



Lives and
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Fund



KSADP-SAA

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NEWSLETTER

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SEED SYSTEM INTERVENTION: PARTNERS AND IMPACT



Lives and
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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)



FROM THE PC

Dear Reader...

Before the commencement of the project, a lot of farmers in Kano state were suffering low yield and productivity due to the use of local varieties and weak seeds of rice, maize, millet, sorghum, and vegetables. Climate change was biting harder and the pressure to increase food production was mounting. It became apparent that our farmers needed varieties that are early maturing, pest and disease-resistant, drought-tolerant, and high-yielding. The project then thought it best to collaborate with key seed sector players to address quality sourcing and sustainable supply of quality seeds of improved varieties of the target crops.

We have since fostered a partnership with eight seed companies and two research institutes to build a sustainable seed system in Kano State as part of the objectives of the project. The partnership was designed in such a way that the research institutes that breed the new varieties are the source of the early-generation seeds while the seed companies are in charge of multiplying and galvanizing the community-based seed outgrowers approach.

Within the framework of SAA's Regenerative Agriculture component, the seed companies establish Community-Based Seed Multiplication (CBSM) plots to facilitate the diffusion of improved varieties across the communities and offer opportunities for the host farmers to become seed outgrowers. The seed companies also establish demonstration plots to introduce farmers to new production technologies, which when used in combination with improved varieties, double their yields, help cope with environmental stress, and increase their income.

This edition of the KSADP/SAA Newsletter is therefore x-rays the work that has been done by the partners and how the farmers are relating with them.

I wish you a happy read.

Abdulasheed Kofarmata
KSADP/SAA Project Coordinator

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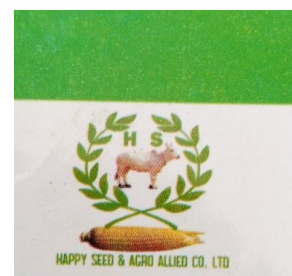
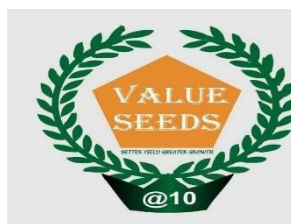
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Research institutes and seed companies driving seed system transformation in Kano



Two research institutes and eight seed companies are partnering with the KSADP/SAA to drive the ongoing seed system transformation in Kano state and diffusing improved seeds across Kano communities.

Under the partnership, two research institutes, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), are facilitating the production and supply of early-generation seeds of improved varieties and using decision support tools to match crops and varieties to various agroecological zones and market niches in the state. They provide technical and knowledge support tools (training manuals, extension guides) for maize, sorghum, millet, and rice. They also provide information on improved production technologies of component crops.

The seed companies include Value Seeds, Premier Seeds, Happy Seeds, Joy Seeds, Sim Seeds, Techni Seeds, Sabanah Seeds and Ahalson Seeds. These companies

are raising community-based seed outgrowers through backward integration. Through the KSADP/SAA, they procure, repackage, and distribute inputs to farmers for dry and wet seasons-based demonstration and Community Based Seed Multiplication (CBSM) plots in line with recommended protocols.

In a chat during a recent tour of the fields established by the partners, Samuel Abiodun, the Techni Seeds agronomist with the KSADP/SAA project, said, "Providing the farmers with quality and improved seeds is not the only thing we do on the project. Our demos and CBSM plots are used to showcase and train farmers on improved production practices and technologies. So, the benefits go to as many farmers as there are where the plots are located".

According to Albert Taru, Regenerative Agriculture Project Officer on the project, the seed companies are allocated to various local governments to cover the 44 local governments of the state. "They have all shown

their strength and proved that the partnerships were worth going into. The impact is already being felt across

the state because some of the farmers have one success story or the other to tell," he said ●



KSADP/SAA Newsletter team interviews Isiaku Abdulhameed, a farmer in Kore Community, Garum Malam LGA, Kano

Seed companies raise awareness for use of improved seeds in Kano

“Our sales of improved seeds to local farmers have increased in the last year. This is an indication that the seed system partnership has increased farmers’ awareness and knowledge about improved seeds”, said Mr Charles Alli, the Monitoring & Evaluation/Operating Officer of Joy Seeds.

Speaking in his office in Kano, Mr Alli noted that the positive impact of the KSADP/SAA intervention in the seed system has been reflected in the volume of seeds being sold by the company in the last one year.

“Farmers are buying more seeds and a lot of

them are increasingly becoming interested in the seed business,” he said. “It has given them access to the seed market where they can buy and sell. So, they do not worry about what will happen if they produce because the seed company is always there to buy from them”.

Concurring, Abubakar Yusuf Kabara, the Project Manager for Sim seed on the KSADP/SAA Project said that there has also been an increase in the number of farmers enquiring about improved seeds not just for themselves, but also for other farmers in their community. According to him, the essence of the partnership between KSADP/

SAA and the seed companies is to ensure the sustainability of the efforts in diffusing improved seeds in farming communities.

“This partnership is a conduit for transmitting new technologies to farming communities and we are ensuring that the knowledge is not being limited to the farmers but every member of the farming population in that community,” he said.

“We ensure that we use an approach that

involves community heads, lead farmers, and everyone, whether they are direct beneficiaries or not. In fact, that is one of the reasons why our demo and CBSM plots are located on the roadsides so that people can easily see the results.”

The seed companies attest to the fact that awareness, knowledge, and willingness to use improved seeds have increased among farmers in Kano State ●



“Farmers are buying more seeds and a lot of them are increasingly becoming interested in the seed business. It has given farmers opportunities to buy and sell planting materials”

- Abubakar Yusuf Kamara

Sim Seed Project Manager for KSADP/SAA Project

Farmers make extra income from seed outgrower scheme

Smallholder farmers are attesting to the benefits of the seed system partnership and efforts of the KSADP/SAA project, saying that the buyback relationship they have with the seed companies has increased their confidence in production.

Sixty-year-old Ado Garuba Wudil is one of such happy farmers. He hosted one of the CBSM plots in Gwari community in Wudil LGA, recorded a massive yield, and had his seeds off taken by Ahalson seed.

The retired civil servant who grew one hectare of maize of improved variety Samaz 27 said: “I harvested 37 bags of maize on one hectare. I was surprised because in the past I only got 15 bags. Farmers around me were also amazed and immediately they started asking how they can get the improved seeds.”

Wudil sold 15 bags of the maize to the company and reserved some for himself, saying he is willing to sell to farmers in his community and continue to produce. He also said that he has used the profit made to diversify into rice cultivation where he is relying on using improved seeds.

Speaking to Wudil’s source of excitement, Mr Ali Ahmad Ali, the CEO of Ahalson General Enterprises, noted that the project has revealed the opportunities that farmers have in the seed market and how they can double their yield.

“In the beginning, a lot of them did not believe that by using improved seeds and the new planting techniques,

they would see their seeds double. Therefore, this project has opened their eyes to vast opportunities. They now know the difference between improved seeds and the ones they were using before”.

“Participating in this project has shown me that there is a lot of difference between the local varieties and the improved varieties,” said Mukaddas Idris, a 46-year-old farmer who hosted the wet season CBSM for millet last year. He planted the Super Sosa variety.

Idris, who is also a civil servant, said: “I got 17 bags from the same plot I used to get eight to nine bags. Other farmers in my community saw it and are now interested in buying the seeds for planting this year. They have been asking how they could get the seeds.”

Idris confirmed that he sold 10 bags to the seed company and is using the proceeds to expand his farming.



Isiaku Abdulhameed, a farmer in Gwari community, Wudil LGA, Kano



Mukaddas Abdulhameed, millet farmer in Wudil LGA, Kano

Sources of quality seeds of improved varieties



KSADP/SAA Newsletter team with Mr Reuben Solomon, inside the IITA foundation seeds store

The research institutes perform the critical role of making the early generation seeds available to the seed companies to produce Foundation Seeds and Certified Seeds, which they transmit to farmers in the various farming communities.

On the KSADP/SAA project, ICRISAT and IITA perform these roles. They not only breed new and improved varieties, they also establish protocols to maintain their genetic purity by offering technical assistance and training to the Extension Agents, the seed companies, the community seed entrepreneurs, and the farmers in general.

Dr. Ignatius Angarawai, the ICRISAT Country Representative in Nigeria, emphasized the significance of this partnership, noting how the extension expertise of Sasakawa Africa Association combines with the breeding prowess of research institutes to facilitate farmers' access to cutting-edge agricultural technologies through the KSADP/SAA project.

“The partnership on the project has helped us extend

the improved technologies developed by the research institutes through the seed system,” he said. “So, we are successfully giving farmers access to improved varieties of sorghum and millet and providing the technical backstopping needed to maintain the genetic purity of the seeds.”

Dr Angarawai, noted that the partnership has facilitated a smooth flow of seeds from the breeders to the farmers through the seed companies and extension agents being trained.

Mr Reuben Solomon, a lead researcher with IITA Kano, underscored the institute's role in providing early-generation seeds of maize to seed companies for the multiplication of Foundation and Certified Seeds.

“However, our contribution extends beyond mere provision”, he said. “We actively engage the seed company representatives, Extension Agents, and community-based entrepreneurs in training and capacity-building sessions on how to produce, process, package, and market the seeds. These climate-smart varieties are early maturing

and disease-resistant and helping farmers bypass the challenges of short-term drought and giving them higher yields.

Mr Solomon noted that the community-based seed producers who are the farmers are also being trained on production, processing and marketing, saying, “We have started the process. We are training them already.

We want them to grow into seed producers and seed production associations to grow, process, and sell seeds profitably and sustainably

According to Dr Angarawai, “Effective knowledge transfer is paramount, so we are collaborating to use the community-based Farmer Field Schools for a more participatory approach.



Dr. Ignatius Angarawai, the ICRISAT Country Representative in Nigeria

“The partnership on the project has helped us extend the improved technologies developed by the research institutes through the seed system. We are successfully giving farmers access to improved varieties of sorghum and millet and providing the technical backstopping needed to maintain the genetic purity of the seeds”.

- Dr Ignatius Antarawai

ICRISAT Nigeria Country Representative

Farmers share experiences with improved seeds, technologies



KSADP/SAA Regenerative Agriculture Program Officer inspects a crop with EAs and CBFs

During the establishment of a Community Based Seed Multiplication (CBSM) plot in Garko Local Government Area, farmers around the host farmer were fascinated about the improved methods and seeds being used. However they considered the process too meticulous and did not think that the effort would yield commensurate results. But just weeks after the plant was established, they started to enquire about how to get the seeds and be part of the project.

That is the story of Mohammed Ayuba, the host farmer of the CBSM plot in Kumfada community, in Garko Local Government Area of Kano state.

“I think it is a case of seeing is believing”, Ayuba said, recalling that he decided to be part of the project as a

result of what he saw on his master’s farm last season.

“I was part of the establishment of his farm then. The methods and the outcome were amazing. So I decided that I would try to be part of it. The crops were well established and he got a high yield. I saw that the variety made a huge difference. So, now that I am doing seed multiplication, I think I will be able to get more of the seeds, and make money selling it back to the seed company.

The yield and income are just one aspect exciting farmers. In Yantomu community in Garum Malam LGA, Abdulazeez Tela, said he is particularly excited about the cost-saving attribute of the production technologies introduced during the field establishment.

His words: “When we were given the seeds to plant, I doubted if the seeds were going to be enough. To add to my worry, we were told to plant only one seed per hole. Again, I worried about germination because in the past, we planted more seeds, three or more, because we knew not all would germinate. But to my amazement, we used far fewer seeds, and germination of those single seeds was almost a hundred percent. To me, that is the best part of using improved varieties. You use less, and save

more”

The experiences of these farmers are influencing their peers. For example, Sagir Ahmad said he decided to be part of the project because of what he saw on his colleagues' farm last season.

His words: "I was sad I didn't take part last time because what I saw on other farmers' farms should not be missed. Using these seeds and these methods, you get full germination and be assured of a high yield. Many

Sustaining the seed outgrowers scheme

“The future is bright, said Ali, MD of Ahalson Seed. He disclosed that in the coming season, his company is hoping to buy up to 120 metric tonnes of seeds through the scheme because a lot of them are willing to come on board and we are ready to support them.

The scheme is however not without challenges, which include initially skepticism by farmers yet to experience the benefits of improved seeds and breach of agreements due to farmers' economic states

Mohammed Ilu Joganna, the Managing Director of Happy Seeds, addressed the challenges and how the seed companies are solving them

His words: “Farmers are highly enthusiastic about improved varieties, the improved planting methods, and the seed business. As seed companies, it is our duty to support them. So, we ensure that every establishment is an opportunity for the host farmer and farmers around him to learn. We involve the National Agricultural Seed

Council (NASC) for certification and also ensure that the farmers manage their fields. Besides, they get the inputs free – both seeds and other agro-inputs. In that regard, the project and the donors have done very well.



A beneficiary of the project receives input from a seed company

On the prospects of the seed business by farmers, Joganna said: “The buyback scheme is working perfectly and a lot of them want to be part of it. We have put up measures to tackle the challenges that arise. For example, some farmers tend to sell their seeds prematurely when they need money. So, we advise them that they may lose money that way. So,

in some cases, we have given farmers advance payment to ensure that the result is a win-win for both the seed company and the farmer.

Undoubtedly, farmers now have more choices with improved seeds. Haladu Adamu, a 50-year-old Sorghum farmer in the Dakumbal community in Sumaila LGA, said he had been willing to plant maize but the yields was not encouraging until he had the encounter with the improved maize variety which is high-yielding.

PHOTO NEWS



Mr Charles Alli, Represntative of Joy Seed, displays improved seeds



Group photographs with the host farmer of a CBSM plot in Garum Mallam LGA, Kano.



Group photograph of KSADP/SAA team with EAs and CBFs



Interview with the MD of Happy Seeds, Mr Mohammed Ilu Joganna



Interview with the MD of Ahalsan Seed, Ali Ahmad Ali



Farmers harvest dry season cucumber demo plot

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

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