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Agricultural Development Activities - The Kwara State Experience

**KWARA STATE AGRICULTURE TRANSFORMATION IN GOVERNOR
BUKOLA SARAHI'S ADMINISTRATION**

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Introduction

The current transformation of the agriculture sector in Kwara State is the brain child and vision of His Excellency, Dr. Bukola Saraki, the Executive Governor of Kwara State. In evolving his vision of transformation, His Excellency undertook an indepth analysis of the situation of Kwara/Nigerian Farmers, challenges facing them and the way out of woods. This vision metamorphosed into critical policy framework and strategic plan of action based on where we were in Kwara State agriculture at the inception of the Administration of Governor Bukola Saraki in year 2003 and where he desires that we should be with a combination of knowledge from successful examples and best agricultural practices in other parts of the world. With the critical policy framework, we have been able to put in place accelerated production, processing systems and marketing of major food and cash crops in Kwara State. Today, the successful implementation of the strategy framework has put Kwara State on a path of sustained agricultural growth and rapid socio-economic development that is enviable by all and sundry.

Baseline Agriculture Survey/Gap Analysis.

Immediately after being sworn in as the Chief Executive of the State, His Excellency, Dr. Bukola Saraki, the Executive Governor of Kwara State engaged in the formulation of the agriculture plan of action with an indepth analysis of the situation at the grassroots level. During the exercise, production gaps for major crops produced in Kwara State were identified through an analysis of present average grain yields compared to yields in other parts of the world where we have similar or less tolerable climate. Areas of the State with potentially high yields and physiological yield limits were also identified. Specifically, potentials to increase grains, livestock and fish yields were duly noted and analyzed including the most important

constraints/challenges to increasing yields such as genetics, inputs, markets, agricultural processing knowledge and opportunities to create wealth through agriculture.

The present consumption pattern and use of major grain crops in relation to population growth, income growth and anticipated increased demand for livestock feeds, processed dairy products, other processed food and industrial products were guiding parameters. A documentation of the existing markets and identification of market potentials for both whole and processed agricultural products in Kwara State, Nigeria and elsewhere in West Africa was also made. The financial support and credit availability to farmers, grain handlers and trade intermediaries were equally analysed. The link to the Kwara State Government, private sector and institutional stakeholders (research, extension and development services) at State, national and international provided by the private sector to promote the agriculture sector was closely examined.

Where we Were In Agriculture Sector in 2003

Armed with the vital statistics of agriculture, the State Government was poised to cause a major transformation of her agricultural terrain which the State had never experienced since its inception in 1967. The information gathered from the survey exercise by the stakeholders in Kwara State agriculture and our knowledge of the challenges were quite revealing and thus inspired great concern and moves for positive intervention. The story reflects the reality of most of our farmers which we often conclude, represents 70% of our population. Interestingly, reports also say 70% of our population lives below the poverty line. The typical face of the Nigerian farmer is a face that is trapped in a vicious circle of hard labour and caught at the very edge of survival.

Only about 11% of the cultivable land was cultivated prior to 2003. Average yield of most crops were very low. For example grain yield was about 1 ton per hectare while tuber crops averaged below 10 tons per hectare. Value addition to crops produced was very minimal, for example cassava produced in the State was largely for gari production. Availability of land clearing / preparation was very low, an average of only two (2) functioning tractors for each of the 16 LGAs. Irrigation schemes in the State were abandoned. Extension agent farming family ratio was at a ridiculous one (1) agent to over 4,000 farmers. A large percentage of the cash/tree crop farmers were very old with the usual low productivity. There were very few or near absence of activities of large scale commercial farmers in the State.

Fish production was 3,000 metric tons from both artisanal and aquaculture sector. There were only 120 registered fish farmers and about 2,000 fishermen in the State as at year 2003. Fingerling production in the State was 100,000 of fingerlings per annum from both government fish farm and private hatcheries

Livestock improvement and breeding centres for cattle and sheep remained abandoned and poultry production units, piggeries and rabbitries were ghosts of themselves due to long years of abandonment. Illegal slaughtering centres for cattle were more of the rule than the exception. The government's 10 tons per hour feed mill was illegally sold and the poorly managed dairy plant closed down due to poor management and lack of direction in the then civil service.

Funding from banks was limited and almost impossible for peasant farmers to obtain. Where available the timing of the agriculture loans were ill-timed and there was total neglect for stockroutes and grazing reserves with utter disregard for range management and this accumulated to

widespread and regular conflicts between the Fulani herdsmen and the crop farmers.

Any attempt to actualize socio-economic development given the parameters on ground at that time in 2003 when the Administration of His Excellency, Dr Bukola Saraki, the Executive Governor of Kwara State came to power would amount to squeezing water out of stone. The end result would of course be perpetual poverty if the situation was not reversed. We were therefore faced with the main challenge of fighting and weeding out poverty from Kwara State and leading Nigeria into prosperity through agricultural transformation. Since then, the Administration of His Excellency, Dr. Bukola Saraki, the Executive Governor of Kwara State has made the provision of opportunities and a highly conducive environment for employment in agricultural, industrial and commercial activities matters of deliberate policy. One of the main objectives of making Kwara State one of Nigeria's most progressive and prosperous State is to boost agricultural production, food security, adequate nutrition, wealth creation and accelerated employment generation.

Vision

The picture painted by the foregoing scenario is that something must be done and very fast if we want to free the State economy from the dwindling oil resources which our State is always at a great disadvantage when sharing the oil proceeds. We see agriculture as the way out of the woods; as a well developed agriculture sector would grow the economy, create employment opportunities, alleviate poverty, bring about rural transformation etc. Our vision of the agriculture sector is the **“development and expansion of agricultural potentials to ensure food security, create wealth, provide raw materials for industries and produce for domestic consumption and export”**.

Agriculture Sector Potentials

The Government took great advantage of the potentials of the State in evolving policy targets for transforming the agriculture sector. The potentials and policy targets include but not limited to:-

A. Potentials

- availability of required human resources and institutions for modern agricultural development
- availability of fertile arable land throughout the State
- favourable climatic conditions
- existence of large volumes of surface and underground water sources for irrigation and fish farming
- availability of grazing lands for livestock
- ability to produce and provide the populace with enough food.
- ability of the State to have enough food for reserve.
- import substitution
- animal protein, dairy products and poultry
- capacity to produce large quantity of agricultural products to feed our industries and for export e.g. Jatropha, cassava, cotton, sheabutter, oil palm, cocoa, melon, groundnut, cashew, sugar cane, vegetables, flowers etc.

B. Policy Targets

- Engagement/training/deployment of extension agents to transfer the improved technology to the fields.
- Training extension agents on proper data collection and entry.
- Developing irrigation in 60 sites in the State in phases.
- Increase in number of commercial farmers by 70% and aggressive mechanization of agriculture by 2011.

- Increase total land cultivated by 80% from the present 20% by 2011.
- cultivation of 80,000 hectares of Jatropha for bio-diesel and 80,000 hectares of cassava to produce flour and starch for industries.
- establishment of large scale commercial poultry farms.
- Installation of complete processing equipment/facilities and agric malls.
- liaise with Ministry of Lands, Justice and Finance to secure land and pay compensation promptly.
- establishment of 5 nos. rice processing plants by 2011.
- generate over 100,000 jobs in the agriculture sector through enhancement of agro allied industry and capacity building.
- enhance Commercial Farming through Public/Private Partnership, aggressive mechanisation to generate employment and create wealth
- enhancement of growth of agro allied industry and capacity building.
- drastic increase in the production of crops, livestock and fish by small holder farmers through provision of inputs, irrigation, and extension services
- Rural transformation through agriculture (Shonga example:- roads, water, electricity, schools, hospitals etc)
- Provision of wholesome agricultural products to the consumers

Where we are/The Journey so Far

At the inception of the administration of Dr. Bukola Saraki, a programme called Back to Farm was introduced to encourage our farmers in agriculture. Under this programme, a total of 868.35 hectares of land was cultivated in 80 sites across the 16 Local Government Areas, using the existing State's farmers' council and Ministry of Agriculture. Through the scheme, farmers were given money to prepare designated farmlands and they were provided seeds, seedlings, chemicals and fertilizers.

However, the outcome did not quite justify the enthusiasm and the investment that went into the programme. The farmers that participated in the programme largely saw the money and the input we gave them as their own dividend of democracy. As such, there was no commitment on the part of the farmers that participated in the scheme.

One of the lessons learnt from the scheme/programme was that spoon-feeding farmers would not work. We also learnt that we needed a radical approach and policy for agriculture, if we must use agriculture to drive out poverty reduction efforts and create wealth.

So far we have been able to make giant leaps in transforming the agriculture terrain of Kwara State within a very short period of five (5) years. Cultivated area has more than doubled. Average yield of most crops have improved from the initial 1 ton per hectare to 3 tons per hectares while the tubers have increased to between 20-40 tons per hectare. As a result of the facilitative roles of government, agro allied factories and processing centre have sprang up. We facilitated the establishment of eight high quality cassava producing factories and another twenty cassava micro processing centres across the 16 Local Government Areas of the State. Extension agent farm family ratio has improved to one extension agent per 2,000 families. All the old cocoa plantations were regenerated, seedlings of tree crops were raised and over 300,000 seedlings are distributed free of charge on an annual basis. It is interesting to note that over six indigenous large scale commercial farmers have sprung up. The State Government also facilitated the establishment of over twenty (20) non-indigeneous/foreign commercial farmers. Large portions of farmland were made available at the shortest notice. Some of such commercial farmers include Coga Farms Ltd, Olam Nig. Limited, Enviro Friendly Energy Ltd, Kwara Greens Ltd, African Chicken Farm Ltd, Dana Foods

Ltd, Lix Konti Ranch Ltd, Casplex, ZJS Ltd, Dawacom and Tunslag Nig. Ltd. to mention a few.

Shonga Commercial Farm Phase I – Shonga Commercial Farm

The commercial farming idea was borne out of the concern of His Excellency Dr. Bukola Saraki the Executive Governor of Kwara State to bring about food security and improve the livelihood and living standard of the people. The main issue is that we must rise above the subsistence level and move into large scale commercial farming that would guarantee increased productivity while gradually integrating the small farm holders into the core farming centres. Hence the introduction of the present approach of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in commercial farming. This led us to the partnership with Zimbabwe farmers now New Nigerian Farmers(NNFs). 1,000ha of land was leased to each of the 13 farmers for an initial period of 25years while the local land owners were paid compensation and "Agricultural packages" (bicycles, fertilizers, seed etc.) Shonga Farms has attracted investments of up to N3Billion in both loans and equity from six major banks in Nigeria. It is a novel public private enterprise with sharp focus on viability and profitability. Through, this project, Kwara State has led the way in Nigeria's quest for alternative development framework by changing the country's reliance on imported food (poultry, milk and milk products. Six Extension agents are attached to the area with each one manning a block of less than 1,000 farmers to help in transfer of technology from the NNFs to the local farmers. Basic infrastructure like good road networking, domestic water supply, adequate security 15MVA transformer for electricity supply and standard Hospital were provided.

To date, Shonga Farms concept is already giving positive results. At the last international Agribusiness Summit and Expo held in Ilorin in July

2009, Kwara was declared as the "Capital of Agriculture Development in Nigeria". The results among others include:

- a) Massively improved food production. In fact the maize sold out at subsidized rate to the populace at this year Ramadan period was from Shonga Farms.
- b) Shonga Farms is now generating large employment opportunities (both skilled, semiskilled and unskilled) for the populace. Over four thousand people are employed by only thirteen farmers.
- c) It has socially improved upon the lots of the community. A sum of N3million was approved by the State Executive Council to upgrade the hospital in Shonga town to status of one having National Health Insurance scheme.
The road network have been improved upon while schools and potable water were provided for the communities.
- d) Economically, the farms have helped as source of income for the employed local people and improved the GDP.
- e) The farms have moved from crop production to processing. This has helped in gradual industrialization of Shonga environs.

People continue to troop to Shonga from all over Nigeria to buy sweet banana, Yoghurt, Pasteurized milk, UHT milk, cassava even grains (maize and Soyabean) etc. Soonest the Shonga Poultry syndicate will have 3.2 million broilers for sale annually as well as cassava flour/pando yam.

The Shonga Dairy factory has a capacity of 50,000 litres per day. Currently it is producing 10,000 litres per day. Arrangements have been made to improve the indigenous cattle by selection and artificial insemination of the imported cattle. In order to improve the nutrition content and orientation, Shonga milk is distributed to pupils throughout the State free of charge. The Shonga Poultry Syndicate has completed the construction of automated/computerized poultry pens, poultry abattoir and

feedmill. The poultry complex is capable of producing 3.2million broilers annually.

There exists a harmonious relationship between the New Nigerian Farmers and the host communities because of the involvement of the host communities in the project. We have a Trust Fund whereby 1% of the annual gross turnover of Shonga Farms is set aside for community demand driven development. There also exists a model farm whereby the local communities could domesticate the best practices experienced on the New Nigeria Farm Plots.

Irrigation Projects

The contract for the construction of irrigation project at Shonga Commercial Farms that would guarantee all year round farming activities in over seventeen thousand hectares of farmland is being constructed at a cost of N2.9 billion. The Duku-lade Irrigation Scheme was also rehabilitated at the cost of N100 million.

Commercial Farm Phase II

The huge success story of the phase I of the Commercial Farm Project at Shonga has led to the establishment of the Commercial Farm Phase II in Owode-onire district in Asa Local Government Area of Kwara State. Work is in progress on the reconnaissance survey of 22,500 hectares of land acquired by the State Government. Cash crops such as rice, sugarcane and vegetables will be produced under the phase II project.

Cassava Production

The State Government gave tremendous support to the local farmers on cassava production to be able to produce and feed the

emerging cassava processing factories. In 2007 and 2008, the farmers experienced cassava glut as well as high cost of production to the extent that the farmers who took bank loans could not pay back as agreed. The sum of N200m was approved as cassava intervention to assist the farmers in settling their loan obligation with UBA which they were unable to settle due to the cassava glut that year. In resolving the glut problem, an agreement was reached to supply the mills in Anambra State as much surplus cassava as could be evacuated from the State. In addition the, State Government also financed the construction of three (3) weighbridges at Eyenkorin, Patigi and Ijagbo to determine the quantity of cassava and other farm produce evacuated from the farms. Four (4) trucks were also procured to transport the cassava to the users outside the State on a regular basis.

The State Government's quest to promote cassava production in commercial quantity to meet the Federal Government's policy on 10% cassava inclusion in the nation's flour mills led to the establishment of three (3) cassava factories in Ilorin, Kaiama and Offa. The factories have been leased out to private processors namely Wakilin Mata Farms Ltd, Integrated Group Farms Ltd and Bammeke and Associates (Nig) Ltd respectively. 60kVA generating set was procured and installed by the State Government at Offa Cassava Processing Factory plus the extension of the generator house while 100kVA generator was installed at Kaiama Cassava Processing factory.

Integrated Youth Farm Training Centre, Malete

The Malete Integrated Youth Farm Centre which was established in 2005 is another Kwara State Government's strategic initiative for creating a successor generation of New Nigerian Farmers. The Centre is an agricultural training facility for training young men and women with different levels of educational background, ranging from Primary School Certificate

to University degree. The farm is equipped with social and recreational facilities that make living on the farm an interesting experience.

The students are trained in a wide range of agricultural practices which include: Soil management, cropping, animal husbandry, irrigation, farm machinery, harvesting/storage, post harvest technologies crop marketing, farm and labour management, finance and cash flow analysis. While on the farm, the students also earn monthly stipends of between N6,000 and N11,000, depending on the students qualification at level of student's entry qualification. At the end of their training, it is expected that they would start their own farms and make a successful and lucrative living on the land. The essence of the programme is to groom a new generation of young farmers that are skilled, both in the techniques of modern farming and also financially literate to manage farming as a business with focus on profitability.

The farm graduated 100 students in 2008. The second graduation ceremony of the trained youth commercial farmers took place on Thursday 23rd April, 2009 with 87 graduating students. N42.5 Million equity payment to access trust fund model loan has been granted. Crop planting started in April, 2008 with the farm obtaining N15million loan. Each graduated student was settled on 5 hectares at three different locations. Each student was awarded N850,000.00 to cultivate 3 hectares for soyabeans, 1 hectare for maize and 1 hectare for cassava.

Cocoa Production:

The present Administration has also come forth in regeneration and rehabilitation of cocoa production in the State. There has been rehabilitation of grading centre at Oke-Onigbin, raising of 1.8 million cocoa seedlings, the distribution of agro-chemical/input worth N10,000,000.00 upgrading of cocoa zonal office in Ilorin worth N1.7 million, establishment

of five community-based cocoa farmer field schools, training and retraining cocoa farmers and establishment of cocoa seed garden at Ajase-Ipo for the production of early maturing cocoa pods. The State Government procured Cocoa inputs/agro-chemicals worth N3.1 million which was sold to the cocoa farmers at 50% subsidy.

The early maturing cocoa seedlings of 18 months were planted in June, 2009. This will serve as source of planting materials to all cocoa farmers in the State. Presently, 300,000 seedlings of improved varieties are already distributed to cocoa farmers in the State for 2009 planting season at no cost to the farmers. The flag-off ceremony for year 2009 cocoa planting season came up at Share, Ifelodun Local Government Area.

Technology Transfer:

Further to the effort of the Ministry to retain youth in the various aspects of agriculture through the Malete Integrated Farm Centres, efforts were made through the support of His Excellency, the Executive Governor to disseminate new farming techniques to our local farmers. To achieve this, a committee was constituted within the Ministry to see to the transfer of technology to the grassroots.

The committee organized regular in-season training across the three (3) senatorial districts of the State. Video clips on the use of improved technologies in farming were put up at six (6) different locations for practical demonstration of the efficiencies of the new techniques on Radio and television programmes are run to reach out to a wider population of farmers. Harvesting at the demonstration sites was done with result demonstration carried out to the local farmers. The transfer of technology for the 2009 farming season has commenced with in-season training for our farmers at five (5) locations in the 3 senatorial districts.

Fertilizer Procurement and Allocation:

The quantities and costs of the fertilizers procured by the State Government from 2003 to 2009 are summarized below in a tabular form

Years	Quantity (Metric Tons)	Cost (N)
2003	1,230	44,505,000
2004	3,000	122,400,000
2005	289.85	12,599,775
2006	3,930	186,112,500
2007	-	-
2008	14,930	1,782,371,250
2009	8,000	1,132,000,000
Grand Total	31,379.85	N3,279,989,025.00

The allocations of fertilizers are based on the requests submitted by the 16 Local Governments according to the needs of their farmers at electoral ward levels. The fertilizers are sold to the local farmers at 50% subsidy. The aim of the State Government is to boost the crop production capacities of the local farmers.

Unfortunately, it was discovered that some sharp practices were being perpetrated by some local government officials to divert the fertilizers to other States. High level monitoring mechanisms were put in place to arrest the trend.

Agro Export Conditioning Centre

We have started to develop our capacity to penetrate the international markets, especially for tropical produce. Plans have reached advanced stages for the establishment of agro export conditioning centre in collaboration with the federal government and an Israeli firm. Towards this end, the State Government has almost completed the construction of a

cargo terminal with dry and cold sheds to facilitate export trade in agriculture produce such as fruits, dairy, flowers and vegetables.

Farmers' Census

The 2009 farmers census exercise programme is already underway in the State. The purpose of the census is to know the population of genuine farmers in the State so that Government can plan for their social and economic needs. The exercise will also help the government capture yields of each crop; generate data on weather, agronomy, e.t.c. The enumeration is done through approach of questionnaire administration measurement of farms, using Global Positioning System and pictorial of each farmer and farm sizes. It is now a matter of deliberate policy that distribution of agriculture inputs in the State would be based on enumerated farmers only.

Tractor Subsidy/Equipment Hiring

The State Government bought tractors and sold them to cooperative farmers at 50% subsidy. The tractor subsidy scheme was streamlined to accommodate those in the scheme as far back as 1982. In 2007, 53 tractors were procured and distributed to farmers under the subsidy loan scheme. Plans are underway to procure 20 tractors in 2009.

So far fifteen (15) cooperative farmers have deposited a total sum of N26,792,125.00 for new tractors. To support the farmers, government made available tractors for hiring to farmers at a low rate of N7,000 per day.

Buffer Stock:

In 2007, the Ministry sold 355 metric tons of assorted food grains to the general public at subsidized rates, 1,220.95 metric tons of grains were purchased and sold in 2008.

The State Government in its effort to ensure food security in the State rehabilitated six strategic Grain Reserve Stores for proper storage of grains purchased by the Ministry. A sum of N42 million was released by the present administration for the purchase of 600 metric tons of maize and 600 metric tons of sorghum allocated by the Federal Government. The vision of the State Government to transform the State to an industrialized agrarian State has continued to yield dividends.

Fisheries

The achievements recorded include the production of 1,400,000 assorted fish fingerlings from 2003 to date which were sold to fish farmers in the State at subsidized rates. In 2008, 20,000 fingerlings were stocked in the earthen fish ponds for rearing. The State Government financed the purchase of fishing inputs project worth N4.9million and distributed same to fishermen at 50% subsidy in April, 2008. This was to promote the implementation of the State's fisheries law. The law is aimed at protecting the fishes from extinction through the indiscriminate use of chemicals in our water bodies to catch fish. The inputs include nets, hooks, outboard engines, canoes, floats, twines and breeding.

Another set of fish farmers were given fish inputs worth over N4 million at 50% subsidy in August, 2008 and N4.5million in 2009. These inputs include feeds, water tanks, pumps, e.t.c. The sum of N886,000.00 was released for training workshops for fish farmers, fishermen, women fish processors and fish hatchery operators in the State from 2005 to date. Fourteen (14) youths were trained in the art of fish farming and graduated

in October, 2008 after two years of intensive training. The graduates were resettled with a loan of N10 million from NAPEP office, Ilorin. Another batch of 60 students was admitted for the 2009/2010 training season. The training programme is to empower the youths, create employment, alleviate poverty and to make cheap and affordable high quality protein available to the populace.

The State Government has released 70m x 40m of land in Ilorin to the Association of Fish farmers and aquaculturists for the establishment of a modern fish market. The fish pond at New Yidi Road was rehabilitated with provisions of an industrial borehole, overhead tanks, 15kva generator and breeding materials at the farm site at a cost of N4.5 million in 2008 for production and sale of high quality fish fingerlings and table size fish to the public at subsidized rates.

The State Government has also released land at Area Fisheries Office, Jebba for construction of a fish processing centre by Federal Government. The centre will consist of processing complex, smoking kilns, cold room and a borehole. The State Government also complimented the efforts of the Federal Government in conducting fish catch Assessment and Frame Survey of Fishermen and fish farmers in Kwara State in 2007.

The State Government has initiated the Empowerment of Multipurpose Rural Women Fisheries Society at Jebba with a grant of N1.6 million from Ireland Embassy, Abuja in 2007. The grant was used for construction of smoking kilns and borehole, literacy Education of the women fish processors and also used for revolving loan among the members of the Cooperative Society.

Veterinary and Livestock

The Kwara State Government has remained a good partner-in-progress with the Federal Government in the fight against zoonotic diseases. A sum of N3.5 million has been released to date by the present administration for the control of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) and Rural Poultry Bio-Security Improvement Scheme in the State. The present administration also released N2.5 million for the purchase of Anti-Rabies vaccines for Anti-Rabies campaign programme between 2007 and 2009. This was aimed at controlling the problem of rabies in our society that has been causing the death of innocent Kwarans through bites of rabid dogs.

In 2007, 1,500 dogs were vaccinated against rabies while in 2008, 250 dogs and 185 cats were vaccinated against rabies. From January, 2009 to date 500 dogs and 150 cats have been vaccinated.

In 2007, the sum of N18,871,510.82 was approved in principle for Control Posts and Cattle Market Development, out of which N8 million was released. The projects executed in this regard include: modernization, restructuring and renovation of cattle market at Ilesha Baruba and construction of Kenu International Control Post in Baruten Local Government Area. The release of another N11,000,00 is being awaited for development of Bode Sa'adu Control Post. N2million revenue is expected monthly, following the development.

The sum of N9.7 million was released for resuscitation of Kaiama cattle ranch which had been moribund for years. It is envisaged that the ranch will collaborate with Shonga Diaries for the improvement of local breeds. Towards resolving the lingering conflict between the local farmers and cattle rearers in the State, the Ministry hosted a conference of Fulani cattle rearers and farmers to educate them towards achieving amicable resolution of the crises in Ilorin, Ajase-Ipo, Gbugbu, Patigi and Kaiama at a cost of N700,000.00 in 2007. A similar sensitization workshop was held in

2008 on the re-demarcation of stock route and its use as a means of preventing incessant clashes between crop farmers and Fulani Cattle rearers at a cost of N600,000.00. At the commencement of the Avian Influenza Project, the Federal Government donated to Kwara State Office equipment, 4 wheel drive vehicle and 20 motorcycles.

As a result of Kwara State Government's contribution to Avian Influenza Project in the State culminating in Kwara State being the number one Project office in the whole Federation and our conceiving the idea of Rural Poultry Bio-security Improvement Scheme; the Federal Government has donated to us a four wheel Land Cruiser Jeep with Diagnostic and Information dissemination gadgets worth N9.5 million. This is in addition to putting in place a modern live bird market at Obbo road, Ilorin South Local Government Area, at a cost of N18,000,000.00. Recently, plastic transporting crates worth about N2million were donated to the State in addition to disinfectants that are being given to poultry farmers free of charge. Further to this, the Ministry embarked upon the reconnaissance survey at Alapa, Babanla, and Lata grazing reserves for the purpose of providing adequate grazing land for the cattle rearers and forestall further clashes between the cattle rearers and the farmers.

During the year under review, 600 dogs were immunized and the State wide vaccination programme came up in July, 2009.

A sum of N390,000.00 has also been released being State contribution towards reopening/demarcation of stock routes in the State embarked upon by the Federal Government. A stock route has been reopened in the State and this, to large extent will reduce crop farmers – Herdsmen conflicts.

Kwara Agricultural Development Projects (KWADP)

The State Government in collaboration with Root and Tuber Expansion Programme (RTEP) has been able to bring about the establishment of Gari processing centres in various parts of the State. In 2007, the sum of N20.28 million was earmarked and expended on the project while the sum of N23 million was expended in 2008.

The Kwara State Government released the sum of N20.0 million from 2007 – 2008 as its counterpart contribution for the establishment of 90 hectares of land for cultivating cassava, yam and sweet potato for improved planting materials to farmers in the State.

The State has potential for rice production and in the effort of the State Government to boost rice production; an arrangement between Kwara State Government and a private sector investor (Olam Nig. Ltd) was initiated under the Bank Trust Fund Scheme. In 2007, 750 hectares of rice farm were established through out-growers scheme with an average yield of 3 tons per hectare of paddy rice to be used as production seed for the State rice farmers and Nigeria rice farmers at large.

In 2008, 1337 hectare of land was cultivated for growing paddy rice under the KWSG/Olam Nig. Ltd. initiative. The rice production in the State has increased from 18,710 tons in 2003 to 345,690 tons in 2008 through Kwara State Government/Olam rice production initiative. In 2009, a total of 5,146 hectares has been cultivated under the initiative. A loan package of N60,00 per hectare through a collaborative effort of Kwara State Government/Olam Nig. Ltd. disbursed by First Bank Plc to the farmers.

Rural Institution Development department distributed the following Inputs to farmers from year 2004 to date for the various grain crops programmes to include rice, maize, cow-pea, soybean etc.

Seeds	-	363MT
Herbicides	-	53,148 Litres
Fertilizer	-	2,290MT.

Community Based Agriculture and rural Development Project (CBARDP) implantation started in the year 2007. Within the short period, all documentations for drawn-down have been concluded. The programme is to last for a period of 6 years. The State Government has paid all its counterpart fund of N28.6 million while the African Development Bank has released N24,536,000 to date.

Twenty-Seven hectares (27ha) of orchard farm land, one hectare in each of the 27 Rural Village Areas (RVAs) was established at the rate of N350,000.

3,600 sheep and goats were vaccinated with PPR vaccination. 6 Artificial incubator from Vom were demonstrated while one On Farm Adaptive Research (OFAR) and 15 Management Training Plots (MTP) were carried out.

In 2009, the State Government embarked on rapid maize production programme with technology transfer on doubling maize yield per hectare extended to farmers and backed up with bank loan. Four hundred and twenty one farmers benefited with 842 hectares of maize farm involved.

Various technologies to improve production, value addition through improved processing and utilization options were extended to over 291,667 farm families from 2004 to date through several extension techniques to include Radio, TV, Print Media, Demonstrations, Campaigns, Management Training Plots (MTP) and on-farm adaptive research (OFAR).

Fadama Programme

The State Government supported the Fadama II Project by prompt payment of her counterpart fund of N50 million. Fadama II has contributed significantly to complement the State Government's effort to reduce poverty in the State by ensuring food security among other achievements. This has gone a long way to develop the rural areas by providing rural infrastructural facilities such as 33 boreholes, 30km rural access roads, tube wells, open wells (70no) and 3 veterinary clinics for the pastoralists across the three (3) senatorial districts in the State.

Fadama Farmers in Ajasse Watershed are also being supported in the area of livelihood support activities with a World Bank grant of N26.5 million. This is to remove intense pressure on the ecosystem especially in the area of land degradation. Such activities like orchard and woodlot development (50ha), grass cutter, rabbitry, snailery are covered under the project.

An agro-input support programme was also put in place to take care of the Fadama project beneficiaries. In this regard, 8,000 bags of fertilizer, 5,000 litres of agro-chemicals, 2 tractors, 2 rice milling machines as well as substantial kilogram of improved seed varieties were made available to the farmers.

The Kwara State Government has also released her counterpart fund of N15 million for the successful take-off of Fadama III Project in the State which is about to commence, soonest. Officers for the take off of Fadama III have been examined, interviewed and appointments made purely on merit. The National Fadama Office has given a 'no objection' clearance for all the appointments 74 new personnel were engaged in all.

Overall Economic Impact

The time allowed for this presentation is definitely not sufficient to expatiate on the spectacular achievements and experience of the Administration of His Excellency, Dr. Bukola Saraki, the Executive Governor of Kwara State in the agriculture sector. Permit me therefore to summarize the overall socio-economic impact of the intervention on the lives of Kwarans in particular and Nigerians in general as follows:-

- ❑ Shonga farms initiative has attracted investments up to over N3billion in both loans and equity from six (6) major banks in Nigeria. This has boosted economic activities on Kwara Socio economic Plan.
- ❑ Growing confidence of core investors in Kwara State Commercial Agriculture Initiative has lead to a boost in economic activities, leading to drastic increase in number of commercial farming enterprises in the State (Coga farm, African Chicken, Lix Konti, Olam, Veetee, etc.) that were not in Kwara a few years back.
- ❑ Increase in nutrition content of pupils/youths through increase in consumption of dairy products from Shonga farm.
- ❑ Over 4,000 employments created at Shonga farm and another 4,000 in other private sector commercial farms.
- ❑ Commercial agriculture technology transfer through Malete Integrated Youth Farm and regular enlightenment programme for local farmers on international best practices which has boosted agric production. This has reduced youth restiveness.
- ❑ Provision of subsidized fish inputs has made nutritious fresh fish easily available for the citizens of the State and neighbouring states, provided impetus for employments generation in the fisheries industry, served as a catalyst for increased fish production in the

State from 10,000mt of fish in 2006 to 20,000mt in 2008. a drop in selling price of fish from N350/kg in 2007 to N320/kg in 2008.

- ❑ The Youth Fish Farming Training Programme has empowered the youths, create job opportunities, create wealth and enhance food security and redirecting the energies of our youths.
- ❑ Reactivation of irrigation projects e.g. Duku-Lade gave room for all-season farming, employment poverty reduction increase in food production.
- ❑ Easy movement of agric produce from farms through provision of trucks for easy movement of farm produce within and outside the state; thus creating secondary employment.
- ❑ Promoting of socio economic activities through the cocoa sub sector. Out growers of cocoa has increased and this is a source of foreign exchange in the next three (3) years.
- ❑ Provision of agric inputs has helped improved yields, reduce drudgery on the farm and saves time.
- ❑ The on-going farmers census would make for better planning, forecast research policy formulation/implementation and bring positive socio economic benefits to farmers in the very near future.
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- ❑ Control of livestock diseases has increased livestock production, availability of wholesome protein of animal origin to the populace and improved pastoral activities.
- ❑ Stock route and grazing reserve development has helped to reduce conflicts between crop farmers and cattle rearers.
- ❑ Public private partnership agric initiatives has increased the tempo of socio economic activities in the State.

Our Efforts and the 7 Point Agenda

Our efforts and successes has direct bearing with the Seven Point Agenda of the Federal Government. This is because we believe that if agriculture is well developed, there will be food security, which is a cornerstone for national security. Abundant production of raw materials will obviously lead to rapid industrialization, thus will arrest poverty, unemployment and healthy living. Youth restiveness would be brought to the barest minimum as their energies would have been directed towards gainful employment in agriculture. Adequate food intake will improve mental capability and alertness and lead to improvements in the education sector. Our dependence on oil and its attendant land degradation as experienced in the Niger Delta would be reduced. Transformation and repositioning our agriculture sector would mean getting alternative sources of energy (Jatropha, cassava and the like. Transformation of agriculture would lead to opening up of rural access roads and construction of new socio-economic infrastructure at the grassroots.

Where We Want to Be in the Years Ahead

In the very near future we want to see that 70% of the cultivable areas of the State are under cultivation. We intend to achieve average grain yield of between 4 – 8 tons per hectare while average tuber yield

rises to 60 – 70 tons per hectare. We want to have value addition to our agriculture produce such as establishing about six (6) large scale rice processing plants in view of our comparative advantage in rice production. As much as possible, we want to development the sixty irrigation sites across the State in collaboration with the Nigeria's capital market so as to pave way for all year round farming. Our Extension Agent Farm family ratio would also improve to 1:1,000 with the engagement of at least 300 Extension Agents by 2011. Our doors would continue to be open to more investors; both from other parts of the State and the outside world. We want to be in the league of Nigerian States that no longer have to depend on oil revenue. We can only achieve this with favourable investment climate. His Excellency, Dr. Bukola Saraki has ushered in an era of peace even development and broadly shared prosperity. This has become an asset for core foreign investors to capitalize on by coming to Kwara State and invest.

We have invited the private sector to set up Agric Malls that would serve as one-stop shop for farmers in the near future. Farmers can go to the malls and hire tractors. We expect investors to take advantage of the Kwara State agriculture transformation by setting up Urea production plants in different parts of the State to make for easy availability of fertilizers for farmers.

We want to establish at least two (2) modern abattoirs in addition to the recently completed one at Akerebiata in Ilorin East LGA. Very decent, slaughter slabs would also be established in every local government area council headquarters and major towns in the State. Fly-proof boxes and working tools would also be made available at subsidized prices so that meat sellers can imbibe hygiene compliant habits. Major interstate disease control posts would be established and the existing ones strengthened to include infrastructural facilities (borehole, electricity,

residential buildings for cattle merchants and staff, loading/unloading rumps, security etc). On grazing reserves, we intend to embark on gazettelement and development of more grazing reserves and stock routes to curtail movement of cattle and prevent the often bloody clashes between pastoralists and crop farmers. Artificial Insemination centres where local breeds of cattle are bred with semen from foreign breeds on a commercial scale would be established. This exercise would be one of the major gains of Shonga Dairy Farms. We would still continue with efforts on control and containment of Avian Influenza and prevent outbreak of swine flu.

The fingerling production is expected to increase to 2.5 million fingerlings per annum while the fish farmers would increase from the present 300 to over 1,000 and the number of fishermen would increase from 8,000 to over 10,500 fishermen by 2011.

All these and more would be made possible by the efforts of the present Administration in repositioning agriculture, increase nutrition status, creation of enabling environment as well as human and institutional capacity building for long term sustainability.

We have a dream of a day when farming would no longer be regarded as mere means of survival but as a business in its own right with all the potentials and possibilities that come with any other business. We look forward to a future where graduates would see farming as so lucrative as to want to own and run their farms rather than seek banking jobs. We look forward to seeing our youths empowered through government efforts, to make cash-flow analysis and other business arguments to persuade a bank to give him credits based on demonstrated profitability of his farming venture. We are eager to wake up to see a day when bankers would mill around farms seeking business and competing for farmers' bank accounts.

We want our farms to be capable of taking advantage of technologies and products of research to multiply yields and realize at

least 10 tons of maize or 40 tons of cassava from one hectare of farmland. We have a dream of a tomato farmer who would not be satisfied with his job until he is able to process and package tomato puree and deliver it directly to the supermarkets. We desire a State where children of the rich will take to farming and the children of the poor will not seek to escape from the farm so that farms would be run by 5th and 6th generation family owners.

We desire to see our farmers to be familiar with products of agricultural research and innovation and be able to use it to expand his productivity and profitability. We would continue to develop global partnership to enhance all round agriculture development.

With the foregoing background, you would appreciate why the State Government under the able, visionary and dynamic leadership of His Excellency Dr Bukola Saraki the Executive Governor of Kwara State is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that the enabling environment is created for farmers to farm all year round, process their output on industrial/commercial scale and bring our dreams of the New Nigeria Agriculture to a reality in no distant future.

ANNEXTURE

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Arising from the enabling environment created by the present Administration on commercial agriculture, the Kwara State Government has continued to witness the influx of potential Private Sector Investors who had shown interest to partner with the State Government. We have been able to allocate land in any part of the State within 48 hours of receiving requests from local and foreign investors. Highlights of the investors are in tabular form as follows:

S/N	NAME OF COMPANY	DETAIL/TITLE OF PROJECT	LOCATION	LAND SIZE IN HECTARAGE	REMARKS
1	2	3	6	7	8
1.	COGA Farms Ltd.	Cultivation of Cassava, maize and Jatropha Plantation.	Fallah, Moro L.G.A.	1,000	The land surveyed by Kwara State Government. C. of O not yet collected. Compensation fee paid to the customary land owners/occupiers. Memorandum Understanding (MoU) is yet to be signed. One motorized borehole was sunk by the State Government at a cost of N1 million and electricity was extended to the farm at a cost of 4 million. The Company is requesting for additional 5,000 hectares for expansion. Operation, already started on the farm.
2.	Olam Nig. Ltd.	Rice processing, Paddy Rice outgrowers scheme and seeds multiplication 30,000 ton capacity rice mill is underway.	Patigi, Patigi L.G.A.	20	The Land already surveyed by Kwara State Government C. of O not ready. R of O collected. Compensation fee not yet paid. MoU already signed. Work already started.
3.	Enviro Friendly Energy Ltd.	Cultivation of Jatropha for Production of Bio-diesel. Establishment of refining complex.(\$20m)	Lanwa, Moro L.G.A.	15,000 requested in one location	Only 9,368.98 hectares already surveyed. The remaining 5,631.02 would be surveyed in another location. MoU signed. R of O collected. C of O not yet collected. Compensation fee not yet paid. The MD of the Company from California, USA has arrived Ilorin.

S/N	NAME OF COMPANY	DETAIL/TITLE OF PROJECT	LOCATION	LAND SIZE IN HECTARAGE	REMARKS
1	2	3	6	7	8
4.	Kwara Greens Ltd.	Production of vegetables and flowers.(\$12million)	Oro-Gbangba Village, Asa L.G.A.	50	The land already surveyed C of O not yet collected. Compensation fee not yet paid. MoU signed. Kwara State Government has approved the payment of 50% of her 30% equity participation.
5.	African Chicken Farm Limited.	Integrated Poultry Production, including broilers, layers, eggs production, etc.(\$70m)	Iponrin, Ilorin East LGA	600	The land is already surveyed. Assessment of compensation and publication already done. Payment of compensation fee is outstanding. R of O collected. C of O collected.
6.	Dana Foods Ltd.	Rice farming and rice out growers scheme (\$20m)	Oke-Ose, Ilorin East L.G.A	11	Land Surveyed C of O and R of O already collected. Payment of compensation fee not yet effected.
7.	Lix-Konti Ranch and Industries Ltd.	The Company is into cultivating maize, soyabeans, sorghum, sesame seeds and groundnut and process them into finished products.(N860m)	Ejidongari, Moro L.G.A.	766	Land surveyed 416 hectares already cleared. The Company has commenced business operation, employing about 25 people R of O collected C of O not yet collected but it has been paid for by the company. The company has requested for 2 nos boreholes and extension of electricity to the farm which are receiving intention. MOW is processing papers on the construction of 20km road from Olokonla to the farm.

S/N	NAME OF COMPANY	DETAIL/TITLE OF PROJECT	LOCATION	LAND SIZE IN HECTARAGE	REMARKS
1	2	3	6	7	8
8.	Jatropha Farmers Assoc.	Cultivation of Jatropha for production of Bio-diesel.(\$100m)	20,000 hectares at five (5) different locations in the State	5,000 hectares already surveyed at Iwo, Isin LGA	N2.5 million for the cost of survey, at Iwo was granted by Kwara State Government but not yet cash backed. MoU signed, C of O not yet collected.
9.	Future Energy Ltd.	Planting Jatropha for bio-diesel. (N6billion)	20,000 hectares required at Five (5) different locations in the State	5,000 hectares approved and surveyed at Echi-Wada, Patigi LGA.	Approval of N2 million granted for the survey of 5,000 hectares at Echi-Wada but the money is not yet cash backed. MoU signed. C of O and R of O are outstanding.
10.	Gil Flour Mills Ltd.	Production and processing operation in rice mill and parboiling plant(\$12m).	Echi-Wada, Patigi LGA & Tsaragi Edu LGA.	5,000 hectares at Echi-Wada and 50 hectares at Tsaragi	The land surveyed. R of O collected. C of O for the two sites is awaiting His Excellency's signature. Assessment of compensation is about to be carried out
11.	Jan-Kasal Company Ltd.	Industrial starch and Ethanol plant, using cassava and potatoes as sources of raw materials(N890m)	Ndamaku, Patigi LGA	5,000	The money has been approved and cash backed for the surveyed exercised. The survey work is already in progress.
12.	CASPLEX Ltd.	Cassava production and processing complex.(\$23m)	Okuta, Baruten LGA	15,000	Money approved but not yet released for the survey.
13.	Waysagro holdings Ltd.	Beef ranching, Feedlot/Timber production(\$960m)	Shao, Moro LGA	5,000	The land already surveyed C of O not processed.
14.	ZJS International Company Ltd.	Cultivation of arable crops such as maize, rice, soyabeans and establishment of household equipment factory(\$70million)	Afunkun Village, Asa LGA.	100	Memo requesting for the approval of fund has been directed to the ML & H to meet the cost from its monthly subvention. MoU signed.
15.	Dawacom International Limited	Cashew processing Plantation (N3billion)	Oke-Ola, Oro, Irepodun LGA	5,000 hectares	MoU not yet signed. Land allocation in progress.
16.	Tunslaq Ni. Ltd.	Production and processing of Cassava, Maize and establishment of feed mills. (N24m)	-	500 hectares	C of O Land accusation in progress.