

# Nigeria Agriculture Policy Activity

November 2022

NAPA Highlight #19

## The Policy Activity supports improved access to and use of the Benue State Soil Productivity Index (SPI) map

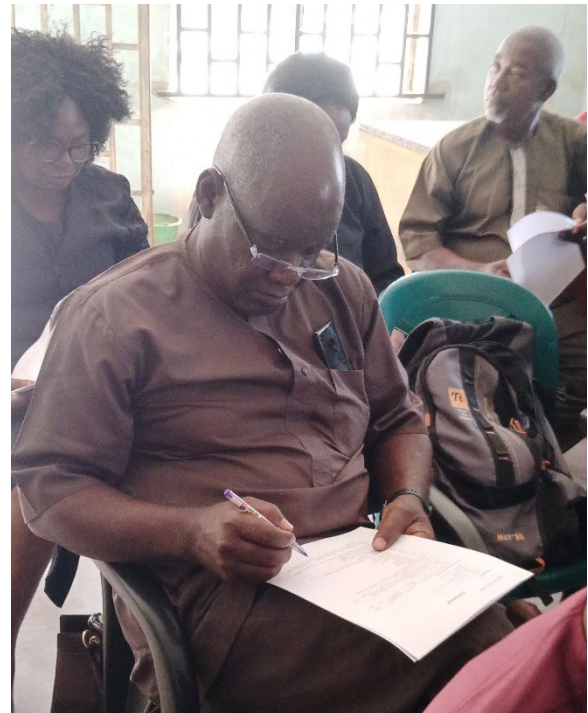
A one-day Stakeholders meeting on the Soil Nutrients and Soil Productivity Maps took place at the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MANR) in Benue state on November 24, 2022. The focus of the event was to deliberate on how best to use the soil productivity index maps generated for the state to benefit farmers, and who should drive the process. 56 Participants (18 females and 38 males) were drawn across the agricultural space including government, farmers, other private sector, civil society and academia.

agreed that a group will be created comprising soil scientists from JOSTUM and other members from MANR on November 28, 2022. The function of the group will be to handle all inquiries from farmers, extension agents and potential investors on the soil status of their farm fields. The group will also provide interpretation to soil test results and recommend appropriate soil management practices including fertilizer application for the focal crops grown.



Fully Engaged Participants

During the program, one of the issues raised was the interpretation of results of the soil tests from the maps to farmers and to the government to guide fertilizer use by farmers and fertilizer purchase for the state. It was



Participants Carefully Following the Program

At the meeting it was agreed that the crops produced in the different Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state would be grouped based on tonnage produced to determine the volumes and type of fertilizer needed to help

guide fertilizer purchases/distribution by government along the lines of specific soil - crop relationships. It was also agreed that to ensure that the maps are easily assessable, a link would be placed on the government website while capacity will be built through training and retraining of group members, extension agents and farmers on soil test interpretation.

Another hindrance to using the map noted during the meeting was the fact that extension agents and divisional officers of agriculture (DAOs) at MANR, do not have smart phones to access the map. Thus, a plea was made for support to purchase some phones for the group members so that interpretation across the wards, LGAs can be calculated and documented on a specific phone and using a number that farmers, extension agents can call to ask specific questions as they pertain to their ward and LGAs with respect to particular crops.



**Dr. Agada facilitating group discussion and reflection.**

This 8-man group will be built on a tripartite arrangement with Dr. Agada as the Lead soil scientist from the academia (JOSTUM) and a USAID FTF NAPA team lead on Soils; 2 Extension Agents from Benue State Agriculture and Rural Development Agency BNARDA; 2 DAOs and 1 land management officer from MANR as Government and 2 persons from the USAID Feed the Future Ag-Extension Activity-Benue State Soil Management cohort team as Private sector.

Following the deliberations, there was a closed-door meeting/ presentation of The Ebonyi State Climate Change Policy to the Commissioner of Agriculture Terna-Kester Kyenge with the view that it will be replicated for Benue state (a focus USAID Feed the Future State) in 2023.

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