



BRITISH AMERICAN
TOBACCO NIGERIA
FOUNDATION

GREEN TALK

ISSUE 21 | MARCH 2024

NEWSLETTER

RURAL AGRICULTURE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | ADVOCACY | PARTNERSHIP

EDITORIAL

Dear partners,

In this edition of the GREEN TALK Newsletter, we are thrilled to share the remarkable strides and impactful initiatives undertaken by the Foundation through unwavering dedication and collaborative efforts, we continue to uplift and transform the lives of our beneficiaries, fostering sustainable development across communities.

You will delve into the heart of our initiatives aimed at empowering youths to transcend the role of job seekers to become job creators and employers with the provision of a N10 million grant, a beacon of hope for aspiring entrepreneurs, fostering innovation and enterprise in our communities.

We celebrate the commendable acknowledgment by the Governor of Lagos State at the Lagos Farm Fair, recognizing the invaluable contributions of farmers to our society. Their dedication and resilience serve as an inspiration to us all as we continue to champion agricultural development and food security.

Partnership with three tertiary institutions, we are empowering graduates to nurture and expand their agricultural enterprises, while also providing invaluable mentorship. This initiative not only cultivates innovation and enterprise but also contributes to the creation of job opportunities and economic empowerment for the youth. Furthermore, our Fingerlings to Fork

Project in Lagos State exemplifies our commitment to bolstering the capacity of smallholder fish farmers. Through targeted interventions, we are equipping these farmers with the necessary skills and resources to enhance productivity and promote value addition within their clusters. By fostering sustainable practices and encouraging entrepreneurship within the fisheries sector, we aim to catalyse positive economic growth and improve livelihoods.

Additionally, we invite you to learn about our intervention in Garin Jummi town, located in Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe State. Here, we installed a solar-powered borehole with a capacity of 20,000 liters, addressing the community's long standing challenge of access to clean and safe drinking water. This endeavor underscores our commitment to making tangible and positive impacts in underserved communities across Nigeria.

As we reflect on these impactful initiatives, we also reaffirm our commitment to environmental sustainability and resilience-building. Through afforestation initiatives we are actively mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

We invite you to delve into the inspiring stories and impactful projects featured in this newsletter, and to join us in our mission to create positive change and build a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Kindly send your comments or inquiries to BATN_Foundation@bat.com or call 07040441790. Engage and follow us on Facebook/Instagram/twitter /LinkedIn and youtube -batnfoundation

Yours cordially
Oludare Odusanya
General Manager

IN THIS
Edition



Lagos Farm Fair



BATNF champions environmental sustainability



Water is life and flows in Sangaru Village



BATN Foundation empowers 300 women in Bauchi

BATN FOUNDATION CATALYZES AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN KANO STATE FOR 400 SMALLHOLDER FARMERS: THE WARD HEAD OF GWARZO'S STORY



In the words of Ward Head Muhammadu Halliru Gwarzo, this initiative is not just a project; it's a story of hope and empowerment. Standing in the midst of flourishing maize fields, Muhammadu Halliru Gwarzo, Ward Head of Gwarzo, paints a vivid picture of the impact of BATN Foundation's Capacity Building Project for 400 smallholder maize farmers in Kano. This initiative, executed in collaboration with Ahalson General Enterprises, extends its reach to 400 smallholder maize farmers across four local government areas in Kano State, aiming to cultivate not just crops but sustainable futures for the livelihood of smallholder farmers in Kano.

The flag-off event, held on August 9th and 10th, 2023, was a pivotal moment for Muhammadu and his fellow farmers. "We received critical inputs—maize, aflasafe, herbicides, and pesticides. These are not just resources; they're tools of transformation." Muhammadu Halliru Gwarzo, Ward Head of Gwarzo, expressed heartfelt thanks for the program's efforts and committed to ensure that all inputs are used to their full potential throughout his district. He further

stated that active supervision, monitoring, and mentoring will be carried out to guarantee that the inputs are effectively implemented, to ensure the positive ripple effect on the entire local government area and Kano state at large.

The foundation championing capacity development program to empower 400 smallholder farmers operating within the maize value chain in Kano State. The launch of the initiative saw the distribution of agricultural inputs, including fertilizers, seeds, and insecticides, to the beneficiaries. The program strategically employs 1-hectare model farms as demonstration plots, exemplifying the outcomes and benefits of adopting effective agricultural practices. The flag-off took place in the towns of Ruwan Kanya in Rano local government, Garun Malam in Gafan town, and Kura local government, heralding a new chapter of agricultural empowerment.

Speaking at one of the flag-off events, Adetola Oniyelu, Project Manager of the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, highlighted the

foundation's commitment to improving agriculture among rural communities in Nigeria and fostering the livelihood of smallholder farmers across the nation. In conjunction with Ahalsan, Ali Ahmad Ali, echoed this sentiment in Hausa, emphasizing their collective aspiration to bolster the growth and potential of the agricultural sector.

The presence of the community traditional rulers and esteemed agricultural organizations and agencies like GIZ, Harvest Plus, KNARDA, and the State and Federal Ministries of Agriculture were present at the flag-off to pave the way towards a sustainable and thriving agricultural landscape. Among the beneficiaries, the impact of this initiative is resonating deeply. Receiving these inputs with enthusiasm, several farmers voiced their appreciation for the initiative, affirming its potential to revolutionize the agricultural landscape at both the state and national levels.

BAT Nigeria Foundation remains committed to pioneering innovative strategies that empower local communities, foster sustainable growth, and create enduring impact within the agricultural ecosystem.



WATER FLOWS IN SANGARU VILLAGE! UNVEILING OUR SOLAR-POWERED BOREHOLE PROJECT

The United Nations General Assembly, in 2010, recognised the right of citizens to water and sanitation and that everyone is entitled to sufficient, safe, acceptable, continuous, and affordable water for personal and domestic use. However, that has not been the case for indigenes of Garin Jummi community in Gombe State.

Garin Jummi has an area of 1,415km² and a population of 236,087 with about 150 -200 households or even more. For over 5 decades until the intervention of the BATN Foundation. The community's access to water was limited to a mere 10 litres per person daily achieved through a (reservoir) locally dogged well only available during the raining season,

As a result of this water deprivation experience in this community, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation in consultation with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Water Resources (ask Tola) implemented a 20,000 litres capacity solar-powered borehole to meet the needs of the people. The solar-powered borehole provides a sustained and consistent supply of clean and safe water throughout the year for over 3000 beneficiaries and stands as a symbol of hope and transformation to the people of Sangaru. The impact of this project has been profound and far-reaching, and we couldn't be prouder of the positive outcomes we this simple facility has generated: Sangaru Village, Bajoga Community, Funnakaye Local Government Area, Gombe State

Health and Hygiene: With easy access to clean water, the community is experiencing enhanced health and improved hygiene practices. Reduced waterborne illnesses and improved general health.

Economic Empowerment: the newfound water



Before at Garin Jummi town



After at Sangaru Village, Bajoga town

source has unlocked new opportunities for economic growth, allowing the community members to invest more time in education and entrepreneurial ventures.

Agricultural Advancement: The water supply has breathed new life into the community's agricultural pursuits. With irrigation now possible, farmers enjoy no off-season in production, fostering food security and economic growth.

Harnessing the "Sun Power" for a Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Solution: As part of our commitment to environmental sustainability, the use of solar power for the facility helps to not only to secure continuous water supply but also minimize our carbon footprint, thereby impacting the health of our world.

**The sun, an ever-faithful ally,
has now found a new purpose
in Garin Jummi.**

BATNF EMPOWERS YOUNG AGRIPRENEURS WITH N10 MILLION GRANT FOR FARMERS FOR THE FUTURE COHORT 4.0

Adebisi Opeyemi- CEO Pemnia Wellness emerged as the grand prize winner and was awarded the prize of N3 million. N2 million naira each was awarded to Edeh Felicitas – CEO, Felinech Global Company Limited and Williams Ekwebelam – CEO, Bluefish Farm who were the first runner-up of the competition, while Bernice Oyedele – CEO, Bernice's Farm, Ideede Favour Nukpugi – CEO, Favorite Fishery and Idowu Femi – CEO, FMD Agro Concept as the second runner-up were awarded ₦1 million each. Alongside financial rewards, winners will also be able to access comprehensive support including technical assistance, mentorship from industry professionals, guidance with business registration, and membership in the esteemed Farmers for the Future alumni network. This holistic approach nurtures both agribusiness growth and personal development.

In line with its objectives of touching lives in many positive ways, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation (BATNF) has rewarded six successful agripreneurs who entered for the 2023 edition of the Farmers For Future (F4F) grant, with the sum of N10 million.

The Farmers for the Future (F4F) Grant is an Agricultural Entrepreneurship grant designed to support young people with viable Agri-Business with equity-free capital and other associated support they require to scale their businesses. With over 30,000 applications from this year's edition of the F4F program, is a resounding testament to the aspirations of Nigeria's youth in Agriculture and the profound impact of the Farmers for the Future (F4F) Grant, commitment to nurturing young Agripreneurs and catalyzing transformation.

This innovative Agricultural Entrepreneurship initiative, developed in partnership with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and Fate Foundation, demonstrates BATN Foundation's commitment to fostering the growth of young Agripreneurs. The F4F Grant provides equity-free capital and comprehensive support to promising youth-led agribusinesses, enabling them to scale their ventures and contribute to Nigeria's agricultural sector. The grant serves as a catalyst for ambitious young

individuals with viable agribusinesses.

Since its inception in 2019, the Farmers for the Future (F4F) initiative has been transformative, empowering enterprising youth to thrive in the agribusiness landscape. F4F stands as a beacon of opportunity, equipping winners with not only an annual cash grant but also with technical training and mentoring.

Over the years, the transformative power of the F4F initiative unfolds in the narrative of success stories that have flourished over the years. Agribusinesses such as Agrohive, Agrodemy, Sokvikia Enterprises and Quotidian-V Foods have not only thrived with revenue increase of over 30 percent, but have also ignited employment opportunities for young graduates, and made an impact in society.

Mr. Adetola Oniyelu, Project Manager of BATNF, said: "The Farmers for the Future project challenges misconceptions about agriculture and underlines our commitment to nurturing the potentials of young minds in this field. We firmly believe that empowering these talented Agripreneurs will significantly advance Nigeria's agricultural landscape." To learn more about the program and its groundbreaking impact, visit the official application portal at <https://f4f.wealthishere.org/>.

FARMERS FOR THE FUTURE

WINNERS OF FARMERS FOR THE FUTURE (Cohort 4)

 Adebisi Opeyemi CEO Pemnia Wellness 1st Place Winner 3 Million Naira	 Edeh Felicitas CEO Felinech Global Company Limited 2nd Place Winner 2 Million Naira	 Williams Ekwebelam CEO Bluefish Farm 2nd Place Winner 2 Million Naira
 Bernice Oyedele CEO Bernice's Farm 3rd Place Winner 1 Million Naira	 Ideede Favour Nukpugi CEO Favorite Fishery 3rd Place Winner 1 Million Naira	 Idowu Femi CEO FMD Agro Concept 3rd Place Winner 1 Million Naira





BATN FOUNDATION REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO FOOD SECURITY TO MARK WORLD FOOD DAY AT THE LAGOS FARM FAIR



The 5th edition of the Lagos Farm Fair was a buzz of excitement and platform for smallholder farmers and consumers. With the theme **“Water is Life, Water is Food; Leave No One Behind”** is geared towards taking actionable steps both by the government and the organised private sector in ensuring food security - foods are made affordable and accessible within the State.

Present at the event was the Executive Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, who emphasized the need for collaborative efforts and innovation to sustainably scale up agricultural production to meet demand. He also disclosed that a central food logistics hub will be completed next year, which is intended to reduce waste and loss. He noted, “Farming is an important

component of our government’s activities. We need to grow what we eat and eat what we grow. While we have collaborated with some major agricultural states within the country, we are also looking for independent paddy rice farmers across the federation to raise paddy supply at Lagos Rice Mill. We need a lot of paddies to meet production capacity. It doesn’t matter how much paddy rice they have; we are ready to take it up. This is calling on paddy growers across the country to key into this opportunity”.

The BATN Foundation has partnered with the Lagos State Government to host the 2023 Lagos Farm Fair as part of the activities commemorating United Nations World Food Day, which was held at the Police College, Ikeja. The Lagos Farm Fair is an initiative under “Wealth is Here,” which is aimed at ensuring food adequacy and sufficiency.

The BATNF partnership with the Lagos state government is in tandem with achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 8, 10 and 13, which ultimately aim to improve human living conditions through a healthy diet and promote action against hunger in the state and this year’s fair has been able to support over 600 smallholder farmers.

Speaking at the event, Ruth Owojaiye representing the Board Director, BATN Foundation Odiri Erewa-Meggison, asserted that the initiative aligned with the core objectives of the Foundation. She also gave stewardship of the achievement of BATN Foundation in the installation of 100 solar-powered borehole facilities (20,000-liter capacity) with over 300,000 beneficiaries and irrigation kits to smallholder farmers on over 500 acres of land to support dry season farming and boost their income, all achieved in five years.

BATN Foundation, since its inception in 2002, has supported the Federal and State Governments in agricultural development programs and has invested over 2 billion Naira in supporting rural smallholder farmers in the production of food crops, like cassava, rice, and maize; and in aquaculture and livestock. So far, we have reached over 1.3 million beneficiaries, and we expect to double that in the next 10 years through increased support to smallholder farmers across the 36 states of the federation and the FCT.

The Lagos Commissioner for Agriculture, Ms. Abisola Olusanya, noted the event was held in the wake of critical food security issues facing the country and required urgent actions to scale up food production across the various value chains.

“Not only is Lagos playing a frontline role in the aqua farming industry, we are also key players in the production of other crops and edible produce. This year’s commemoration of World Food Day is to come out and encourage our farmers and create a platform for them to be aware of all the incentives and interventions we have created for them,” the Commissioner said. BATN Foundation has partnered consistently over the years with the Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture and Stanbic IBTC Bank to sponsor the World Food Day - Lagos Farm Fair celebration, a platform designed to create market linkage to farmers as we recognize the integral part they play in nation-building.

No Farmer, No Nation!!!!!!
At BATNF we are committed to empowering smallholder farmers.



ADVOCACY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ITS AFFORESTATION INITIATIVE, BATN FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH NIGERIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Moved by the need to combat deforestation and promote environmental conservation, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation (BATNF), in partnership with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), has initiated a transformative afforestation and natural resource management initiative to rejuvenate the Ajingi Forest Reserve located in Kano State, Northwest Nigeria.

At the core of this initiative, lies a significant milestone with the flag-off of 5,000 tree plantings in the Ajingi Forest Reserve, Kano with the overall goal to elevate this number to 50,000 trees by 2027. British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation, as part of its broader community-based initiatives, supports afforestation, biodiversity conservation, environmental protection, and the prevention of deforestation and habitat fragmentation. Beyond merely replenishing the forest cover, the planting of these trees also aims to sequester carbon dioxide, a significant contributor to global climate action.

The benefits of this endeavor extend beyond carbon capture, as the restored forest will be enhancing biodiversity and promoting ecological equilibrium. The theme of "Creating a Greener World for a Sustainable Future" underscores the goal for a cleaner, more eco-friendly world. Our commitment extends beyond mere tree planting; it emphasizes tree planting with a purpose. Each tree cultivates a symbol of dedication to a sustainable climate.

Odiri Erewa-Meggison, Board Director, BATN Foundation, expressed the project's significance, emphasizing that it extends beyond the mere planting of 5,000 trees. She highlighted the continuous dedication, education, and community involvement required for the journey toward environmental restoration and sustainability. In the past decades, BATNF accomplished a remarkable feat by planting a total of 503,000 trees across Nigeria's diverse geopolitical zones. Today, we gather to mark the flag-off of the completion of 5,000 trees already planted in Ajingi, Kano, with a goal of planting 50,000 trees by 2027, continuing

our commitment to a greener and more sustainable future.

She also stated that "We are in a world grappling with the grave challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, and deforestation, which threaten the very ecosystem that sustains us. We recognize that climate change is a global crisis, and we must take local actions to mitigate its adverse effects. By breathing new life into the forest, we are not just restoring its beauty but also enhancing local biodiversity and contributing to a more ecologically balanced environment. Each tree we have planted is not just a number; it is our commitment to empowering our rural and farming communities for a sustainable future."

The Director-General, NCF, Joseph Onoja, commended BATN Foundation for the partnership, saying the partnership couldn't have come at a better time than this when the world is being confronted with the adverse effects of climate change.

In his words, "It is our collective responsibility to cultivate a greener world for a sustainable future, and we are committed to doing so whenever the opportunity arises. We aim to plant the right trees in the right places at the right time."

This partnership between BATN Foundation and NCF symbolizes a critical step in addressing the global environmental challenges we face, uniting efforts for the betterment of our planet and the communities it supports.



DONATION OF SMOKING KILNS TO SMALLHOLDER FISH FARMERS IN LAGOS

Elizabeth Tagbenu, one of the beneficiaries and recipient of the smoking kiln expressed her excitement and mentioned how the smoking kiln will help boost her business and productivity.

An addition to the initiative was her participation in the capacity building practical training which provided her with new knowledge and real-life scenarios to increase her output.

The handing over ceremony of the smoking kilns to the beneficiary, held at LSADA office, Oko-Oba Agege, had in attendance government officials, fish farmers' groups, and cooperative societies across the state.

In support of the livelihoods of Smallholder farmers in Lagos State, BATN Foundation in partnership with the Lagos State Agricultural Development Authority (LSADA) donated 20 fifty-kilogram smoking kilns to beneficiary farmers and agribusinesses.

With the support of the BATN Foundation, the Lagos State Agricultural Development Authority also facilitated several weeks of intensive capacity building and established four demonstration sites for practical training for over 200 beneficiaries cutting across agricultural zones (Agege, Ojo, Ikorodu and Ibeju-Lekki) in Lagos State. This initiative is programmed to enhance the productivity of the farmers and equip them to successfully overcome the challenges prevalent in the aquaculture industry.

The partnership which commenced in 2018 aims at building the capacity of fish farmers under the Fingerlings to Fork Project and the donation of smoking kilns is part of the Foundation's effort to prevent post-harvest loss and support the socio-economic development of smallholder farmers in the state.



Mr. Oludare Odusanya, the General Manager, BATN Foundation in his remark at the handing over ceremony, said that the Foundation's long-standing assistance to farmers has revealed the importance of not only imparting optimal agricultural practices for enhanced fish production but also ensuring market access and empowering them to enhance the value of their commodities. This approach, according to him, is essential for building resilience against price volatility.

In his words: "In our long-term work to supporting farmers, we have seen that beyond simply imparting best practices for enhancing fish yield, it is critical to give them market access and give them the tools they need to add value to their product and withstand fluctuations in prices"



In her keynote address, Ms. Ruth Abisola Olusanya, the Commissioner of Agriculture for Lagos State, who was represented by Mrs.

Aramide Gansallo, Director, Agribusiness, Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture, encouraged the fish farmers benefiting from the initiative to maximize this opportunity for successful fish processing in the State. She reiterated that the project plays a pivotal role in supporting the Lagos State government's on-going agricultural policy to guarantee food sufficiency and security across significant agricultural value chains.

Encouraged by the success recorded so far by the initiative, the Commissioner called upon other corporate organizations and Foundations

to collaborate with the state in its pursuit of sustainable food security, mirroring the exemplary efforts of the BATN Foundation.

Mr. Abdullateef Adekunle, one of the beneficiaries expressed his heart-felt gratitude to the BATN Foundation for providing him with the smoking kiln saying this invaluable support would not only enhance his business but would also open new avenues for growth. "With this equipment, I can now process and preserve my fish more efficiently, ensuring better market opportunities and increased income for my family", he said.

BATNF ADVOCATES SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS AT ITS BIENNIAL AGRIBUSINESS DIALOGUE SESSION



In a bold move toward its commitment to fostering sustainable agricultural practices, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation hosted its biennial Agribusiness Dialogue Session, aimed to address the challenges faced by Agripreneurs and create sustainable paths in the agricultural sector.

The dialogues session, which took place on Thursday, November 16th, 2023, centered

around the theme, "Turning Challenges into Opportunities: Establishing Sustainable Strategies and Pathways for Smallholder Farmers in the Agrifood System," underscores the Foundation's to support agribusiness and grow sustainable agriculture in the country. The dialogue session is a gathering to evaluate policies and strategies from both the government and private sector aimed at elevating smallholder farmers for a more sustainable future.



conversations; they are seeds of change that, when planted and nurtured, will grow into pathways leading our farmers to sustainable success”, said Nneka

The dialogue session served as a platform for in-depth discussions and deliberations, where all participants, including government representatives, private sector stakeholders, and experts, convened to explore and analyze the strategies and initiatives necessary to drive the smallholder farming sector forward.

In his keynote address, Professor Olusola Kehinde, Vice-Chancellor, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), commended BATNF Foundation for emphasizing the importance of focusing and leveraging on opportunities presented for smallholder farmers in Nigeria across the various Agricultural value chain while also minimizing concerns about inevitable challenges that charts a new course for sustainable practices in line with global standards.

The dialogue session featured plenary sessions, breakout sessions, and fireside chats with renowned experts on topics focusing on "The Power of Collaboration: Climate Change and Agrifood System Partnership; Empowering Youths: Tech-Driven Agricultural Opportunities," explored the myriad opportunities for youth in technology-driven agriculture; Smallholder Farmers and the Path to Sustainable Agriculture.

Professor Kehinde further said, The expectation is that this dialogue will proffer a more robust and adaptable strategy that could be deployed to sufficiently address the challenges smallholder farmers in the nation, and unlock their potential to contribute to economic growth within the agri-food system and beyond”.



Nneka Okekearu, Director, Enterprise Development Centre, Pan-Atlantic University in her goodwill message encouraged stakeholders to be intentional about advancing sustainable agriculture and supporting the well-being of farmers and rural communities.



“Our smallholder farmers are the backbone of our communities, producing over 80% of Nigeria’s food and as we embark on this dialogue, let us recognize the pivotal role they play in feeding our nation and sustaining livelihoods. Today’s discussions are not mere

BATN FOUNDATION DISTRIBUTES 6,000 BIRDS, BAGS OF FEED AND ESSENTIAL VITAMINS TO EMPOWER 300 WOMEN IN BAUCHI STATE

300 beneficiary women were selected across seven Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the State – Bauchi, Shira, Tafawa Balewa, Alkaleri, Warji, Ganjuwa, Toro and each received a carefully curated package including 20 noiler birds, one bag of 25kg specially formulated feed and one 100g sachet of essential vitamins for poultry production. To broaden their knowledge of poultry management, beneficiaries were also equipped with adequate training and sensitization to ensure best practices in poultry production. Noilers were selected because of their hardy and dual purpose to produce both eggs and meat.

The flag-off ceremony for the distribution was attended by several dignitaries. These included the Honorable Commissioner for Agriculture in Bauchi state, Professor Simon Madugu Yalams who presided as the chairman of the occasion, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Directors, Heads of departments, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of the Yelwa Division, the Acting Program Manager of Bauchi State Agricultural Development Programme (BSADP), as well as the L-PRESS (State Livestock Productivity and Resilience Support Programme) Coordinator, Dr. (Mrs.) Rose Idi who doubles as the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation for the Bauchi State Agricultural Development Program (BSADP). She was also the State Focal Person for this project.

As part of efforts to improve the livelihood of rural smallholder farmers and their families in Bauchi State, the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation (BATN Foundation) implemented a poultry project to support 300 rural and vulnerable women in Bauchi State. This initiative, which focused on poultry production, aims to generate income, promote gender equality, and combat poverty in vulnerable communities.



Recognizing the importance of collaborations, the BATN Foundation partnered with key stakeholders including the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security which assisted in beneficiary selection and ensured project alignment with national agricultural priorities, and the Bauchi State ADP Office which provided local expertise and streamlined beneficiary selection through their established networks. Other partners include Amo Farm Sieberer Hatchery Limited, which supplied the high-quality noiler birds and offered technical support to women, ensuring project longevity, and Eco-lead Imperial Engineering & Global Services Ltd which implemented the project, managing all activities from beneficiary selection to training and inputs distribution.

The Honorable Commissioner for Agriculture while delivering his speech expressed gratitude to the British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation for choosing Bauchi state to benefit from the initiative. He commended the tireless efforts of everyone involved in bringing the project to fruition. In his address, the commissioner emphasized the commitment of the Bauchi state government, through his ministry, to sustain the project with an innovative approach that complements and supports the beneficiaries, ensuring long-term

success. He urged beneficiaries to utilize the support effectively and appealed for more gestures from individuals and corporate organizations.

The General Manager of BATNF, Mr. Oludare Odusanya, represented by Engr. Sadiq Abdullahi Waziri, underscored the foundation's dedication to enhancing the well-being of rural farmers. In his statement, he highlighted that over two billion naira has been invested in farmers through strategically designed impactful projects since the foundation's establishment in 2002. Mr. Odusanya emphasized that the project serves as a pilot, with the potential for scaling up due to its direct positive impact on smallholder rural farmers.

Dr. Umar Abdullahi Maina, speaking on behalf of Eco-Lead Global Services, expressed satisfaction with the collaboration received from the Bauchi state government through BSADP. He urged beneficiaries to prioritize appropriate biosecurity measures and ensure the adequate feeding of their birds as essential steps in safeguarding their livelihoods. Dr. Maina concluded by calling on extension agents from BSADP and the ministry to continue offering steadfast support in providing routine extension services for the beneficiaries.

Some of the beneficiaries who commented after the distribution expressed their gratitude to BATN Foundation for the support and promised that they would ensure the sustainability of the project.

This poultry project aligns with the BATN Foundation's dedication to empowering rural communities in Nigeria. By fostering self-reliance through income generation and improved nutrition, the project aims to create a lasting impact on women, their families, and the Bauchi State economy.



EMPOWERING LEAD AGENT FARMERS IN KEBBI, NIGER, JIGAWA AND GOMBE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN TOMATO AND RICE VALUE CHAINS

The project's primary goal was to fortify food security measures within the nation by amplifying dry season production of tomatoes and rice in the designated regions. Spearheaded by [Implementing Partner: Ahalsong General Enterprises], with invaluable support from various state Agricultural Development Programmes, the initiative aimed to equip 500 lead farmers and extension agents with advanced skills and knowledge pivotal for elevating agricultural practices.

In a concerted effort to bolster agricultural capacity and drive sustainable development in Nigeria, a transformative extension project was initiated by BATN Foundation in collaboration with the Federal Department of Agricultural Extension under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The project, spanning across four states - Niger, Kebbi, Jigawa, and Gombe - focused on enriching the expertise of extension agents and lead farmers in the vital tomato and rice value chains.

Beneficiaries were meticulously chosen from farmer groups and local governments renowned for their proficiency in tomato and rice cultivation. Each state handpicked 125 individuals, with 80% designated as lead farmers, ensuring a robust representation of experienced stakeholders.

The training regimen, conducted concurrently across the four states encompassed a diverse array of topics essential for enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability. The program was meticulously designed to achieve multifaceted objectives, including the enhancement of technical competencies in crop management, post-harvest handling, and value addition. Moreover, it aimed to foster innovation, promote sustainable farming practices, and facilitate access to lucrative markets for farmers. The curriculum was meticulously structured, comprising technical training sessions covering agricultural techniques, value addition strategies, entrepreneurship, and practical field demonstrations. Furthermore,



Gombe state training



Jigawa state training



Niger state training

networking opportunities were provided to facilitate collaboration among participants and stakeholders.

The project's success hinged significantly on the expertise of the master trainers identified during a strategic meeting with key stakeholders from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The Four distinguished individuals are experts dedicated to propel the project training sessions across the respective states- Mr. Tambul Halilu Buba – Gombe, Haruna Yusuf Atuman – Jigawa, Maryam Attahiru – Niger and Raheem Adejoke Arike - Kebbi

Through concerted efforts and strategic partnerships, this extension project endeavors to catalyze a transformative shift in agricultural practices, thereby fostering food security, economic empowerment, and sustainable development across Nigeria. By empowering extension agents and lead farmers with advanced skills and knowledge, we embark on a collective journey towards a resilient and prosperous agricultural sector.

This initiative not only augments production capabilities but also underscores the intrinsic value of collaboration and knowledge sharing in propelling agricultural development forward. As we navigate the dynamic landscape of agriculture, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and inclusive growth.

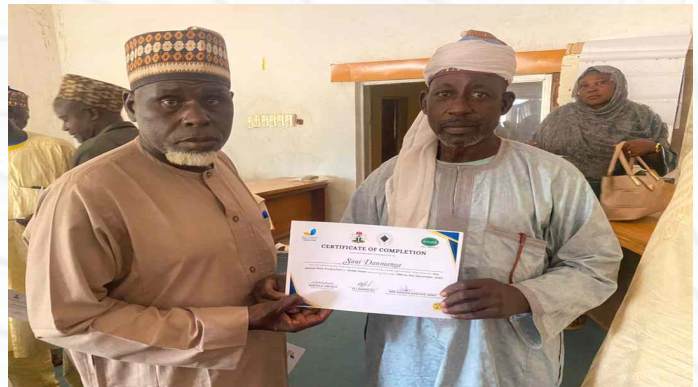
Together, we sow the seeds of progress and reap the harvest of prosperity for generations to come.

BATN Foundation partners with the tertiary institutions to empower Graduates in Agriculture

In recognition of the pivotal role that youths play in shaping the economic landscape and their potential to thrive as agripreneurs when given adequate support, the BATN Foundation is steadfast in pioneering initiatives for youth empowerment and agricultural innovation. At the core of these efforts is a strategic partnership with the University of Ilorin, initiated during a courtesy visit to the Vice Chancellor in February 2024, representing a significant leap towards nurturing young graduates into successful agripreneurs through the Graduate Agripreneur Project (GAP).

The Graduate Agripreneur Project aims to foster the development of agribusiness enterprises among postgraduates and undergraduates in agricultural faculties of tertiary institutions. This competitive program provides grants to at least four graduates annually, with the overarching goal of preparing future generations to address the challenges of feeding a growing population, nurturing unique young talents, promoting interest in sustainable agriculture, and fostering the establishment of agricultural enterprises among young graduates.

BATN Foundation has partnered with renowned institutions such as the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB) and the University of Ibadan, where the Graduate Agripreneur



Kebbi state training



Niger state training

Program already made notable strides. A newly formed partnership with the University of Ilorin marks a significant milestone in extending the program's reach and encouraging agricultural entrepreneurship. Open to graduates, masters, and PhD students from partnering institutions, the program offers a gateway for aspiring agripreneurs to realize their potential.

Temitayo Oredeyin, co-owner of Captain Fish a beneficiary from the University of Ibadan stated in her interview that before she won the grant, she always had a passion for fishery business although it was primarily processing, but she didn't have adequate equipment to sustain and expand her business but when the foundation gave her the grant, she was able to expand her business has been able to rent concrete tanks to continue and sustain her processing and also create employment. Temitope further added that she is currently involved in exporting.

"I have always had a passion for fishery although it was mainly just processing, and I didn't have appropriate tools I needed to attract and expand a bigger market. Before I got this project, I was just processing but it was not a lot. I must really say a big thank you to BATN Foundation for this privilege because without them I don't think I would have been able to get to where I am right now. This has given me access to a bigger market and I'm more recognised in my association in Lagos and among the entrepreneurs. And with this I can now empower people".

While sharing her biggest gain, she stated that this experience has built her in such a way that 5 years from now, she will still refer to this project.

Taiwo Okuntosun is also a beneficiary of the foundation who had his first degree from the University of Ibadan. He is a crop farmer. Taiwo stated in the interview that the programme has been a good avenue for him to practice what he learnt from school and put food on his table. He explained that under the project, he was given 7 hectares of land to cultivate, and he is currently into Cassava production.

In the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB), the beneficiaries Joseph Oluwaseun and

Jimoh Akeem now have an installed facility on their farm for all year farming. Aderanti Oni, an agripreneur through the Graduate agripreneur grant started her poultry business and increased her capacity with a 100% turnover at first cycle. The impact of this project is significant and ignites the power of determination within the beneficiaries.

"We are thrilled to welcome the University of Ilorin into our ecosystem of Youth empowerment", said Oludare Odusanya, General Manager of BATN Foundation. Emphasizing the pivotal role of youth in national economic development, he added, "Empowering the youth to become successful agripreneurs is not merely an investment in their future; it is an investment in the future of our nation. By nurturing young talent, we contribute to the growth and sustainability of the agricultural sector and, consequently, the economy as a whole."

In response, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin Professor Wahab Egbewole, SAN, welcomed the BATN Foundation team to the University. The VC appreciated the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Professor Oluyemisi Fawole, for sustaining conversations with the BATN Foundation which culminated in a partnership with the Foundation. He expressed great pleasure for the initiative which would benefit graduates of the university and assured BATN Foundation of the University Management's support and commitment to the success of the Graduate Agripreneur Project.

The Foundation increased the number of beneficiaries in each university from 2 to 4 and the total available grant available to graduates of the university from 3 million to 6 million naira to convey optimism for a better future for young agripreneurs.

While BATN Foundation continues to nurture and support youth agripreneurs in FUNAAB and the University of Ibadan, the addition of the University of Ilorin strengthens the program's and broadens its impact.

The Foundation remains open to forging more partnerships and collaborations. For inquiries and partnership opportunities, please visit www.batnf.com or contact batn_foundation@bat.com



Agriculture Riddle

Match each produce item with its corresponding description or fact:

PRODUCE:

Apple, Tomato, Carrot, Strawberry, Lettuce, Banana



DESCRIPTIONS

- A. Known as the "king of fruits" due to its nutritional value.
- B. Often mistaken as a vegetable, it's actually a fruit.
- C. Comes in various colors such as red, yellow, and green.
- D. Rich in vitamin A and known for promoting good eyesight.
- E. This popular fruit is rich in potassium and often referred to as a natural energy booster.
- F. Rich in antioxidants, this fruit is often enjoyed fresh or blended into smoothies.

ANSWERS:
Apple - A, Tomato - B, Carrot - C, Banana - E, Strawberry - F, Lettuce - D



BRITISH AMERICAN
TOBACCO NIGERIA
FOUNDATION

EMPOWERING RURAL NIGERIA...


for a sustainable future



   @batnfoundation

 **British American Tobacco Nigeria Foundation**
2, Olumegbon Road, off Alfred Rewane Road, Ikoyi, Lagos.

 BATN_Foundation@BAT.com

 +234 7046002000, +234 7046002033