KSADP-SAA

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NEWSLETTER

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A DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE BY

FROM THE PMU

Dear Reader...

The Kano State Agro-pastoral Development Project is a $95 million, 5-year program which focuses on improving crop production and enhancing livestock productivity in the state. It is funded by the Islamic Development Bank, IsDB, the Lives and Livelihood Funds, LLF and the government of Kano state. The Executing Agency of the program is the Kano State Agriculture and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA).

The overall objective of the KSADP is to contribute to reducing poverty and strengthening food and nutrition security in the state by developing agro-pastoral production systems (production, processing, and retailing). The target beneficiaries of the program include smallholder farmers and pastoralists.

Other key beneficiaries are actors involved in the value chain of agro-pastoralism, namely, agricultural produce processors, marketers, input suppliers, and financial institutions. The program will directly benefit over 1.26 million people.

One of our major mandates is the development of the crop value chain. In this regard, we are funding Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) to impact nearly half a million smallholder farmers across the 44 local government areas of Kano. We are proud that our relationship with SAA is making a huge impact.

It is my hope that this publication will bring into the limelight the achievements of our collaboration with SAA and how, together, we can continue to make an impact in agriculture for the good of our citizens.

Have a great read...

Ibrahim Garba Muhammad
State Project Coordinator
Kano State Agropastoral Development Project (KSADP)

KSADP-Sasakawa team in group photo with Kano State Commissioner for Agriculture, Danjuma Mahmoud, during a courtesy call

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Two KSADP/SAA beneficiaries form female PSP cooperative group in Kano community

Members of Hajara and Marys spray enterprise group during a visit to their community in Tudun Wada LGA, Kano State

Sometime last year in Unguwar Dan Umma village in Tudun Wada LGA of Kano State, an Extension Agent scouting for potential beneficiaries for the KSADP/SAA project, saw a young woman spraying agro-products on a maize field. He asked her if she would like to get the training that would make other farmers in and around the community pay her to spray their fields. The 35-year-old woman, Mary Musa, agreed but insisted that she would like her friend, Hajara Hamza, to be part of the programme. The two women returned to the community days after the training with new knowledge, spraying skills and spray kits. Consequently, what they did formerly as a farm chore turned into a business enterprise.

"They taught us how to identify genuine agro-products, how to handle and apply them safely and correctly and how to do it as a business," Mary said in a chat with KSADP/SAA Newsletter "They also gave us knapsack sprayers and safety kits. That was what gave us the confidence to approach farmers and offer to spray for them for a fee. And it gradually turned into an income-generating activity for us"

The two women went further to train other women in the community and ended up forming an all-female spray service cooperative group. Today, the group which currently has 10 members, is involved in spraying as a business saving money in a unique cooperative style and helping one another financially.

Explaining how the group works, Hajara stated that the group exists to support the women financially. She said, "Since we only have two sets of spray and safety kits, we take turns to use them. Members go out to spray people's farms and get paid. They contribute a certain percentage to the group and keep the rest. Since the members are also farmers, we give the money as loans for production. After harvest, members also contribute produce that we store and sell when the price is good. So, that is how we

support ourselves."

Mary and Hajara are examples of how KSADP/SAA project beneficiaries are supporting themselves and transforming their communities. The project has trained and equipped scores of young men and women as Private Service Providers (PSPs) in spray service for farm pest management and crop threshing machine operations in farming communities in the 44 local government areas of Kano State.

Mary Musa and Hajara Hamza

According to Comrade Abdulrasheed Hamisu Kofarmata, the project selects qualified beneficiaries and gives them knowledge, skills and equipment to generate income by serving their farming communities. In the case of Mary and Hajara, these women find themselves in a community where women are just as involved in production as men. In other communities where women are mainly into processing, the project trains and empowers them with processing kits to boost household income generation.

On the plans they have for the cooperative group, Mary said they wish to enlist more members, get registered to be able to access input financing and acquire more spraying kits. Expressing gratitude to the KSADP project and its sponsors including the Kano State Government, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Lives and Livelihoods Fund (LLF), she said the project has benefitted the group immensely.

In Hajara's words: "When Mary invited me to join her, I didn't know it was going to become something this tangible. I am glad I did, and I thank the project and the sponsors" ●

Six more Kano communities to get KSADP/SAA solar-powered vegetable tent dryers

The KSADP/SAA project plans to increase the number of solar-powered vegetable tent dryers installed across communities to nine in the year 2024. The Project Coordinator, Abdulrasheed Kofarmata, disclosed this recently in an interview, saying that postharvest loss reduction interventions for vegetables and grains need to keep up with the increasing productivity of farmers in the state.

The solar tent dryer is a facility that uses solar power to dry vegetables like tomatoes and peppers. The system consists of a parabolic reflector that generates high temperatures by concentrating sunlight onto a drying chamber to speed up the drying process. The facility reduces drying time, cuts down post-harvest losses, and offers an effective and eco-friendly solution for the drying and preservation of agricultural produce.

Last year, the project installed three dryers of one metric ton capacity each in three local government areas - Bagwai, Makoda and Garum Mallam. This year, Kofarmata says the project has identified six more locations in six different local governments where the production of tomatoes and other vegetables is high.

His words: “We continue to empower farmers with value addition and drying technologies to help them reduce produce and income losses and also maintain the quality and nutritional value of their produce. Currently, the way most farmers dry tomatoes is very depreciative and unhygienic. This reduces their income because the bad practices reduce the nutritional value of the tomatoes.

“So, we’re establishing more of these dryers to support farmers to maintain quality and enhance income. In fact, the tomatoes stored in these facilities meet export standards because their colours are maintained, good hygiene is observed and nutritional contents are retained. We also continue to back it up with training because reducing postharvest losses demands a multifaceted approach and farmers must have the capacity needed.”

The KSADP/SAA project has invested hugely across the vegetable and grain value chains to address post-harvest losses across different stages including harvesting, handling, transportation, storage, marketing and even consumption. “Our interventions in this regard cut across harvesting technologies, rice mills, multi-crop threshers, PICS bags, aerated onion storage facilities and other agro-processing centres,” the project boss said ●

We’re establishing more of these dryers to support farmers to maintain quality and enhance income. In fact, the tomatoes stored in these facilities meet export standards because their colours are maintained, good hygiene is observed and nutritional contents are retained.

- *Abdulrasheed Kofarmata*

KSADP Vegetable tent dryer in Garun Mallam LGA, Kano state

KSADP Youth farmer, Ibrahim Yusuf, in his car during a visit to Kwanar Dumana community, Dawakin Tofa LGA Kano State.

Why I bought a car from my proceeds – KSADP/SAA seed production beneficiary

Ibrahim Yusuf is a 30-year-old rice and maize farmer in the Kwanar Dumana community, Dawakin Tofa local government area of Kano State. Last season, he hosted the KSADP/SAA Community-Based Seed Multiplication (CBSM) plot. He provided a hectare of land and the project supported him with all the input required including improved rice variety Faro 44 and agro-products to control weeds, rice blasts and other pests. The project also exposed him to Good Agronomic Practices for regenerative agriculture.

Yusuf was dumbfounded at the harvest; he got 69 bags of rice from the field, far more than the 15 to 20 bags he got in the past. He confessed that it was the first time he was recording such a massive yield in the six years he had been farming.

His words: "I have never recorded this kind of yield in my years of farming, whether in rice or maize. Before my encounter with KSADP/SAA, I didn't know I could get improved varieties and I didn't know about the innovative production technologies the project taught me and other farmers on the field. I didn't also know that I could profit so much by selling seeds.

"It is from the proceeds that I got that car and I have made a lot of savings. I had to buy the car to ease transportation because I suddenly had a lot of business errands to run."

The establishment of CBSM demonstration plots by the KSADP/SAA project is one of its Regenerative Agriculture (RA) activities aimed at promoting the use of improved varieties and good and sustainable agricultural practices in Kano.

"Those days whenever I was ready to plant, I just went to the market and asked for good rice seeds and I thought 20 bags was all that could be gotten," Yusuf said. "But since the project was going to provide the input and free training, and said that the seed was early maturing, high yielding and able to deal with the current environmental and climate issues we have in the community, I decided to try. I started to get convinced by how the crop even appeared on the field. It looked very healthy and promising.

Since harvesting, Yusuf is happy to be referred to as a rice seed producer. Farmers planning to do dry season farming have been patronizing him and seed companies are in the waiting to off-take the remaining seeds.

"With what I have seen, I am never going back to those old varieties. In fact, my plan for next year is to expand to 20 hectares. I am grateful for this project. May Allah bless them and bless the sponsors. Please extend this to more young people; it will encourage them to take agriculture more seriously" ●

How KSADP/SAA radio programmes are turning listeners into customers

Last year, the KSADP/SAA project extensively used radio to broadcast recorded programmes, live shows, jingles and announcements to reach millions of people including farmers and other agricultural stakeholders in and outside Kano state. The programmes were used to propagate various messages to create awareness about the project's activities and educate farmers about dry season farming, climate change and agricultural market developments. Beneficiaries are however revealing that the radio initiative is converting listeners into customers for their businesses. Mr Dantala Muttaka, a machine fabricator in Zangon Buhari community, Bunkure LGA of Kano State, is one of such beneficiaries.

Dantala Muttaka, machine fabricator in Bunkure LGA of Kano State

Muttaka was one of the 25 indigenous fabricators trained in 2023 by the KSADP/SAA project at the Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State. At the end of the training, each beneficiary was equipped with an angle grinder, a MMA 500 welding inverter and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Before the training, the 45-year-old father of 10, specialized only in welding gates and only experimented with small threshers. "But the training exposed me to rudiments of fabrication and now I can say I am a master fabricator," he said. "Now I make good money producing and selling single-crop threshers and multi-crop threshers."

Muttaka, whose multi-thresher sells for about N900,000, said the KSADP/SAA radio programme was a major contributor to the customer boom he experienced.

His words: "I started witnessing an increase in customers' calls when one of those I constructed a machine for testified on the KSADP/SAA radio programmes. After that testimony, people started contacting me to make various kinds of machines for them. Now I have five apprentices in my workshop and I can fabricate up to four multi-threshing machines every month and I did the last one for N900,000. These days, people even come and make down payments. So, these days, I just love listening to the radio.

Commenting on Muttaka's experience with the radio programmes, the SAA Communication Officer, Moses Nongoatse, noted that the machine producer's story is an indication that the impact of the project was spreading across and beyond Kano state.

Nongoatse explained that "the project has a weekly 30-minute radio programme titled Mai kamar zuwa, aired on five radio stations in Kano - Premier Radio, Vision Radio, Arewa Radio, Radio Kano and Radio Kano AM. We have three live radio programmes on tomato processing featuring project staff and also work with these radio stations to air jingles and announcements that educate and mobilized farmers for dry season farming and agricultural activities."

KSADP/SAA women boost household income and nutrition from cereals

KSADP Nutrition Champions during an interractive meeting in Kano Municipal LGA, Kano state

Soy cake, "soy meat steaks" maize couscous, soy noodles, *tombrown*, and a vast array of soy-based drinks are some of the nutritious and delicious food and drinks recently displayed by some women trained in complementary foods production and income generation under the KSADP/SAA project. The training was conducted by IITA and ICRISAT, KSADP/SAA project partners, to build the capacity of women in the production of nutritious foods and drinks from grains for household nutrition and income generation.

The women, who belonged to different farming and processors' groups, displayed some of their products recently at a meeting with the KSADP/SAA communication team, expressing fulfilment at how the empowerment was helping them generate income and boosting the nutritional status of their households.

Mrs Fatima Abubarkar, a beneficiary from the Sharada Women Farmers Association, Kano Municipal LGA, confessed that she did not know it was possible to get so many varieties of food and drinks from soybeans and other cereals until she attended the training.

"Now I make soya milk drinks of various flavours and I even make *Tombrown*, which is a combination of soybeans, groundnut, millet and sorghum," said the 36-year-old mother of four. "Apart from making it for my family, I take orders and make for people and it's been a worthwhile income-generating activity for me. A lot of people are buying *Tombrown* because of its nutritional value for children and even adults."

Speaking on the profitability of their activities, Mrs Usaina Alli Ahmed, a beneficiary from the Limawa Ammar Women Fadama Farmers group, said she makes up to N1500 profit daily, processing about one Mudu of soybeans every day. "The money I make is helping me to support my husband in taking care of the home."

Mrs Mariam S Zakari, 48, another beneficiary from Zamhat Women Multipurpose Society, however, maintained that generating income was important to her, "but of greater importance is the nutritional value we are creating from these crops." According to her, "With what we are producing from maize, soybean, millet, rice, there is very little room for malnutrition in many families, especially with the biofortified varieties being grown and utilized"

On growing and utilizing the crops, Mrs Alli, appealed for support for the women to be able to grow their raw materials to produce at scale and maximize profit ●

Cabbage and tomato farmers react to early results of KSADP/SAA dry season demos

KSADP Technical officers on Regenerative Agriculture interracting with beneficiaries durnig a field visit to Kura LGA, Kano State

Following the commencement of the establishment of the KSADP/SAA 2024 dry season demonstration plots for vegetables in Kano State, demo host farmers and cluster members are expressing awe at the early results coming from the nurseries. The Project is currently establishing 150 dry-season vegetable demos across the 44 local government areas of the state as part of efforts to introduce farmers to good agronomic practices, improved varieties and climate-smart production technologies.

The crops of interest are tomatoes and cabbage. The farmers were supplied with improved varieties and are being guided in production techniques aimed at climate resilience, drought tolerance, high yield potentials and high survival rate at the nursery and transplanting. The use of organic matter to reduce inorganic fertilizer application is also being promoted and farmers in the communities are given access to study and adopt the technologies.

The KSADP/SAA communications team visited some of the locations recently and the farmers on the ground expressed strong optimism at the outcome of the demos, saying that the nursery stages already indicate that the crops will produce great yields.

At Kura Local Government Area, tomato farmer, Samaila Dahiru, hailed what he described as an “excellent result” from his tomato nursery. “The nursery stage produced excellent results,” he stated. “The straight-line planting of the seeds is far better than the broadcast method we used to do. We did not witness any mortality at transplanting. And I think these new varieties are very good”.

Ahmad Abdullahi, 39, a farmer in Nupawa community, said he was particularly impressed at the new tomato variety, saying that it was ready for transplanting after 18 days whereas the old varieties he used in the past took up to 32 days.

"Additionally, I think the way we are being taught to tackle soil-borne pests, watering and protecting the young plants is markedly different from how we used to do it.," Abdullahi said. "Now, we understand the consequences of water loss and haphazard plant spacing"

At Lautayi II community in Bunkure Local government area, Basiru Sani, whose demo was a cabbage farm, said he was new to cabbage as he has always been a tomato farmer. "I have always intended to do cabbage but KSADP/SAA helped me make the move early because I am sure of their guidance. The methods I have been introduced to give me confidence that I will have good yield," the 40-year-old farmer said.

The same level of confidence was expressed in Garum Mallam, Takai, Tudun Wada, Gabasawa and other locations where Extension Agents and Community Based Facilitators working under the supervision of the KSADP/SAA Regenerative Agriculture team are supervising transplanting activities ●

Banks, agro-businesses to support KSADP/SAA beneficiaries, smallholder farmers

Financial institutions and agro-businesses have pledged to support the beneficiaries of the KSADP/SAA project and smallholder farmers in Kano in production and marketing activities. The firms pledged at a recent 3-day collaborative meeting with market actors organized by the Project. The meeting was attended by representatives of the seven seed companies partnering with the project, four financial institutions, 40 produce off-takers and aggregators as well as 42 commodity association trainers/traders (CATs) from 42 Local Government Areas of Kano state.

Abdulrasheed Kofarmata, Project Cordinator

Seed companies in attendance include Premier Seeds, Ahalson Seed, Techni Seed, SIM Seed and Joy Seed. Value Seed and Nova Africa Agro-Allied attended. Financial Institutions in attendance were the Bank of Agriculture, Jaiz Bank, Wema Bank and Lotus Bank.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, the Project Coordinator of the KSADP/SAA, Abdulrasheed Kofarmata, disclosed that the meetings discussed how the activities of the market actors would benefit farmers in terms of financing, market linkages, produce taking and processing.

He said, "With the good agronomic practices and new production and post-harvest technologies we're promoting, farmers in the state are increasing their productivity and yield. Therefore, we must begin to talk about marketing and increased production because the capacity of the smallholder farmers is being enhanced.

"So, at that collaborative meeting, our teams discussed how the banks will support the smallholder farmers through their quick and affordable agricultural financing schemes at no-interest or single-digit interest rates and how the rice mills and vegetable markets will help with marketing and off-taking. The CATs and seed companies also looked at how they will help promote and sustain the propagation of improved seed varieties among our smallholder farmers.

A day after the completion of the meeting, the KSADP team together with the CATs paid courtesy visits to the facilities of the rice mills, and rain and vegetable markets with proposals on how the firms could run out-grower schemes with KSADP beneficiary farmers ●

PHOTO NEWS

Journalists visit a KSADP vegetable tent dryer during 2023 media field day in Thomas community, Makoda LGA Kano state.

KSADP/SAA Project Coordinator, Abdulrasheed Kofarmata interracting with beneficiaries durnig a field visit to Garun Mallam LGA

Mrs Usaina Alli Ahmed, displays soy-based drinks produced by KSADP Nutrition champions

KSADP Youth farmer Ibrahim Yusuf during a visit to his store in Kwanar Dumana community, Dawakin Tofa LGA Kano State.

KSADP Technical officers on Regenerative Agriculture interracting with beneficiaries durnig a field visit to Kura LGA

KSADP dry season vegetable farmers tending to a Nursery durnig a field visit to Garun Mallam LGA

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRODUCED BY SASAKAWA AFRICA ASSOCIATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE KANO STATE AGROPASTORAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (KSADP).

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