

A chat with Kaduna State Agriculture Development Programme, Implementing Partners of BATNF Projects in Kaduna State

aduna State Agricultural Development Program (KADP) is an extension of the State Ministry of Agriculture established to provide agriculture extension services. In their many years of existence according to Alhaji Yakubu Umar, they have managed several projects on behalf of notable organisations. Most notable to Alhaji Umar is the State ADP's current partnership with BATNF and the African Development Bank sponsored Community Based Agriculture Project (CBAP) managed by the Kaduna State ADP in 2013.

Alhaji Umar in a chat with GreenTalk, expressed his pleasure on the Foundation's approach to interventions. He praised the Foundation for touching the lives of smallholder farmers directly. He said that there was tremendous improvement in the lives of the farmers in both Zango-Aya and Bizara communities. "They used to be 'hand to mouth' farmers who found it difficult to feed themselves", he stated, but all that changed with the Foundation's interventions. He cited with



L-R: General Manager British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, Abimbola Okoya; Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Services Kaduna State Agriculture Development Programme, Alhaji Yakubu Umar; Public Relations Officer Kaduna State Agriculture Development Programme, Dahiru Abdul and Projects Manager British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, Olusegun Adewole.

pride the success of the Foundation's intervention in Zango-Aya Community, Kaduna State from 2011 to 2013 and expressed hopes that equal success would be recorded at the end of the Bizara community intervention in 2016.

In response to questions on challenges faced by KADP in managing the Foundation's projects, Alhaji Umar explained that the farmers' attendance to meetings and trainings scheduled for them was poor during the first cycle of the project in 2014. He also mentioned that the farmers' were late in paying the cost of the inputs donated to them, into their cooperative account during the first cycle of the project, because they hoarded the maize while waiting for market forces to increase the price of the maize, which was the normal but not best practice. However, with the ample harvest reaped by the farmers in 2014, Alhaji Umar noted that their attendance to meetings and trainings had improved tremendously and they were eager to adopt and implement the new practices they had learned.

In anticipation of the bountiful harvest to be reaped in 2015, Alhaji Umar stated that the



The BATNF Team chatting with Alhaji Yakubu S. Umar at the Kaduna State ADP office

ADP is working to link the farmers to flour mills in Kano and Jos to sell their maize at better rates thereby improving market access.

When asked for a goodwill message to the Foundation, Alhaji Umar simply said "We will select another community for the Foundation's support after 2016".

n keeping with its advocacy strategy to facilitate access to policy-making discussions for smallholder farming groups in rural communities, the Foundation set up an Executive Working Committee to examine the components of the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) with a view to establishing points of constraints for the rural smallholder farmer and making recommendations for the resolution of the issues identified.

According to statistics available online, small scale farmers numbering about 14 million people make up a greater percentage of the country's farming population. These smallholder farmers majorly reside in rural communities and often make no contributions to the formulation of policies that affect their lives and livelihoods.

To assure thorough implementation of the Agriculture Transformation Agenda for the benefit of smallholder farmers and to highlight possible issues which might hinder its success, the Executive Working Committee established by the Foundation in January 2015 reviewed components of the ATA. In their review, they conducted indepth interviews and focus group discussions among smallholder farmers and other stakeholders relevant to the sector.

The main objective of the working group is to support the Federal Government to address the needs of smallholder farmers by gathering information from the farmers and other stakeholders and presenting the information as recommendations to policy makers. The findings of the working-group made after series of desk research and indepth interviews will be presented to diverse stakeholders for validation and review at a dialogue session scheduled to hold in

BATNF Executive Working Committee



The Executive Working Committee in session.



Members of the Executive Working Committee after the day's session.

October, 2015.

From the dialogue session, a report will be developed and presented to policy makers for consideration and possible adoption. Policies that affect smallholder farmers affect

majority of the country's farming population and will enhance socio-economic development especially in the rural communities.

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The growing season is a period of time in a given year when the climate is prime for both indigenous and cultivated plants to experience the most growth. For many smallholder farmers in Nigeria, it is planting season in rainy season.

In time for the growing season, the Foundation is flagging off numerous projects in different value chains in various States in Nigeria. The projects flagged-off are aimed at supporting farmers to plant sustainably, reap greater harvest and sell off their produce for higher monetary reward

The first beneficiaries for 2015 were from Ojiegbe Community Ebonyi State...

The Foundation flagged off a rice enterprise development project in Ojiegbe Community of Ebonyi State on Thursday 11th June, 2015. The rice project is the second to be flagged off by the Foundation in the State. With the successful completion of the very first intervention in rice development in the State, the Foundation launched another rice enterprise development project in Ojiegbe community.

30 farmers are the lucky beneficiaries of the project which is managed in partnership with the Ebonyi State FADAMA III Project led by Dr. Cletus Nwakpu. The FADAMA III project in partnership with the Foundation provides trainings and inputs to the beneficiaries to boost their rice production. They will also identify viable markets for the farmers to improve market access and increase earnings.

Murna Shuka Masara, Bizara - Happy Maize Planting Bizara, Kaduna State...

In Bizara Community, Zaria, Kaduna State, the Foundation flagged-off a maize enterprise value-chain development project. The project which was commissioned in 2014 continued in 2015 with the second cycle flag-off ceremony.

The farmers' in Bizara Community had a passionate story on the impact of the Foundation's interventions on their lives. They stated that in the past, they borrowed money from "Alhajis" to plant their maize in previous years. The "Alhajis" (loan sharks) collected their monies in kind as maize when they harvested, which left them with little to sell and even less to feed on. The "Alhajis" according to the farmers hoarded the maize and sold them off when prices were higher, thus receiving what they had loaned to the farmers with interest.

With the intervention of the Foundation in 2014, the farmers' planted without borrowing and sold their produce off with extra food and income left for their families. They wel-

comed Foundation staff warmly to the flag-off ceremony that took place in the community on Thursday, 18th June, 2015 and conducted a tour of their farms ready for the inputs to be provided by the Foundation. The farmers collectively said, that the support of the Foundation had positively affected their lives and families.

Mallam Isa, Chairman of the Bizara Farmers' Cooperative, said during the ceremony, that the beneficiaries were happier and healthier farmers due to the Foundation's support

In Benue State, Foundation flagged off Rice Enterprise Development Project...

30 farmers in Kwande Community, Benue State were the third beneficiaries of BATNF support in 2015. The rice enterprise development project in the State was first flagged off in 2014, the cycle continues in 2015 with the flag-off of the second stage of the project.

Though some of the farmers in the community were unable to harvest their produce in 2014 due to disagreements with Fulani cattle rearers, the Director-General/Acting Chairman of Kwande local government Mr. Nicholas Iorrosu despite this lauded the Foundation for their contributions and the impact





A beneficiary of BATNF-Zaria Maize Enterprise Development Project, Kaduna State receiving his farm inputs during the input distribution

on most of the farmers. He requested that the Foundation support more communities in the local government for improved rice production and to upgrade them from subsistence farming to commercial farming.

lorrosu's gratitude to the Foundation were echoed by the chairman, BATNF Farmers' Group, Mr. Abanger Richard who spoke on behalf of the rice farmers. Mr. Richard praised the Foundation for their support and said that the farmers with the support of the Foundation had formed a cooperative group and opened a current account with the Bank of Agriculture in Makurdi where money was depositied collectively for the cooperatives sustainability after the Foundation's interventions.

The project was officially flagged off on Thursday 2nd July 2015.

In Niger State, the Foundation also flagged-off a Rice **Development Project**

The Foundation flagged off another rice enterprise development project in Niger State on Thursday 2nd July, 2015. With this third project in rice development, the Foundation lends its weight in support of the Federal Government's self-sufficiency in local rice production project.

Alhaji Mohammed Vatsa, Lead Agronomist with the



Group photograph of the beneficiariy farmers of BATNF-Ile Ife Cassava Enterprise Development Project with the dignitaries present at the flag-off

that many farmers who were not already beneficiaries of the Foundation's support in the community were clamouring to participate. He said he had promised the farmers that he would request for an extension of BATNF intervention in the State to include the new proposed participants.

Alhaji M. Fari, representative of the beneficiary farmers, advised the farmers to use inputs provided by the Foundation responsibly. He warned that diversion or hoarding of the inputs would affect their rice production adversely and defeat the purpose of the Foundation's support.

Next it was Otu, Ogboro and Igboho Communities of Oyo State...

Otu, Ogbooro and Igboho communities were the 5th, 6th and 7th communities to benefit from the Foundation's agriculture development projects in 2015. On Wednesday 8th July 2015, the Foundation flagged off cassava development projects in the three communities simultaneously. The Executive Director of the Foundation Oluwaseyi Ashade, whilst speaking at the event reaffirmed the Foundation's commitment to providing essential support to smallholder farmers in rural communities.

Dressed in colourful T-shirts, the farmers received inputs distributed to them with praise for





Beneficiary farmers from Otu Community receiving farm inputs during the flag-off ceremony of Otu, Ogbooro and Igboho Communities Cassava Enterprise Development Projects, Oyo State.

Permanent Secretary of the Oyo State Ministry of Agriculture represented the Governor of Oyo State at the event while the Oniro of Otu was on hand to lend support to his community and appreciate the Foundation's contributions.

And then it was Kwara State...

On Friday 10th July 2015, right on the heels of the Oyo State flag-off ceremony, the Foundation flagged-off another Cassava enterprise development project at Ote community, Kwara State.

Alhaji Baba Seriki, Chairman of the BATNF-Ote Community Cassava Farmers' group in recognition of the benefits of the Foundation's interventions in the community thanked the Foundation warmly. He said that at the commencement of the Project, they thought the Kwara State Agriculture Development Project had just come to pay their usual visit to the cassava farmers but they were pleasantly surprised to learn that they had become recipients of the Foundation's support. He also said the intervention was the first of its kind from a corporate body in that community.

The 9th and 10th communities were Ijebu North and Ijebu North-East Communities of Ogun State...

Rich in carbohydrates, calcium, vitamins B and C, cassava is a staple crop in Nigeria and can be processed to derive other food such as tapioca, garri, flour, chips etc. To boost cassava production, increase income and enhance food security in Ogun State, the Foundation flagged off cassava enterprise development projects at liebu North and liebu North-East local government areas of Ogun State.

Speaking at the event, Abimbola Okoya, General Manager of the Foundation expressed hope that the Foundation's support will increase the production and income of the farmers and create jobs for youths and women in the communities along the value chain.

Reverend Ibikunie Onasanya, Project Manager of the Ogun State Agriculture Development Project spoke glowingly of the Foundation's support in the State and described agriculture as key to driving employment and development in Ogun State.

The 11th beneficiary community was lie-life of Osun State...
Their joy knew no bounds on Friday 7th August 2015, when the

train of the Foundation's intervention arrived at Onikoko Village, along Ile-Ife - Ondo Road for the flag-off and input distribution ceremony of Osun State Cassava Enterprise Value-



BATNF Technical Committee member, Mr. Fatai Afolabi, delivering his speech at the flag-off ceremony of Ijebu North and Ijebu North-East Cassava Enterprise Development Projects at Ijebu-Igbo.

chain Development Project.

In his welcome address, the State Project Coordinator of Osun State FADAMA III, Dr. G.A. Adediji thanked the dignitaries present for attending the event. He said the event is a very remarkable one as it is a leap in the journey towards achieving 3 out of the 6-point integral action plan of the present administration in the State of Osun which are: hunger, unemployment and poverty.

Speaking at the occasion, the Osun State manager, Nigerian Agric. Insurance Corporation, Mr. Olalekan Adelowo, enjoined the farmers to always insure their farms against natural and human-caused disasters. He said with the BATNF intervention, the farmers are bound not to fail during this farming season. Olalekan stated that NAIC, in collaboration with Osun State FADAMA III is ready to provide insurance to the beneficiary farmers of the BATNF intervention.

30 cassava farmers that benefitted from the project are expected to cultivate 1 hectare of farmland each.

And there will be more...

It is still planting season, the Foundation hopes to flag off more projects in sustainable agriculture to fulfil its mandate to support socio-economic development in the country



BATNF at BusinessDay Conference

he 2015 BusinessDay Anuual Giving Back Conference took place on the 23rd June at the prestigious Victoria Crown Plaza Hotel, Victoria Island with the theme: Poverty Reduction and Youths Empowerment: Any role for the Corporate Social Investment?

The event, which was co-sponsored by British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, had in attendance over 150 quests which cut across all sectors of the economy.

During her presentation, the Foundation's Executive Director, Oluwaseyi Ashade, gave the role corporate social investing should take in reducing poverty in the country especially among the youths from the BATNF's perspective.

She reiterated the roles the Foundation has been playing since its establishment in 2003, in eradicating poverty among the rural dwellers through sustainable agricultural enterprise development projects across the country.

She also stated the strategy the Foundation adopted in contributing to the efforts in reducing poverty among women and youths. These include: working with global CSI framework; prioritising agricultural sector as focal area of its CSI activities; focus intervention more on women and youths; and promoting agricultural development through - agro-forestry development, value adding and valu-chain development, agricultural technology transfer and capacity building.

Over 80 guests visited the Foundation's exhibition stand during the 1-day conference.



The panelists of the Conference.



Guests during the Conference.



A visitor at the Foundation stand signing the register.

Interview

Below is the interview of Dr. Richardson Okechukwu, Project Coordinator BATNF-IITA Cassava Enterprise Development Projects at Otu, Ogbooro and Igboho, Oyo State published in The Nations Newspaper of Sunday, 30th August 2015



THE NATION ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2015

H OW would you describe the partnership between IITA and BATNF? In has been very comple-mentary. First, at III A, we are tech-

nical experts and we always inter act with farmers. We always listen to their complaints about what they would love to do and what they would love to achieve. From our findings, one major thing they have always lacked is the resources to getting inputs that they require to implement the technical knowlto implement the technical knowl-edge they have acquired from the different trainings we have given to them. This, for many years, has been affecting adoption. It is easily discernible, owing to the fact that people assess farmers based on their outlook.

Linderstanding that the main

their outlook.
Understanding that the main challenge confronting smallholder farmers is lack of resources to trans-form their farming operations.
ATM Emphation spread in to fill BATN Foundation stepped in to fill this gap by providing unique op-portunity for these smallholder farmers to have access to the right inputs that cover everything, from inputs that cover everything, from land preparation, planting materi-als, technical resource persons to be on ground, herbicides and ferti-lizers. So, what is left is the actuali-sation of these findings, and results that we have got so far have been results. It is no breach the press to that we have got so far have been positive. It is no longer business as usual. It is remarkable that BATN Foundation has made it a grant, but it will turn out to be a revolving fund. The grant will always be there for this group of farmers to access as entrepfeneurs. Also, there are some elements of sustainability which you cannot find in other newhich you cannot find in other n lationships. But we have found it in this one.

As partners, IITA will ensure that every missing gap like mar-keting, forming of cooperatives, group dynamics, conflict resolution between crop farmers and livestock farmers and all those kinds of hic-cups are all addressed. The goal here is to ascertain the viability of the model and how this can serve as a useful tool for many other pro-

spective farmers.
For how long has this partner-ship on the distribution scheme been

The collaboration started in 2014 and this is the second cycle. We just rounded off Cycle One and We just rounded off Cycle One and we are about moving to Cycle Two, where we believe that the cooperatives will be registered. And from the sales of some of their farm produce, they will pay back a certain percentage of this loan into their cooperative account. By so doing, it will be easy for them to manage the Cycle Two. Also, by the time they sell these farm produce in 2016, they will be able to save up more money for the sustenance of this initiative.

We have also been able to watch the group grow. We have

We have also been able to watch the group grow. We have been able to help them resolve conflicts, considering the challenges that money presents. By the time we are exiting in 2016/2017, we believe that they would have got a good purse, as well as links to all the partners, the input, the suppliers, the fertilizer companies and the herbicide companies. With this unique opportunity, it will be easy for them to source for their raw materials in the right places. Another good thing about this is that these farmers are also linked to where they will sell their (cassava)

Smallholder farmers require subsidy to remain in business'

Dr. Richard Okechukwu is Project Coordinator for International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation (BATNF) Cassava Project. At its launch at Otu Community Town Hall in Itesiwaju local government area of Oyo State, he spoke with Bukola Aroloye on the project and the need for sustained public-private sector initiative in driving the agricultural revolution.

roots. And hopefully, if the other investors that we have invited to come to Otu, Igboho and Ogboro finally yield by building micro processing centres this year, then we believe that this 110 hectares will be like a child's play compared to what we will achieve. There will be a gross expansion.

Are there lessons to be learnt from this partnership between BATNF and IITA?

Yes, there are lessons to be learnt. A very good example is that agricul-ture requires patience and sustained support. For any smallholder farmer to do any business there has to be some sort of subsidy. There has to be some sort of support to enable him move forward. In advanced countries,

move forward. In advanced countries, smallholder farmers receive subsides regularly. Even when they produce and there is a glut, government will buy it. Farmers here in Nigeria, don't have any coverage.

The lesson here is that of a foundation that is looking at agriculture and must be targeting this issue of sustainability so that when you give the fund, you should come back to see how they are faring and also see better ways you can support them, not that you should finish and go. It's a very good lesson that is being learnt here.

Nere. What impact has this scheme had on the benefiting families in terms of improving their productivity in subsidiary faming?

As of the time we came in 2014, we found that many of these fames?

farmer didn't really know what a hectare (of land) is. Many of land) is. Many of them were mix-ing their crops, planting up to four types of crops on a piece of land, which is pri-marily sub. marily sub-sistence farm Any ing. Any farmer you see doing that is just looking for what to eat and how to survive. They were not thinking busi-ness. Right now

there is a big shift. You will find out that their yields have gone up from those seven tons in a year to 20/21 tons. But we want to push these yields to over 25 tons. Now that we are getting the market sector doing very well, they will not be at the mercy of monopolists; they won't be at the mercy of middlethey won't be at the mercy of middle-men. Now, they would have stronger power to negotiate. By so doing, we can start addressing the issue of in-come, hoping that their income will increase, and their productivity and livelihoods will change. In work areas do you think that government and the organised private sector can render more support? Government's responsibility is ba-sically policies. They must sustain poli-cies that are pro-agriculture that are capable of empow-

capable of empow-ering indigenous production. You must sustain those kinds of things. You must provide the enabling enment Also. certain things like feeder

roads, tractor hiring services, some ba-sic water management systems, em-powerment of the youths and soft loans for farmers, are areas govern-ments can come in to motivate farm-ers. It is very important that these things are put in place in very good strategic places. The private sector firms are will-ing to participate but there is no way they can pay for the cost of every thing. But once they find out that a good ar-rangement is in place, a lot of people from the private sector will love to come into that line of business because they need these raw materials for their production. Most of the starch we use in this country are imported. We can endeavour to produce starch from our cassava, maize, cocoyam and Irish poroads, tractor hiring services, some bacassava, maize, cocovam and Irish potatoes for local consumption. We will not be importing any of these things

anymore.

The high quality cassava flour has become so useful today especially in the production of bread. Wheat, or the other hand, is so expensive. The high quality cassava flour has to be susquality cassava frour has to be sus-tained. The private sector, I'm sure, is willing to support its production. A lot of young people, including those in the Diaspora, want to come home with their money but they need an ena-bling environment.

ng environment. How well does the Foundation's initiatives resonate with the Institute's and the farmers that have been helped so far?

Well, all our contracts with the BATN Foundation have moved very smoothly. They have provided all that we

agreed ab initio. I think that the free hand and the belief in us as the lead technical part-ner make the differencehere. And it is a relationship we will like to sustain Infact, IITA will like to work with them more in other areas yam, plan-tain, ba-nana and maize cultivation, beause these are all im-portant

crops in Oyo State and so many other places.

Most companies in Nigeria of-ten direct their corporate social in-vestments towards providing social amenities, welfare support, etc. Are you satisfied with this kind of CSI in the area of agricultural sunver?

in the area of agricultural support? Sincerely, I will tell you that most companies will like to go to places where they will have quick visibilwhere they will have quick visibility. They always like to go to where
they will have immediate results.
Very few people like this long-term
approach and agriculture is longterm business that requires patience.
For a company to tread this line,
there is some sincerity in helping
people to grow. This is one very
good thing I love about working
with the BATN Foundation.
Yes, the big ones are okay but
agriculture needs something longer.
If you are going to intervene in agriculture, you have to be there for a
longer time. You have to be there to
balance things. Naturally, the envi-

balance things. Naturally, the envi-ronment is changing, the climate is changing and there are challenges to it. The rains are not coming when we want them to come and these an things that farmers cannot control. Any investor who goes into agri-culture has to plan bigger and has to be able to do this.

be able to do this.

From IITA's perspective, what is the future of this scheme?

The future is big. Now, Nigerians are realizing that agriculture is the way. The former minister of agriculture, Dr Akinwunmi Adesina harped on this. So IITA is fully on a commend to support this process. And narped on this. So III A is fully on ground to support this process. And we will pool all our resources and technical knowledge together to make sure we support anybody who makes agriculture move forward; not only to produce food, but also to make money while producing the food.

We have to make sure that we look at the entire value chain, from the market to the production; and most especially the young ones, the youth: they are our focus. We need to get more and more people in-volved in this process. There is nothing we can't produce in this country that there is no machine or expertise to do it. We must not continue to be the country that produces the raw

the country that produces the raw materials for others to use.

Addressing this whole food value chain is very important for Nigeria and IITA in conjunction with our partners like Africa Rice that is focusing on rice, and others that are focusing on cassava including the national research institutes. I think that the confidence of the research

national research institutes I trink that we will do more now that more and more investors are looking to-wards agriculture. What are your challenges in managing the BATNF-IITA partner-ship tobile trying to help these farm-ers?

ers?
Well, in partnerships there are always challenges. Organisations do have their own. The main thing is building harmony with the federal ministry of agriculture, and the state ministries of agriculture. The people that need it belong to the grassroots. This harmonisation is very roots. This harmonisation is very roots. This harmonisation is very important. The goals and objectives of the donor organisation have to be properly streamlined by targeting certain key value chairs. The main challenge is getting all things to jell together. This also means connecting all the partners, connecting the research, the extension and gelistic the congruences policy to help the partners. ting the government policy to be functional in the way it should work

Group photograph of the journalists and the presenters at the Workshop.



Cross section of journalists during the Workshop.

Foundation sponsored media training

ver 20 selected journalists from the Nigerian media houses participated in the 2015 BusinessDay annual Media Capacity Building Workshop for Science Journalists which took place on 29th July 2015 at the LCCI Building, Alausa, Ikeja with the theme: Effective Reporting on Climate Change.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Jude Ndu, manager, BusinessDay Training Department, gave a brief history of the annual training which started in 2013. He also stated how the previous workshops have impacted the reporting standards of the journalists.

During his presentation titled: *Building Alliances against Climate Change*, Professor Chidi Ibe, Technical Committee member, British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, stated how important it is for the journalists to understand the impact of the climate change and how it is affecting food production in the country.

Professor lbe informed the journalists of the efforts the Foundation geared towards supporting the poor-resource rural farmers in the country to tackle and mitigate against the menace of the climate change through introduction of best agronomic practices and making information and training about soil management, improving crop yield and environmentally friendly pest control methods available to the farmers in a sustainable manner.

Other presenters at the Workshop were Mr. Desmond Majekodunmi, an environmental activist and Mrs. Titi Anibaba, of Lagos State Ministry of Environment



Professor Chidi Ibe during his presentation at the Workshop.

FACTS ABOUT AGRICULTURE

According to the World Bank, about 69 per cent of all sub-Saharan Africans work in agriculture. In the EU, currently only 5.1 per cent of the population make their living with agriculture – the majority of people work in sectors of industry or services.

International staple food prices soared up by 170 per cent between 2000 and 2010. In some parts of Africa, regional and local price fluctuations were much bigger with high price volatility especially in East Africa. For example, maize prices in Kampala (Uganda) peaked in June 2011 at \$466 per ton almost four times higher than in the previous year. In Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, prices for Sorghum quadrupled within nine months to \$0.56 per kilogramme which was 13 times as much as in 2000. High food prices in combination with a bad harvest due to drought made ten million people dependent on food aid.

Half of Sub-Saharan farmers are women. Since 1980, the share of female farmers rose slightly. In the EU the share of female farmers has increased, too, but reaches only 40 per cent.

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