

# Nigeria Agriculture Policy Activity

April 2022

NAPA Highlight 12

## Roundtable Workshop on Strengthening the Business Environment for Agri-Food Enterprises in Kebbi State

Following the role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) within the agri-food subsector in achieving sustainable food production and national food security, the Nigerian Agricultural Project Activity (NAPA) organized a one-day Roundtable Workshop on Strengthening the Business Environment for Agri-Food Enterprises in Kebbi State, Nigeria. This is aimed at strengthening the understanding of the effects of the business environment on the operations of MSMEs' in the State. Relevant stakeholders were invited across the four agricultural zones in the state (Bunza, Argungu, Zuru and Yauri Zones). The stakeholders were selected from Ministries and Development Agencies (including three Ministries of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Commerce), SMEDAN, NASME, Agricultural Organizations and Policymakers.

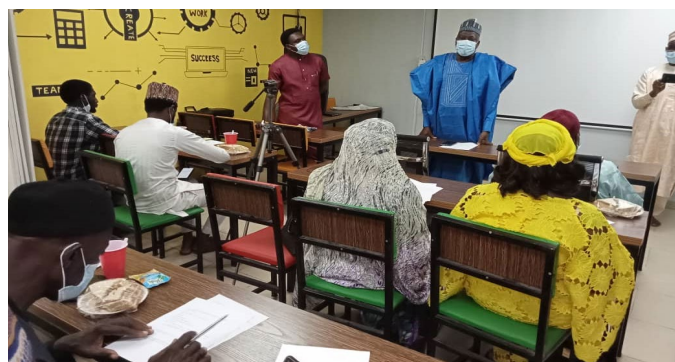
Representatives of the following organizations participated in the roundtable workshop, and were presumed well versed in agribusiness, particularly as it relates to their operations in the state:

- Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN)
- Maize Farmers Association of Nigeria (MAN)
- Brighter Youth Agribusiness Cooperative Association
- All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN)
- Mainstream Lime Ltd

Other stakeholders participating in the roundtable workshop included personnel or representatives from the following:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- National Association of Small & Medium Enterprises (NASME); among others.

The one-day workshop (held on 7 March 2022 at Kebbi Innovation and Technology Hub, Birnin Kebbi) was attended by 35 participants (13 females and 22 males) from across the State.



**Honorable Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Kebbi State during his welcome address**

The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Monday Shaibu and Dr. Oyinkan Tasie. The Commissioner, Kebbi State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources delivered the welcome address and declared the workshop open. Participants were urged to share firsthand information on the business environment, particularly as it relates to agricultural enterprises in the state. Understanding the state business environment, and surrounding regulatory framework, would support the state in identifying the potential benefits under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement. More importantly, an enhanced understanding increases the ability of the state to position its policy framework for MSMEs to be direct off takers of the interventions AfCFTA introduces.



**Cross section of Participants at the workshop with the Kebbi State Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry**



**Cross section of participants filling the perception survey on the business environment for agri enterprises (pre-evaluation test)**

The roundtable workshop commenced with the participants filling out a perception survey on the business environment for agri-enterprises. The survey served as a baseline information on participants' knowledge of policy issues and the existing policy framework. The survey was arranged in three sections, each section containing the framework for one of the 3 sessions. These sessions were: 1) business environment in the State (opportunities and challenges), 2) business environment for agri-food enterprises, and 3) the regulatory framework for agri-enterprises at the state, national and regional level. The African Continental Free Trade Area agreement being in focus under this session. Findings from the session on AfCFTA revealed an appreciable level of awareness of AfCFTA. Some of the participants were engaged in agro-exports.

The roundtable workshop included focus group discussions. The facilitator of each group posed questions to provoke responses from each group member which provided participants with a peer learning forum. Note-takers recorded responses that were later transcribed to notes to be used for further analysis.

Participants exhibited above average understanding of business and agri-food business environment in their respective agricultural zones. They provided valuable insights on existing business opportunities in the agri-food sub-sector which can be explored. Some of these opportunities include:

- Vast arable land for food crop production.
- Available water bodies for dry season farming (irrigation) and fish production.
- Available raw materials for fish feed production and other agro-allied industries.
- Strategic location is an advantage for the achievement of AfCFTA goal and objectives.
- Abundant mineral resources in various parts of the State. Some of these resources include cowling, limestone, gold, and salt, among others.
- Existing industrial layout made available through collaboration between the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Land and Housing.

The workshop provided helpful feedback in respect of knowledge gained. For example, participants learned of AfCFTA and why it was ratified by the Nigerian government. Furthermore, the workshop provided a learning opportunity for participants with knowledge sharing of successes and models that are effective in some agricultural zones in the State. The participants commended the effort of the organizers of the workshop and expressed the hope that capacity strengthening would continue through NAPA and the like organizations.

A WhatsApp group was created at the end of the workshop to continue further interaction and knowledge sharing across participants from the state and the facilitators.

The participants commended the stakeholder engagement and expressed the hope that capacity

strengthening would continue between NAPA and their various organizations; even at the Local Government Area (LGA) level. One of the participants remarked that; *“I want to thank the organizer of this workshop for their consistency in bringing programs targeted at improving livelihood. We are so grateful and hope that, further conversation, especially on MSMEs as majority of the citizens are into farming and entrepreneurship. I also want to thank Mr. Monday for always being impactful. On my own, I promise to go back to my community to organize groups for a similar engagement”*.



**Contribution from the Kebbi State Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources**



**Dr. Oyinkan Tasié (left) speaking on the regulatory framework for agribusiness and Mr. Shaibu Monday (right) NAPP scholar**



**Cross section of participants after the workshop**

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