



Abimbola Okoya, Oluwaseyi Ashade, Dr Anthony Anuforum, former Director General, Nigerian Meteorological Agency and Professor Sani Abubakar Marshi, Director General, Nigerian Meteorological Agency during the MoU signing ceremony at Ikeja, Lagos.

BATNF signs MoU with NiMET

Thursday, 9th February 2017 marked a very significant milestone for British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation in supporting the smallholder farmers in Nigeria with the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMET) in providing weather forecast across the country to the smallholder farmers to improve their production efficiency.

Oluwaseyi Ashade, Executive Director, British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, said that the ceremony marked a very important stage in achieving its set goals, focus and objectives in supporting smallholder farmers. 'BATNF would provide weather information dissemination platforms through different sessions of agronomics and other household economic strengthening trainings across the number of states where BATNF's activities are carried out. The trainings include pre-season and in-season among other trainings for lead farmers and other relevant users.' She added.

In his own remarks, the out-going Director General of NiMET, Dr Anthony Anuforum stated that BATNF would be the second organised private player in the agricultural sector after USAID

MARKETS that is collaborating with the agency in areas of disseminating weather forecast to assist the smallholder farmers across Nigeria which is expected to improve their farm yield and income through best agricultural practices that are climate adaptive.

The new Director-General of NiMET, Professor Abubakar Marshi promised to continue with the agreement with the Foundation. 'We at NiMET are extremely happy with the relationship with British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation. We will give you the necessary support. We are in a transition. We will have expectations that our partners will collect information at the lower level which we will work with, like Katsina State did for us to make necessary adjustment for more effective weather prediction.' Professor Marshi stated.

With the partnership with NiMET, BATNF would be able to provide weather forecast information to its beneficiary farmers across the country with the aim of improving their production and ultimately their income.



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Empowering rural Nigeria for a sustainable future



Sustainability

British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation supports small holder farmers to adopt more productive ways of earning livelihoods from natural resources in a sustainable manner

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BATNF Holds the 3rd IPs' Workshop

THE 3rd in the series of British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation's Implementing Partners' Workshop was held on Thursday, 9th February 2017 at the Conference Hall of Amber Residence Ikeja. The objectives of the Workshop was to share 2016 project reports by the implementing partners; their achievements, challenges, success stories recorded during the 2016-2017 farming season of various crop value-chains enterprise development projects across the country and experiences from different zones which can be of value-addition to other implementing partners.

The Workshop evaluates the strategies of the ongoing projects activities and offers suggestions on how to improve on project implementation which would guarantee the sustainability of the interventions.

Highlights of the 1-day Workshop include NiMET's presentation on weather forecast, BATNF's presentation on the new strategies, climate change and how it is affecting agriculture. The Workshop also featured the Most Outstanding Implementing Partner Award for the 2016-2017 farming season to Niger State FADAMA Coordination Office for its efforts in the BATNF 2016 Rice Enterprise Project in Doko Community of Niger State.



Participants during the Workshop.



Presentation of the Most Outstanding Implementing Partner Award certificate for the 2016-2017 farming season to Niger State ADP representatives.



Implementing partners and other key stakeholders at the Workshop.

Farmers' Market at the Rising Sun

IN continuation of its efforts in supporting its beneficiary farmers across the country, the Foundation staged the first Farmers' Market for 2017 at the car park of the Rising Sun Building, Ikoyi, Lagos. The event which took place on Thursday, 30th March 2017 had farm fresh produce for sale to employees: fresh eggs from Abeokuta, Ogun State, fresh dried catfish from Kabba, Kogi State; fresh Nigerian rice from Doko,

Niger State & Kwande, Benue State and fresh garri from Ago-Are, Oyo State.

In her statement, Mrs. Bose Adeniyi, beneficiary garri processor from Ago Are in Oyo State, thanked the Foundation for the brilliant idea of the Farmers' Market where the beneficiaries can sell their farm produce and interacted with the employees of BAT. 'This is a rare opportunity for us, smallholder farmers that are beneficiaries of BATNF

intervention. It is an indication that the Foundation meant well for us: providing us with the support to produce and the market where to sell the produce.' She added. Other beneficiary farmers at the market include Mrs. Elizabeth Oyelumade, poultry farmer from Abeokuta and Mr Kunle Megbowo, fish farmer from Kabba, Kogi state.



The Farmers' Market Stand.

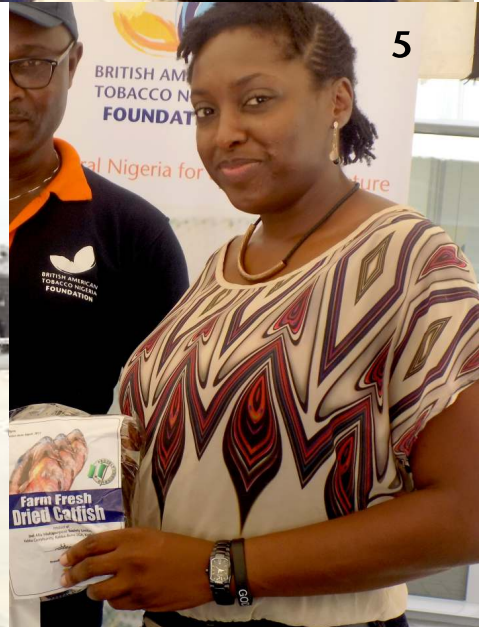
And the winner is...

Abuh Mohammed. He participated in the online quiz to celebrate the Foundation's 1st farmers' market for the year at the Rising Sun Building in Lagos.



Abuh receiving his prize from Oluwaseyi. With them is Tajudeen.

At the Stand



(1). Chris McAllister at the Stand; (2) Beneficiary farmers displaying their farm produce at the Market Stand; (3). Oluchukwu Aniaka with her purchased farm produce; (4). Damilare Ibrionke with his farm produce; (5). Sandra Njaka with her purchased fish pack. (6). BAT employees at the Farmers' Market Stand; (7). Chidinma and Rosemary displaying farm produce for sale. (8). Employees making bookings for their preferred produce; (9). Olisa Onwurah with his crate of eggs purchased at the Stand; (10) Another section of BAT employees at the Stand.



Oluwaseyi Ashade delivering her speech during a session at the Summit.

BATNF at BusinessDay AgricBusiness Summit

THE Business Day 2017 Annual AgriBusiness and Food Security Summit took place on Thursday, 23rd March 2017 at the Landmark Centre, Victoria Island with the theme: Rethinking Nigeria's Agribusiness Systems: Making the case for resolving the nation's food security challenges. The event, which was co-sponsored by British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation had in attendance over 500 delegates from across the agricultural sector of the economy.

Various issues as it affects the agricultural sector were discussed during the panel discussions at the Summit. These include: Funding of agriculture, insurance and the prerequisite of farmer education, tackling post-harvest losses & increasing value addition, Increasing production & achieving international standards. On the Panels were experts within the agricultural sector and Oluwaseyi Ashade, BATNF Executive Director.

Keynote addresses were delivered by Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Honourable Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development and Professor Ruerd Ruben, Research Coordinator, Food Security, International Value Chains & Impact Assessment at the Agricultural Economics Institute, Netherlands.

Abdulhameed Aliyu, CEO, Nigeria Incentive-based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) and Alhaji Sanni, Dangote, President, Nigeria Agribusiness Group were the guest speakers at the event.



Participants at the Summit.



The BATNF exhibition stand at the Summit.

BATNF Capacity Building Projects Training kicked-off

ON the 12th and 13th of January, 2017, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation kicked off its capacity building training programs for the 2016 - 2017 dry season farming with the Akwa Ibom State dry season Cassava and Maize Enterprise Capacity Building Project.

The objective of the training program which has about 200 selected smallholder farmers from the identified farmers' groups, is to update the farmers on best agronomic practices of the cassava and maize production, water management, soil management, use of fertilizers, crop harvesting, storage, processing and marketing.

According to the Projects Coordinator from the Akwa-Ibom State FADAMA Coordination Office, Friday Akpabot, the field training of the selected smallholder farmers, commenced on the 4th week of February with the establishment of 0.5ha demonstration farms at each of the local government areas.

In September 2016, a similar demonstration farm was established at Ekpenyong Atai Community, Essien Udim Local Government Area of the State.

...At Lagos State Fishery Value-chain Capacity Building

On Monday, 13th February, the BATNF Lagos State 2016-2017 fishery value-chain capacity building project training program commenced at Maforija Community, Eredo LCDA of Lagos State. The program which was designed to boost the aquaculture practices of the selected 100 smallholder fish farmers from Epe Division had in attendance all actors along the fish value-chain, this included the fish farmers, processors and marketers. Similar training programs were also held at Ikorodu and Badagry Divisions of the State on Tuesday 14th February and Thursday 16th February respectively. Based on the agreement with the stakeholders at the program, practical trainings with the establishment of demonstration ponds commenced during the 2nd week of March at all the Divisions simultaneously.

...Edo Dry-season Rice Capacity Building not left out

The success story was the same at Esan South-East, Etsako West and Etsako Central Local Government Areas of Edo State when the capacity training programs in dry-season rice value-chain project was conducted on Monday 13th, Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 17th of February at the LGAs respectively. The capacity training program on dry-season rice production for Edo State kicked off at Auchi, Etsako West Local Government Area of the State with 100 selected smallholder rice farmers on Monday 13th February, 2017. The training, which was in collaboration with the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI) provided the farmers the opportunity to update their knowledge on modern agricultural practices in rice production, this also included an overview of the rice value-chain, group formation and its advantages, farm business record keeping, farm management, choosing quality seeds and bird scaring methods. Similar training programs took place at Udaba Community, Etsako Central Local Government Area on Tuesday, 14th February 2017 and Illushi Community, Esan South-East Local Government Area on Wednesday, 15th February 2017.

...Kano Dry-season Maize Capacity Building

In continuation of its efforts in supporting rural smallholder farmers, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, in collaboration with the Institute for Agricultural Research of Ahmadu Bello University,



Group photograph of the beneficiaries after the training session at Illushi Community, Esan South-East Local Government Area of Edo State.



Beneficiary maize farmers during training session at Kadawa Community of Garin Mallam Local Government Area of Kano State.



Beneficiary cassava and maize farmers in a group photograph after the training program at Iyang Community, Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Zaria commenced the 2016-2017 Kano State maize dry-season farming capacity building training programs with the pre-season training at Kura, Garin Mallam and Bunkure Local Government Areas of the State on Tuesday 21st, Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd of February respectively. About 300 selected smallholder maize farmers from the 3 LGAs attended the training programs of which women and youths constituted about 50% of trainees. According to the project coordinator, Dr. Aminu Sharifai of IAR, the establishment of demonstration farms for the practical trainings commenced 1st week of March.

...FCT Dry-season Training Programs

The BATNF-FCT 1-year Dry-season Maize Capacity Building Project for 2016-2017 kicked off at Gwagwalada Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja on Tuesday, 21st February at Gwagwalada Area Council with training on capacity building of the identified 100 maize smallholder farmers on best agronomic practices most especially for the dry-season production. The implementing partner, Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI) partnered with the HarvestPlus, of International Food Policy Research Institute on how best the smallholder farmers can produce maize fortified with vitamin A. Dollah Yusuf, a maize specialist of HarvestPlus, stated that "planting the variety fortified with vitamin A will produce a better crop, give better nutritional value to consumers and increase the income of the farmers since the variety is in high demand by the institutional markets for drugs and cereal production".

Similar training programs were held at Kwali and Bwari Area Councils of the FCT on Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd respectively. Over 300 smallholder farmers attended the 3-day program.



Yusuf Dollah, maize specialist, HarvestPlus speaking to the beneficiaries during one of the training sessions at Kubwa, Bwari Area Council of FCT, Abuja.



Group photograph of the beneficiaries after the training session at Epe Division.

BATNF visits project sites

On Friday, 20th January, the Foundation's General Manager, Abimbola Okoya and the Project Manager, Remi Adewole visited the established model irrigated rice farms of the rice value-chain enterprise project beneficiaries at Doko and Sheshi Bikum villages in the Bida Emirate of Niger State. The objective of the monitoring visit to the model farms is to engage the beneficiaries and evaluate the present state of the farms and how impactful it has been to the farmers and the host communities.



Abimbola Okoya with the beneficiaries inside an established rice farm during the visit.

With the inputs and technical supports received by the beneficiaries from BATNF and the implementing partner, Niger State FADAMA Coordination Office (FCO), the smallholder farmers can now cultivate 3 cycles in a year through irrigation facilities procured from their group's fund and availability of a river from which water is conveyed to their farms. It was also noted during the visit that the tube wells are now a reliable source of water for the members of the host communities.

The group had also acquired a small-scale processing mill with the support of the Niger State FCO with the group providing the counterpart fund for the mill.

...Ogun Cassava Project

On Thursday, 2nd February, members the Foundation team: Chidinma and Rosemary, visited the established cassava farms of the BATNF-Ogun State Cassava Enterprise Projects at Imodi Imosan community in Odogbolu Local Government Area of the State. The monitoring visit availed the Foundation the opportunity to meet with the farmers, discuss their challenges and to see the present situation on the cassava farms established by the beneficiaries.



Standing: Solomon Ogundele, Abimbola Okoya and Mrs. Victoria Isang, Comptroller of Immigration, Oyo State Command during visit to the rehabilitated waiting room.

Upgraded NIS Waiting Room Commissioned

THE Waiting Room of the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), Oyo State Command, which was upgraded by the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation was commissioned and formally handed over to the management with a brief ceremony at the NIS Oyo State Command office at Agodi, Ibadan on Friday, 17th March, 2017.

In her welcome address, the Comptroller of Immigration, Oyo State Command, Mrs. Victoria Isang thanked the Foundation for the prompt response to the NIS call for support in upgrading the facility. She said that the gesture has drastically reduced her worries whenever she sees passport applicants under the old waiting room whenever she goes on her routine inspection. 'I must confess to you; the present condition of the Waiting Room has added value to the general environment of the Command and our own little efforts in improving the general look of the Command's environment.' She added.

Oluwaseyi Ashade, Executive Director of the Foundation in her remarks which was read on her behalf by Abimbola Okoya, the Foundation's General Manager, thanked the Command for the opportunity given to support the NIS in providing quality services through the upgrading of the Waiting Room. She said that the support is a practical demonstration of the major achievements that can be made where private corporate organisations such as the Foundation support the activities of public-sector organizations like the NIS.

The Waiting Room is upgraded with: an expansion of its size; provision of 150 units of plastic chairs; provision of 4 units of electric standing fans; supply and installation of a 40-inch colour television; ceiling of the roof with PVC; supply & installation of DSTV with 5 months' subscription, a generating set and tiling of the floor with ceramic tiles.



Dignitaries inside the NIS Conference Room during the official handing over ceremony.



Group photograph with the NIS officials after the handing over ceremony.



Participants during the Meeting.

BATNF Presented an Executive Memo at the NCARD meeting

THE Executive Working Group (EWG) of the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation presented its Executive Memo on *Issues Affecting Smallholder Farmers* to the members of the National Council on Agriculture and Rural Development (NCARD) at its 42nd regular meeting held at Dr. Obi Wali International Conference Centre, Port Harcourt between 24th - 28th April, 2017.

The 5-day event, which has *Agricbusiness Investment for Economic Stabilisation, Diversification and Growth* as its theme of the yearly event, was declared open by the Executive Governor of Rivers State, Chief Nyesom Wike, CON, and chaired by the Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbah, OFR.

Mr. Innocent Azih, a member of the BATNF-EWG presented and submitted the Executive Memo to the Council.

The Executive Memo is a review of the new Agricultural Promotion Policy document of the Federal Government with the aim of determining its applicability and suitability in addressing the challenges confronting the small holder farmers in the country.

Also representing the Foundation is its General Manager, Abimbola Okoya and the BATNF-EWG Chairman, Professor Femi Ajibola. Over 100 memorandum and papers were presented during the meeting which has over 300 stakeholders in attendance.



Chief Audu Ogbah, Mr. Innocent Azih and Abimbola Okoya at the NCARD Meeting.



Group photograph of Chief Audu Ogbah, Governor Wike and other stakeholders at the meeting

BATNF attends Akwa Ibom State Agricultural Summit

THE Akwa Ibom state government engaged New Nigeria Foundation to developed an agricultural policy roadmap with the aim of divesting the resource base of the state form oil to other non-oil resources in view of its large expanse of rich land that is suitable for food and cash crops, aquaculture and poultry enterprise.

The programme which took place from Wednesday 19th to Friday 21st April 2017 at Le' Meriden Hotel and Golf Course, Uyo had BATNF duly represented at the event by it Project Manager, Olusegun Adewole who took active part in syndicate sessions on staple crops development and promotion, stakeholders engagement, and NGO/donor support and participation.

He made it known that BATNF is presently supporting smallholders farmers in the state through the Maize & Cassava Capacity Building Project and assured the participants of BATNF continuous support on the project in the next 2 years provided the state government is ready to make contribution in kind or cash towards the project that may be planned for the state.



Stakeholders during the Summit.



A syndicate group in session at the Summit.

FACTS ABOUT AGRICULTURE

Nigeria is the world number 1 producer of cassava. Cassava farming has taken the centre stage in Nigeria and contributes over 45 percent of Nigerian agricultural GDP. Agriculture in Nigeria contributes merely about 20 percent of the Nigeria total GDP, trailing behind petroleum which is the major Nigerian domestic produce.

Nigeria is a country of over 500 different ethnic groups. Hence, the foods in Nigeria differs from one tribe to another, although there are very popular foods that are eaten by almost all Nigerians, like rice, beans, eba, egusi soup, yam, maize, potatoes, moi moi and porridge or pottage yam.

If the government of Nigeria and the Ministry of Agriculture would intervene in solving the problems of farmers in Nigeria, it is believed that by 2020 the country would witness a gross decrease in the importation of food stuffs and animals. With good planning and the needed resources, Nigeria has what it takes to multiply her GDP just with cassava products alone.

In 1990, it was speculated that about 82 million hectares out of Nigeria's total land area of 91 million hectares were found to be arable, and merely 42 percent of this cultivable area was farmed. Much of this land was farmed under the bush fallow system, a process whereby land is left idle for a period to allow natural regeneration of soil fertility and replacement of soil nutrient.

Among the many foods eaten in Nigeria some are more popular than others. Take the egusi soup for instance, Nigeria egusi soup is the most popular soup in Nigeria, it is eaten by the three Nigeria major tribes and visitors to Nigeria prefer egusi soup and pounded yam to other.

Source: total-facts-about-nigeria.com



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