

PRESENTATION ON THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES BY THE HONORABLE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES ON THE OCCASION OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNOR'S FORUM SECRETARIAT'S VISIT TO KEBBI STATE ON 4TH MAY 2010.

PROTOCOLS

It is an honor for me to address this gathering on the occasion of the visit of the Nigeria Governors Forum to Kebbi State.

Kebbi State is endowed with rich agricultural land, large water bodies, shallow and extractible aquifer, human resources, and favorable climate for diverse agricultural productions. The vast agricultural land is mainly being cultivated mainly by small holder traditional farmers. Of late however, there is an impetus in promoting large scale commercial farming in the State as a result of various intervention support by this administration. Rapid agricultural development is being achieved through the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies and strategies to ensure sustainable agricultural production and spear-head the exit of majority of people of Kebbi state from poverty.

The agricultural policy of Kebbi State is tailored towards the attainment of the main goals of the National Policy on Agriculture, and is principally aimed at increasing productivity of crop and non crop sub-sectors with the aim of raising the standard of living of the farming communities and attaining food sufficiency and recognizing the pivotal contribution of agriculture to poverty reduction.

The agricultural policy in the state recognizes the role of small scale farmers as the engine of growth of the sector and is accordingly providing a wide range of support services to such group of farmers. At the same time, the State Government also encourages and supports large scale farmers due to their role as major producers and providers of employment at the farm level. Similarly, the policy recognizes the need for total inclusiveness of the youth, women, disabled and other vulnerable groups in promoting agriculture in the society.

Implementation of the agricultural policies and programme is being made through the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources which has eight (8) technical departments as follows:-

- i) Agricultural Services;
- ii) Livestock and Fisheries Services;
- iii) Produce and Pest Control;
- iv) Irrigation Engineering;
- v) Fisheries Services;
- vi) Finance and Supply;
- vii) Personnel Management;
- viii) Planning, Research and Statistics

The Ministry of Agriculture has three (3) three main parastatals responsible for the implementation of the programmes as follows:-

a. Kebbi Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KARDA) is responsible for the implementation of agricultural development programmes in the state and is currently coordinating the implementation of the following key programmes:

- i) National Agricultural Technology Support Programme;
- ii) IFAD/CBARDP programme,

- iii) KBS/CBARDP programme,
- iv) Fadama 11 Project
- v) National Programme for Food Security.
- b. Kebbi Agricultural Supply Company (KASCOM)
- c. College of Agriculture, Zuru

ACHIEVEMENTS

This administration had tailored systems to ensure the effectiveness of the service it provides to its populace and it is in this regard that it appointed a Committee on Agriculture to advise on the areas of intervention by the Government. The committee had submitted a report to the Government and its recommendations are already being implemented. Some of the salient achievements in the Agricultural Sector include the following:-

1. The distribution of 10,000 units of water pumps to Cooperatives and individuals for small scale irrigation development.
2. Installation of Sprinkler Irrigation systems at Zauro and Koko.
3. The payment of the sum of N85million as 15% subsidy contribution for the PPP operated Cooperative Tractor Hiring Service Scheme and the distribution of 65 units of Tractors to the Cooperative Associations in the State. The State Government had also distributed additional 27 units of tractors and implements to large scale farmers in the State.
4. The procurement and distribution of 40,000 bags of assorted grains worth N320million distributed to Civil Servants and the general public in 2009. This is in addition to the receipt of assorted grains from farmers that had benefited from loans as

repayments in kind in settlement of the loans. A total sum of N114million had so far been expended for procurement of grains for the buffer stock for 2010 in the State.

5. The Construction of 3 units of 1,000metric tones capacity stores in Birnin-Kebbi at the cost of N24,495,760.00 to improve the existing storage capacity in the State.
6. The State is collaborating with the Federal Government in the implementation of a number of projects which include the construction of 100,000mt capacity grains silo, Construction of Agro Export Conditioning Center, construction of 3nos Community ware houses, and establishment of 2nos large scale rice processing mills.
7. To safeguard farmers production from damage and losses from migratory birds, Government procures pesticides worth N12m in 2009 and provided additional flying hours to those allocated by the Federal Government for Qualea control worth N18.9m in 2009.
8. A consignment of 171mt of assorted improved seeds worth N33,485,000.00 had been procured and will soon be distributed to farmers for the up coming 2010 wet cropping season. The improved seeds will be distributed free to the farmers with the aim of promoting the adoption of the use of improved seeds and appropriate technology as a panacea to obtaining increase in yields and income.
9. Procurement of Livestock vaccines, veterinary drugs and cold chain facilities worth N7.5m for the 2009 livestock vaccination campaigns against various livestock killer diseases. 204,000

cattle were vaccinated against Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), 126,000 cattle against Black Quarter Disease, 325,000 sheep and goats against Pestes Des Petit Ruminants (PPR) and 225 dogs against Rabies. The sum of N15million had been released for the conduct of the 2010 livestock vaccination exercise which shall be conducted in June.

10. Purchase of supplementary feeds consisting of 160 tons of Wheat Offals, 160 tons of cotton seed cake and 10,000 units of mineral salt blocks which cost the State Government over N25m. The feeds were sold to pastoralists and other livestock producers in the State at 60% subsidy in order to cushion the effects of hunger faced by livestock especially during the dry season when pastures are scarce.
11. A total of 49,620mt of assorted fertilizers was procured and distributed at subsidized rate of N1,700 per bag to farmers for the 2009 production season. 30,000 metric tonnes had been procured for the 2010 wet season. It is worthy of note that the state adopts a distribution strategy which delivers fertilizer to all the political wards in the State and is distributed through ward level committees to ensure the fertilizer (and its subsidy) actually reaches the farmers.
12. The various donor assisted agricultural intervention programmes in the State (IFAD/CBARDP, FADAMA3, Food Security Programme) are implementing a number of projects that are demand driven and demand responsive and which had

helped to provide the communities in the State with various infrastructures, capacity building and social awareness and generally improved agricultural service delivery and improve the living conditions of the communities in the State. Loan Packages totaling N68,271,300.00 were administered to 90 Associations formed in the nine (9) participating Local Government Areas. The Loan packages include Work bulls, bull fattening, ram fattening, sheep and goat production, fish farming, home gardening and family income generation activities, and Agro-forestry. This administration had been unwavering in the payment of counter part contribution to all the programmes with annual contributions of over N650million.

13. Various interventions particularly on trainings and capacity building are being provided to promote the establishment of private owned aquaculture in the State. This is in recognition of the dwindling resources of the lakes and rivers occasioned mostly by the obnoxious fishing practice by the fishermen. The promotion of aquaculture is beginning to show results as there exists at least 100 standard fish farms in the State beside several homestead fish ponds. Kebbi State is also collaborating with the Federal department of fisheries in the Establishment of Cage Culture Programme at Tarasa Village in Birnin-Kebbi and the establishment of modern Fish Market at Yauri. The State is also implementing the ECOWAS artisanal fisheries promotion project for second Phase of the programme, Training of sixteen (16) Fisheries Officers on Hatchery and Integrated Fish Farming.

Conclusion:

Agriculture as we all know is a time bound activity and it faces much challenges. Some of these challenges include changes in the weather and rainfall pattern resulting into low level rainfall particularly for all the states in the north west zone, destruction of tree and wild life resources, dwindling water resource, low yield of crops, high cost and challenges of adulteration of farm inputs, low level technology generation from the Research Institutes, encroachment of grazing reserves and cattle routes due to pressure to provide farm land to the teeming populace or capital developments; which often leads to conflicts and sometimes casualties, low funding of agriculture due to competing needs, and several other challenges. State Governments and indeed the Nation needs to invest heavily to address the key challenges facing the Agricultural sector for the overall sustenance of our souls and Nationhood.

This report is a synopsis of the efforts at promoting agriculture in Kebbi State. I am most grateful for the opportunity given to me by this august body. I wish every body here safe journey back home. Thank you and God Bless.

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