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Monthly

NEWSLETTER



INCEPTION PHASE IN REVIEW: OUR WINS AND MILESTONES

HortiNigeria recently rounded out its inception phase, which began the program's transformational journey in the Nigerian horticulture sector. Within the last eight months, the program carried out activities to increase productivity and income through the introduction of eco-efficient production practices; identified climate-smart actions and innovative technologies to be promoted among entrepreneurial farmers, particularly women and youth; kickstarted partnerships with financial institutions to improve value chain actors' access to financial services; established a dialogue with both private and public institutions within the agricultural sector to resuscitate policy platforms; and initiated actions required to build business-to-business linkages and enhance sector coordination.

Our Wins and Milestones!

1. Registered more than 8,000 farmers (validated over 6,000).
2. Trained over 7,000 farmers (48% women and 69% youth) in Kaduna and Kano states.
3. Initiated partnerships with 20 institutions.
4. Identified 20 innovative technologies for piloting in Ogun and Oyo states.
5. Identified 21 business-to-business linkages and brokered five to increase market accessibility.

STRENGTHENING SME THROUGH NETWORKING

Participation in the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Agribusiness Investment Forum, organized by Innovative Youth in Agriculture, and the 8th EU-Nigeria Business Forum, both held in Lagos, has fostered partnerships and exposed HortiNigeria's potential business champions, both women and youth, to wider networks.

Through the Agribusiness Investment Forum, relationships with financial institutions offering youth-focused packages were initiated. Similarly, given the heterogeneity of the institutions and individuals at the EU-Nigeria Business Forum, business champions were exposed to new networks, enabling them to build the business partnerships necessary for business expansion.

Solokad, Eco-Tutu, Afri-Agri and Hotscotch Chilli are youth and women-managed businesses that participated in the EU-Nigeria Business Forum. According to the business managers, this event pushed them outside of their local communities, breaking barriers and creating opportunities that would not have been achieved independently or within a short period of time. These companies displayed their technologies to onlookers and, in some cases, made sales.



BUILDING AGRIBUSINESS CLUSTERS

Recognizing the critical role Agri-Business Clusters (ABCs) play in enabling a sustainable gender- and youth-inclusive horticulture sector that contributes to food and nutrition security within communities, HortiNigeria is employing the model as one of its key approaches to improve supply of vegetables to markets.

ABCs foster unity and trust among actors operating in diverse activities throughout a value chain. With improved unity and trust, Agri-Business Clusters enhance connections amongst farmers, local entrepreneurs (involved in supplier and channel value chains), bankers (financial services) and business development services invariably increasing income, reinvestment in new production technologies leading to economic growth.

In July, ICRA was contracted to provide an orientation training for identified facilitators, coaches, and cluster actors on ABC, improving their mindset & skill sets.



CHANGE STORY: LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOME

Twenty-nine-year-old Mohammad Yakubu Bubayaro was born near and grew up around the Mile 12 International Market in Lagos State, one of the largest vegetable markets in Africa. His father, Alhaji Mohammed, was the chairman of the market from 1998 to 2002. Thus, Bubayaro was privileged to be exposed to the dynamics of market activities in the horticulture value chain from a young age.

“Several challenges hinder efficient supply and demand of produce, particularly vegetables from the northern part of the country, to the market, which is located in the south, limiting the potential of actors across the value chain,” explained Bubayaro during a visit organized by the HortiNigeria program to the market.

According to Bubayaro, challenges include inadequate logistics, dysfunctional regulation of payments of farmers, lack of reliable market agents, use of raffia baskets by farmers in supplying tomatoes, and revenue and produce loss, among others. With the various components of HortiNigeria aiming to provide solutions to the existing challenges, Bubayaro foresees a partnership that will nurture transformational change, boosting income and improving markets within the horticulture sector.

Bubayaro is one of many young people who employ digital media and information technology solutions to access information on market prices, improving the availability of market information to smallholder farmers. However, to harness the potential within the value chain, Bubayaro seeks to build his capacity, particularly in developing the appropriate network necessary for alleviating supply shortfalls. Therefore, he was delighted to receive an invitation to participate in a vegetable sourcing mission, a collaborative event organized by HortiNigeria and Seeds for Change in Kano State.

The event created networking opportunities for various stakeholders and institutions within the downstream sector of the value chain, including the Centre for Dryland Agriculture (CDA), exposing Bubayaro to commercial nurseries that boost the chances of quality hybrid seed adoption by smallholder farmers. Similarly, business-to-business linkages between farmers and the International Market were established through the event. It is expected that four smallholder farmers will commence supplying cabbage, pepper, and tomato to the International Market in August 2022, with 12,000 crates of tomato expected.

HOW TO PARTNER WITH HORTINIGERIA?

In the upcoming months in 2022 efforts will continue to be made to build partnerships with businesses and institutions within the value chain. To partner with the program, the following requirements must be met:

1. Understand the program's goals and activities in order to identify specific areas of collaboration. See link for an overview of [HortiNigeria](#)
2. Work within a targeted horticulture value chain, such as tomato, onion, okra, cucumber, pepper, cabbage, or watermelon.
3. Work within the program states of intervention – Kaduna, Kano, Ogun, and Oyo states.
4. Be a registered business or institution.
5. Fill out HortiNigeria's inclusive idea form to help the program understand the partnership needs and strengths.

HORTINIGERIA

A SNAPSHOT OF HORTINIGERIA'S IMPACT STORY

It is important to remind stakeholders of the changes the program intends to facilitate on our transformational journey:

1. Catalyze increased productivity for 60,000 smallholder farmers (40% women and 50% youth) who will be exposed to eco-efficient production systems and improved agricultural practices, leading to more than nine million Euros in net income in Kano and Kaduna states.
2. Increase acreage under sustainable land use by 15,000 hectares.
3. Reduce seasonal risks and impacts by piloting innovative production systems with 2,000 entrepreneurial farmers (40% women and 50% youth) in Ogun and Oyo states.
4. Create 1,000 direct jobs (40% women and 50% youth) in agriculture SMEs.
5. Increase access to finance for 50 agriculture-related SMEs, facilitating six million Euros through various financial mechanisms for private SMEs in the agriculture sector.
6. Facilitate 200 business-to-business linkages more than 100 business partnerships.

A Message from the Program Director



Mohammed Salasi
Idris
Program Director,
HortiNigeria.

Dear Stakeholder,

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the inaugural edition of the HortiNigeria newsletter. Through the newsletter, we will keep you updated on the program's activities, allowing you to participate, partner, or get involved in certain activities of specific program components or the program as a whole.

Reflecting on the impressive wins made and lessons learned so far, I am indeed grateful for the collaborative efforts we have had with various stakeholders from both the public and private sector since inception. Our journey to transform the horticulture sector in Nigeria is on track because of your efforts. As we continue on this path, know that we intend to achieve our ambitious goals with you.

The next few months are partnership-focused months. The goal is to keep initiating the partnerships needed to build viable chains within our various states of intervention: Kaduna, Kano, Ogun, and Oyo. To continue to progress, we all need to maintain our vision of ensuring a food- and nutrition-secure nation. Thus, we need to continue to work with you and you with us. Henry Ford said it perfectly: "Coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."

Thank you.