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NANTS – TrustAfrica

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COMMUNIQUE AND REPORT

Training and Capacity Building for Media Practitioners on Agriculture Policies (CAADP, ECOWAP, APP, JSR, BR, NAIP, etc) in Nigeria

Hosted by National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS) in collaboration with TrustAfrica

Abuja, 15th February 2018



Group picture of participants

1.0. Background and Participation

The Media has been popularly known as a catalyst for change being the voice of policy makers, farmers, researchers and various agricultural stakeholders. The media has been identified as a

major stakeholder in the articulation, development and implementation of policies as well as the monitoring of the process and outcomes of such policies. Agriculture. The agriculture sector is one sector that holds a lot for food security, sustainable development and poverty reduction especially for Africa. For this reason, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Programme (CAADP) was developed as a policy framework with commitments from member states to drive the sector and move the continent from food import-dependence to a food-secure status. The CAADP framework was laced with allied instruments to facilitate its effective implementation and monitoring. Similarly, at the regional and national levels, the ECOWAS agriculture policy (ECOWAP) and the Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) are meant to link with the continental framework and draw down impacts on the citizens.

Regrettably, a major chunk of citizens are not aware of these instruments that commit to address challenges impeding their livelihoods. The media therefore has a huge task in effectively communicating the imports and processes of these important policies, provoking public discourse so that the citizens can be able to follow up and track the implementation while also monitoring the impacts or otherwise. To this end, the National Association of Nigerian Traders – NANTS organized a one day training and capacity building workshop in Abuja targeted majorly at the media organizations covering agriculture. The aim of the workshop was to update participants on the relevant policies, demystify their contents, the commitments therein, implications for livelihoods and national development as well as the implementation process and approaches and targeted outcomes/impacts on the citizens.

Thus NANTS in partnership with Trust Africa organized a capacity training and capacity building workshop on agricultural policy instruments (CAADP, JSR, Biennial Review and NAIP) for media organizations to be well knowledgeable on these policy instruments in other to create a public awareness on CAADP.

2.0. Technical sessions

The technical sessions took critical look at the various policy frameworks and issues related to agriculture at the national, regional and continental levels, as follows:

- i. Paper 1, delivered by Dr. Manson Nwafor, an Economist with the ECOWAS/IITA-ReSSAKS dwelt on the Demystification of the APP, NAIP, ECOWAP, CAADP and ancillary instruments implementation in Nigeria.
- ii. Paper 2 which was delivered by Mr Sylvester Baye from Policy and Planning Dept - Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development explored the place of Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the nexus with National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP).
- iii. Paper 3 by Jimoh Babatunde, a Journalist, which expressed the role of the media in the implementation of the APP and CAADP.
- iv. Paper 4, delivered by Gabriel Okeowo which explained Innovative ICTs in Media advocacy for Agriculture Sector

3.0. Participation

The training had in attendance about 40 representatives drawn from various media organizations

including print, electronic, and online media.

4.0. Matters Arising from the Training Session

The capacity building session provided a platform for the media organizations to understand the depth of these policy instruments which facilitate better reporting. The matters arising are:

- i. Understanding the contents and direction of the CAADP
- ii. Bringing Agricultural instruments to the front burner of the media

5.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

At the end of the training session, participants agreed that CAADP truly aims to stimulate and facilitate increased agricultural performance through improvements in policy and institutional environments, access to improved technologies and information, and increased investment financing. In furtherance of the implementation of the CAADP commitments, CAADP Results Framework was developed, for tracking, assessing and reporting progress made under the AU Malabo Declaration. Some of the elements which can as well be described as the key principles of CAADP are Mutual Accountability, Joint Sector Reviews and Biennial Reviews including the national instruments such as the National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIP). It has been observed that some of these instruments sound complex to many farmers, Non-State Actors and the media.

Pursuant to the objectives of the training, the following issues, conclusions and recommendations were adopted:

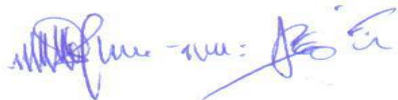
- i. Participants lauded the training and capacity building as a clear provision of the definition, contents, pillars, implications, issues and commitments on the various agriculture policies, namely; the CAADP and its linkage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and specifically on how they are connected to the regional frameworks (ECOWAP) and national policies (the APP and NAIP) as well as their related instruments such as the JSR, BR, MAF, etc.
- ii. Participants noted that over the last 10 to 20 years, a number of policies have been rolled out at global, continental, sub-regional and domestic levels on the agriculture sector. Notable among these are the SDGs, CAADP, ECOWAP and APP respectively; and that many of these policies have not yielded the expected three-pronged result of poverty reduction, food security and sustainable development. Governments at all levels must therefore wake up to the reality of the place of agriculture and implementation of the commitments to drive policy processes and investments thereto in the direction of poor farmers.
- iii. Participants expressed reservation over Nigeria's performance and level of commitment to the implementation of Malabo commitments, especially given that whereas the country was deeply involved in the evolution and development of CAADP (propagated and signed by the former President - Chief Olusegun Obasanjo) making Nigeria a political father of the continental instrument; regrettably, only 2 (namely; (i) commitment to the

CAADP principles and (ii) boosting intra-regional agricultural trade) out of the 7 commitments have been realised. More so, Nigeria scores only 3.4 out of the required minimum threshold of 3.9 percent of the maximum 10 percent benchmark. Similarly, the fact that available statistics shows that about 20% (about 36 million) of Nigerians are go to bed without food is a clear indication of Nigeria's inadequate performance in CAADP, ECOWAP and APP implementation.

- iv. Participants commended the various presentations and lessons learnt and highlighted the need for translating bulky data into infographics as pictorial representations for easy communication to the wider public especially the common man on the street.
- v. Participants also lamented that the subject of improved storage facilities, extension service delivery and the introduction and application of new farming technologies are given poor attention. This is against the backdrop that these are components of CAADP commitments directly linked to reducing postharvest losses in order to address the challenge of food security and imports substitution.
- vi. Participants noted the absence of Journalists in the JSR Steering Committee, and advocated the creation of a coalition of media actors working on agriculture monitoring and reporting. This would be a medium for engaging the JSR and BR activities (with the possibility of creating a *whatsapp* platform for improved interactions among themselves) with a view of properly communicating information on the reports thereof to the wider public and holding governments accountable to the commitments in the extant policies.
- vii. Participants agreed that the media has a responsibility for tracking the agriculture budget especially given that: (i) the commitment to Malabo Declaration of allocating at least 10% of national annual budget to agriculture, and (ii) the agriculture is one key sector where capital budget is higher than recurrent, and must therefore be effectively monitored so as to know the level of implementation and the overall impact on the lives and livelihoods of the citizens.
- viii. Participants resolved to increase the presentation of agric related policy instruments and their implementation process on the front burner of national discourse in order to create the needed awareness for citizens to collectively engage in the effective monitoring thereof, and in holding governments accountable to their commitments.
- ix. While the participants applauded the knowledge gotten on vital policy instruments for facilitating agricultural development, they also encouraged increased and timely re-training on these instruments. The technicalities of these instruments are too vital to be absorbed within one-off training session.
- x. Participants noted the importance of strategic partnership with Non State Actors (particularly the civil society organizations) with the media to achieve the objective of creating more awareness on the agricultural policy instruments.

- xi. Participants agreed on opening up a media platform preferably a website where information on agriculture and related policies shall be regularly hosted. Similarly, to concretize engagements in the agriculture policies at the various level, participants elected 3 members to be headed by Jimoh Bbatunde (Vanguard Newspaper), Gabriel Kuma (Independent Television) and Hauwa Gimba (NTA) as interim administrators.
- xii. For the JSR representation, participants nominated Raliat Yusuf – Deputy Editor of the Leadership Newspaper to regularly attend and represent journalists at the JSR engagements/activities and disseminate to participants accordingly. Participants called on NANTS to assist in facilitating these arrangements by way of possible financial and technical assistance.
- xiii. Participants thanked NANTS and TrustAfrica for their confidence in the media practitioners and commitment in organising the capacity building workshop.

For: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN TRADERS (NANTS)



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With the support of:

