operate as authorized and licensed seed entrepreneurs. The Activity promoted good value-chain crops such as cowpea, rice, sorghum, millet, soybeans and maize.

The Training Methodology

The training relied on experiential learning methodology to help learners relate new content with their everyday lives. In this way, CBSEs can apply the skills in their various group, as well as retain the lessons with greater ease. Since CBSEs are responsible as active learning agents in the process, the participants are encouraged to share experiences and engage in the activity. Four Hundred and Ninety-seven (497) cooperative leaders and members attended the training, this consisted of chairmen, secretaries, treasurers and group members across all implementing states of the Activity. The training was held in Gombe- Kaltungo LGA on 28th May, Yobe - Potiskum LGA Secretariat, on 30th May Borno – Biu, on 1st June and Adamawa State- Yola, on 3rd June, & Gombi LGA, 4th June 2024. Mr. Bassey Archibong, the market systems and livelihood specialist for the Activity, while reiterating the importance of the training emphasized, that “the training came at the right time for the CBSEs as they kick-start their journey into profitable commercial seed entrepreneurship.” He further expressed confidence in the Activity of the CBSE cooperatives as they commence their seed businesses.



Community-Based Seed Entrepreneur (CBSE) Training on Improved Seed Production and Marketing Techniques



CBSE training session and group photo in Song, Song LGA Adamawa state

The Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSE) in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe states have recently undergone comprehensive training in improved seed production and marketing techniques. This initiative, a collaboration between the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) and the Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA), aimed to enhance the skills and knowledge of the local seed entrepreneurs, enabling them to improve their seed production and business operations.

A total of 2,182 CBSEs participated in the training across the four states. The participant breakdown is as follows: Adamawa State had 646 participants (452 males and 194 females), Borno State had 482 participants (393 males and 89 females), Gombe State had 526 participants (155 males and 371 females), and Yobe State had 528 participants (309 males and 219 females).

The training sessions were tailored to meet the specific needs of the seed entrepreneurs, focusing on modern seed production techniques and effective marketing strategies. By providing these essential skills, the initiative aims to improve the quality and availability of seeds, which is critical for boosting agricultural yields and ensuring food security in the region. The training has had a

wide-reaching impact: high-quality seeds produced and marketed by trained CBSEs lead to better crop yields for farmers, increasing their incomes, and guaranteeing sufficient food supply in the communities.

Of note is the participation of women in the training, this is particularly important because supporting female entrepreneurs in agriculture promotes gender inclusivity and ensures that the benefits of improved agricultural practices reach all members of the community.



CBSE training at Billiri, Billifi LGA Gombe State.

Seed System Model in Northeast Nigeria: The Impact of the 2024 Wet Season Agricultural Inputs Fair

The COP, Mr Prakash Kant Silwal, delivering the welcome address at the Biu Inputs Fair, Borno State



The fourth annual Agricultural Inputs Fair, hosted by the Activity, recently concluded with remarkable successes, leaving an indelible mark on the agricultural communities across the intervention states of Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe. Spanning from April 29 to May 12, 2024, this landmark event served as a pivotal hub for innovation and growth within the agricultural sector, underscoring the scale potential of collaborative efforts and resource accessibility.

The Agricultural Inputs Fair has grown into a crucial platform where stakeholders from various facets of the agricultural industry converge. It offers a unique opportunity for farmers, suppliers, researchers, and experts to come together, share invaluable knowledge, and explore the latest advancements in agricultural inputs. The fair's core objective is to provide farmers with access to high-quality inputs, such as certified seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. These inputs are essential for enhancing farm productivity and efficiency, ultimately contributing to the overarching goal of achieving sustainable agricultural development and food security in the region.

This year's fair was meticulously planned and executed across multiple locations in the intervention states. The event kicked off in Gombe State, with sessions held at Kaltungo Stadium on April 29 and 30, followed by the ADP Premises in Kumo, Akko LGA, on May 2 and 3. Simultaneously, in Yobe State, the fair took place at the Yobe State ADP Premises in Potiskum on April 29 and 30, and at the Fika Football Field on May 2. The fair then moved to Adamawa State, with activities held at Kwanan Waya Primary School in Yola on May 7 and 8, the Presidential Lodge in Song LGA on May 9 and 10, and the ADP Zonal Office in Zone 4, Guyuk LGA, on May 11. The grand finale was hosted in Borno State, with events at the Biu Local Government Lodge on May 9 and 10, and the Kwaya Kusar LGA Government Lodge on May 11 and 12.

The turnout for the Agricultural Inputs Fair was impressive, with a total attendance of 2,894 participants across all locations. This enthusiastic participation is proof of the fair's growing reputation and the crucial role it plays in the agricultural calendar of these states. The event's success was

further made clear by the encouraging sales figures, particularly the achievements of the newly certified Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSE) cooperatives. These cooperatives, which had undergone rigorous training and certification processes, were able to sell over 5 tons of certified seeds during the fair. The breakdown of seed sales is as follows: Adamawa accounted for 3.07 tons, Borno for 1.83 tons, Gombe for 0.45 tons, and Yobe for 0.40 tons.

The impact of the Agricultural Inputs Fair on the local communities cannot be overstated. One of the most notable outcomes has been the improved access to high-quality inputs for farmers removing the barriers of distance and high costs. By obtaining certified seeds and other essential agricultural inputs, farmers are better equipped to enhance their crop yields and quality. This access to superior inputs is a critical factor in driving productivity and, ultimately, the economic well-being of the farming communities.

Moreover, the fair facilitated a vibrant exchange of knowledge and best practices. Farmers had the opportunity to interact with suppliers, researchers, and agricultural experts, gaining insights into innovative farming techniques and sustainable practices. This exchange of knowledge is invaluable, as it empowers farmers to adopt new methods that can improve their efficiency and productivity. Economically, the fair provided a boost to the local seed producers. The sales generated by the CBSE cooperatives not only validated their hard work and commitment to quality but also provided them with the financial incentive to continue improving their practices. This economic upliftment is important for the sustainability of the seed system and the broader agricultural sector.

“ These cooperatives, which had undergone rigorous training and certification processes, were able to sell over 5 tons of certified seeds during the fair. ”

The fair also played an important role in strengthening the seed system in the region. By making certified seeds more accessible to farmers, the fair has contributed to improving the overall quality and reliability of the seeds used in farming. This is a critical step towards ensuring food security, as high-quality seeds are essential for achieving consistent and productive harvests.

The 2024 Agricultural Inputs Fair has proven to be a transformative event for the agricultural communities in Northeast Nigeria. By encouraging collaboration, providing access to high-quality inputs, and facilitating knowledge exchange, the fair has significantly boosted agricultural productivity and sustainability of the CBSE model being piloted by the Activity in the northeast of Nigeria. The impact of this year's fair will continue to resonate, driving ongoing improvements in the agricultural sector and contributing to the long-term goal of food security for all. As we move ahead on the close-out plans of the Activity, the lessons learned and the successes achieved this year will serve as a strong foundation for continued growth and development in the region.



Unguwan Zana and Nasara women community-based seed entrepreneurs collaborate to attend and sell their seed in the 2024 wet season Agricultural Input Fair in Kaltungo LGA Gombe State.



Fostering Impact Sustainability: NIAA and ADAS Partner to Empower CBSEs



Representatives of the CBSEs, Standard Microfinance Bank, State Ministry of Agric.. and ADAS in a sustainability strategy meeting facilitated by NIAA in Yola, Adamawa State.

In a bid to enhance the sustainability and business development of Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSEs) beyond the Activity close-out, the Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA) has partnered with the Adamawa State Agribusiness Support (ADAS) Programme. This collaboration is designed to provide CBSEs with essential business advisory services and support their participation in significant trade events, including the 15th Northeast Joint Domestic Trade Fair held in Bauchi State from May 19 to 21, 2024.

As part of this initiative, a series of sustainability strategy meetings were conducted with ADAS throughout May 2024. These meetings were pivotal in finalizing plans for the inclusion of CBSE cooperatives from Adamawa State into the ADAS 2024 wet season farming program. The ADAS program has secured 2,000 hectares of land across various Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Adamawa, facilitating the cultivation of contiguous plots which enhances the efficiency and scale of agricultural operations.

The collaboration between NIAA and ADAS aims to integrate the CBSEs into a broader agribusiness framework, ensuring that they benefit from comprehensive business development support. During the meetings, CBSE leaders were tasked with presenting their Economics of Production (EoP) and detailing the crops their cooperatives intend to cultivate in the 2024 wet season. This information is important as ADAS plans to synchronize the EoPs of the CBSEs into their overall agricultural framework, promoting a cohesive and well-structured approach to farming in the region.

To further advance this initiative, a key meeting was held on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at the NIAA office in Yola. This gathering included representatives from ADAS and elected leaders from the CBSEs of the seven intervention LGAs in Adamawa State. The purpose of this meeting was to finalize the onboarding process of the CBSE cooperatives into the ADAS program and to discuss the implementation details for the upcoming wet season.

The partnership between NIAA and ADAS is poised to significantly impact the agricultural landscape in Adamawa State. By providing CBSEs with business advisory services and integrating them into a larger agribusiness framework, the initiative aims to enhance the sustainability and profitability of these seed enterprises. The support provided through this collaboration will not only help CBSEs improve their production capabilities but also ensure that they are well-prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of modern agriculture.

The collaboration between NIAA and ADAS is a crucial step towards fostering a sustainable Seed System model in Adamawa State. By empowering CBSEs with the necessary tools, knowledge, and support, this partnership is paving the way for a more active and prosperous agricultural sector in the region. As the 2024 wet season approaches, the efforts of NIAA and ADAS will undoubtedly contribute to the overall growth and development of the agricultural community in Northeast Nigeria.

Donation of Certified Seeds to Borno State Government



The 17 tons of certified seeds donation on display at Maiduguri, Borno State.

On June 11, 2024, in a landmark effort to boost agricultural productivity and support local farmers' access to improved seeds, the Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA) donated 17 tons of certified seeds to the Borno State Government.

The Activity is a five-and-half-year program (July 19, 2019–December 31, 2024) being implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and its partner, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) as part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s contribution to the economic recovery in Northeast Nigeria, in the wake of the devastation caused by the ongoing insurgency in the region.

The certified seeds donated by the Activity, including rice, soybean, and maize varieties, were recovered from the Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs (CBSEs) after the successful 2023 wet season seed production. Initially loaned to the CBSEs as foundation seeds, the seeds were meticulously cultivated and harvested, bolstering the effectiveness of the community-based seed production model. The donation aims to support Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and vulnerable populations in Borno State, ensuring they have access to high-quality seeds for the upcoming planting seasons. The Deputy Governor

of Borno State, His Excellency Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur, received the donation on behalf of the state government.

Additional 7 tons were also donated to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to complement ongoing activities implemented by CRS in Maiduguri and Jere under the THRIVE and the new ER4-DRIVE agriculture-based livelihood projects in Borno State.

Following the seed donation, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between IITA and the Borno State Government. This MoU is a step forward in the collaborative efforts to further deepen agricultural development in the region. The signing ceremony was attended by key officials, including the Chief of Party, Prakash Kant Silwal, and the Deputy Chief of Party, Kayode Faleti, representing NIAA. The Deputy Governor of Borno State, His Excellency Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur, signed the MOU on behalf of the state government.



The MoU outlines a comprehensive framework for cooperation, focusing on several critical areas to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability:

1. Establishment of the Agriculture Technology and Business Incubation Centre: These will support research and agri-business development in Borno State. It will also include the creation of Community-Based Seed Enterprises (CBSE) and Community-Based Seed Cooperatives (CBSC) thus Strengthening good agricultural practices among extension agents, farmers, and agro-processors.

2. Scaling Up the CBSE Model: Expanding the successful community-based seed production system to increase accessibility and affordability of high-quality seeds.

3. Strengthening Extension Services: This will enhance the government's agriculture extension network's capacity and train extension agents and private sector agribusiness entities to effectively support farmers.

4. Enhancing Certification and Seed Testing: Building the capacity of the National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) to ensure high standards in seed quality and certification.

5. Joint Resource Mobilization: Collaborating with various stakeholders to secure the necessary resources and partnerships to achieve the goals

outlined in the State Agriculture Transformation Agenda (ATA).

The Borno State Government has also assured their commitment to mobilizing the resources needed to achieve the objectives outlined in the MoU fully. They are working closely with FAO and other donors to develop a comprehensive framework for cooperation, ensuring that the necessary support and partnerships are in place.

As part of this collaboration, other key areas will be improving market systems, enhancing youth and women's engagement in agri-entrepreneurship, and diversifying livelihoods to strengthen community resilience. The initiative also aims to build a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track progress and ensure that the targeted outcomes and results are achieved. By leveraging modern techniques, high-quality seeds, and community-based models, the collaboration has the promise of a lasting impact on the livelihoods of farmers in Borno State.

As the Activity draws to a close in Northeast Nigeria, this commitment is a sustainability measure in ensuring that the farming community continues to enjoy offerings of the five-and-half-year engagement that has now culminated in the Seed System Development for Northeast Nigeria, a model that has a potential for nationwide scaling and benefits.



The Deputy Governor, Borno State, His Excellency Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur (Right) during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Maiduguri, Borno State. (Left) Mr Kayode Faleti, Deputy Chief of Party, NIAA; (Middle) Mr Prakash Kant Silwal, Principal Specialist, IITA/Chief of Party, NIAA.



SUCCESS STORIES

Justina Alhassan and Kaltungo Farmers in Gombe State

This is the success story of Justina Alhassan in Kaltungo, Gombe State. This story highlights the journey of Justina and other farmers in her community, who have experienced remarkable changes in their agricultural practices and productivity thanks to the introduction of quality seed varieties by the Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA), an Activity funded by USAID and implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). One of the core objectives of NIAA is to increase access to improved seeds for smallholder farmers. Justina Alhassan's story is a good example of the achievement of this goal. Her ADP Extension Agent, representing her at the recent Agric Input Fair in Kaltungo, shared their collective gratitude for the support received from the Activity.

Previously, Justina and her fellow farmers struggled to achieve substantial harvests, often yielding only five bags of produce from their efforts. The introduction of improved seed varieties, such as Samaz 51 maize, has changed farming in Kaltungo for the better. Justina's supervisor proudly reported that Justina, who planted Samaz 51, harvested an unprecedented 45 bags of corn per hectare of farmland. This remarkable increase in yield is proof of the effectiveness of the IITA-developed improved seeds which are draught-resistant and high-yielding and also the effectiveness of the agricultural practices promoted by NIAA. Farmers were taught better farming techniques, which, combined with quality seeds, significantly boosted their productivity.

This success is also a reflection of the strengthened partnerships between the National Agricultural Seeds Council, agricultural research institutions like IITA, and smallholder farmers. Through these collaborations, farmers in Kaltungo have gained access to certified seeds, which is crucial for sustainable agricultural growth. These partnerships have ensured that the benefits of improved seed varieties reach the grassroots level, enhancing food security and economic stability in the region.



Justina Alhassan, Kaltungo, Gombe State

The increased yields from improved seeds have had a direct impact on the economic and nutritional status of the farmers. With higher productivity, farmers like Justina now have more produce to sell, increasing their income and enabling better living standards. This aligns with NIAA's entrepreneurship goals of increasing income and improving nutrition status among participants. The additional income from the surplus harvest allows these farmers to invest in better nutrition for their families and communities, contributing to overall well-being.

The gratitude expressed by Justina's community for the agricultural intervention underscores the sustainability and long-term benefits of the program. Although there is a sense of sadness about the potential close-out of the project, the farmers are hopeful for an extension. They recognize the impact and wish for more members of their community to benefit from the intervention, ensuring that the improved seeds and practices become a permanent fixture in their agricultural endeavours.

As NIAA continues its efforts, the hope is that more communities will experience similar transformations, paving the way for a prosperous and food-secure future in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe states. The success story of Justina Alhassan and her community in Kaltungo is an example of how targeted agricultural interventions can drive significant economic recovery and growth in rural areas. By increasing access to improved seeds and promoting sustainable farming practices, NIAA has not only enhanced agricultural productivity but also contributed to the overall development and resilience of smallholder farmers.



Mina Simon Ali's Testimonial of Increased Yield

■ *Mina Simon Ali, Billiri LGA, Gombe State.*

status among participants. The higher income from increased yields allows farmers like Mina to invest in better nutrition and overall well-being for their families and communities.

In the Kalki ka Ukku Appe community, within the Billiri Local Government Area, Gombe State is the remarkable story of Mina Simon Ali, bringing to the fore the profound impact of the Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA) on smallholder farmers like her. Mina Simon Ali, a dedicated Community-Based Seed Entrepreneur (CBSE), shared her story at a recent agricultural event, expressing her heartfelt gratitude to IITA and USAID for their invaluable support and education on modern farming techniques.

Mina's journey embodies NIAA's core objective of increasing access to improved seeds and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. Reflecting on her past farming experiences, Mina recalled how her efforts would yield a modest 11 bags of grains on 1 Hectare of farmland. However, after adopting the new farming techniques introduced by NIAA and utilizing improved seed varieties like Faro 61 rice, Mina's productivity soared. This year, she proudly reported harvesting an impressive 35 bags of grains. This is evidence of the efficacy of the enhanced agricultural practices and superior seed quality.

This significant increase in yield has brought about a transformative change in Mina's household. The additional produce has not only boosted her family's food security but also enhanced their economic stability. Mina, along with other smallholder farmers, has transitioned from subsistence farming to becoming business-oriented seed producers and traders. This shift aligns with NIAA's entrepreneurship goals of increasing income and improving nutrition

The success of Kalki ka Ukku Appe is also a reflection of the strengthened partnerships between the National Agricultural Seeds Council, agricultural research institutions like IITA, ICRISAT and smallholder farmers. These collaborations have ensured that improved seeds reach the grassroots level, fostering sustainable agricultural growth and resilience. The gratitude expressed by Mina highlights the sustainability and long-term benefits of such interventions. She, like many others in her community, is hopeful for continued support and looks forward to more members benefiting from these transformative agricultural practices.

Mina's success also underscores the increased value of annual sales from farms receiving USG assistance and the enhanced value of agricultural-related financing accessed by farmers. The introduction of certified seeds from Community-Based Seed Production systems has played a crucial role in this transformation, empowering smallholder farmers to achieve greater productivity and economic stability.

By increasing access to improved seeds and promoting sustainable farming practices, NIAA has significantly enhanced agricultural productivity and contributed to the overall development and resilience of smallholder farmers. As the Activity continues its efforts, the hope is that more communities will experience similar transformations, paving the way for a prosperous and food-secure future in Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe states.



Elevating Yields: Philemon Fada's Story with NIAA in Kamo Lah

In the Kamo Lah community within the Kaltungo Local Government Area of Gombe State, the impact of the Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity (NIAA) is being experienced. Philemon Fada, a member of the Kam-Lau Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs, shared her remarkable journey at the recent wet season agricultural inputs fair held in Kaltungo, shedding light on the profound impact of NIAA's initiatives on their farming practices and livelihoods.

During the event, Philemon Fada, a member of the Kam-Lau Community-Based Seed Entrepreneurs, highlighted the profound impact of NIAA's initiatives on their agricultural practices. Philemon recounted how, within just a year of the group's establishment, they have seen significant growth and development, thanks to the invaluable support from USAID and IITA. Previously, the farmers relied on outdated techniques and the use of stored harvested grains for re-cultivation. However, the introduction of modern farming techniques and high-quality seed varieties has revolutionized their approach to agriculture. "We are grateful to USAID and IITA for their support and look forward to continued collaboration," she said.

This shift has not only enhanced their productivity but also paved the way for sustainable farming practices.

The benefits of these improvements are evident in the community's increased agricultural productivity. By adopting high-quality seeds and modern techniques, the farmers have experienced higher yields and improved crop quality. This transformation aligns with NIAA's goals of increasing access to improved seeds and promoting the adoption of better agricultural practices among smallholder farmers. Philemon's story explains the initiative's success in fostering economic recovery and growth through a sustainable seed production and distribution system.

Despite these advancements, Philemon



Philemon Fada, Kamo LGA, Gombe State

highlighted the community's need for continued support. The people of Kaltungo, Apo, and Billiri are collectively calling for an extension of NIAA's presence by an additional two years. The acceptance and assistance from American partners have been instrumental in their progress, and the community believes that more time is needed to adapt to these new methods fully. Philemon assured that with this extended support, the communities would experience even greater positive changes.

Furthermore, Philemon emphasized the urgent need for agro-equipment to process their harvested grains, particularly rice and soybeans. The absence of processing machines poses a significant challenge for the farmers, affecting their ability to maximize the value of their produce. By providing the necessary machinery, NIAA and its partners can further enhance the productivity and economic stability of these communities.

Philemon Fada's story from Kamo Lah is a good illustration of the impact of NIAA's agricultural interventions. By increasing access to improved seeds and promoting sustainable farming practices, NIAA has significantly enhanced agricultural productivity and contributed to the overall development and resilience of smallholder farmers. As NIAA continues its efforts, extending its support and providing essential machinery will ensure that more communities like Kamo Lah can thrive and secure a prosperous future. The heartfelt gratitude and prayers for safe journeys back home are a testament to the deep appreciation for the positive changes brought about by NIAA and its partners.



FEED THE FUTURE

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



Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity



“As stewards of sustainable development, we are committed to not only rebuilding livelihoods but also igniting a spark of hope and resilience in communities affected by adversity. The recent modifications and extensions granted by USAID underscore our dedication to adapt and respond to emerging challenges, such as the Ukraine–Russia conflict's secondary impacts. Together with our partners, we envision a future where agriculture becomes a cornerstone of prosperity and stability in Northeast Nigeria as a benchmark implementable across the country, ensuring a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

Prakash Kant Silwal
Principal Specialist IITA/Chief of Party
USAID-Feed the Future Nigeria Integrated Agriculture Activity



FEED ^{THE} FUTURE

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

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 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.

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