



Nigerian Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services NIFAAS

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REPORT FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONAL POLICY DISCOURSE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 2021

**VENUE: KWARA ADP HALL, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, ILORIN, KWARA
STATE**

TIME: 9: 00AM

Background

The Nigerian forum for Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (NIFAAS) is an umbrella organization of agricultural advisory services (AAS) providers, and stakeholders in Nigeria including the Agricultural Extension Society of Nigeria (AESON). The mission of NIFAAS is to build capacity and empower stakeholders along agricultural value-chain through knowledge-sharing, resource mobilization and skill development for sustainable improvements in agricultural productivity, food and nutrition security and livelihoods.

NIFAAS, through its Foresight & Climate Smart Agriculture Working Group (F&CSWG), organised a policy discourse on the state of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Technologies, Innovations and Management Practices (TIMPS) in North Central Zone, Nigeria. The local organizing committee had its inaugural meeting on the 30th of January, 2021 where it was decided that the zonal policy discourse should come up on Wednesday, the 10th of February, 2021. The meeting was chaired by Dr Sidiqat Aderinoye-Abdulwahab who is North Central Zonal Coordinator for the Policy Discourse. In attendance were four other members: Drs Felicia Olooto, Ololade Abdulrahman, Latifat Olatinwo, and Emmanuel Komolafe. The aim of the policy discourse is to bring stakeholders of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) together to interact, deliberate and come up with policy issues that could be suggested for inclusion in the national/zonal policy.

The policy discourse was held at the Kwara State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) Hall, on the 10th of February, 2021. The activities started with the arrival and registration of the participants.

ATTENDANCE

The discourse drew participants from various stakeholders ranging from: farmers, Ministry of Agriculture, Lower Niger River Basin Development Authority (LNRBDA), Ministry of Environment, Kwara State, Agricultural Development Program (ADP)- Kwara, Kogi, Niger, FCT, Abuja, Benue, and Nasarawa States; Agricultural Research for Management and Training Institute (ARMTI), Nigerian Stored Products Research Institute (NSPRI), Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET), National Cereal Research Institute (NCRI, Badeggi), University Lecturers and Students most especially Post graduates.

The programme kicked off with welcoming of guests while brief introduction of 'who NIFAAS is' was recited by Dr. L. K. Olatinwo. Professor Israel Ogunlade (the North Central Coordinator of NIFAAS), on behalf of the National President, Prof. E. D. Tologbonse declared the event opened. He also explained the purpose of the discourse and charged the participants to contribute meaningfully while generating ideas that will chart a new way for farmers to cope better and adapt to climate change. Prof. Ogunlade further stated that climate change impact has led to a reduction in production level to the extent that production has failed to reach the recommended researched level.

Highlights of the programme

The technical session of the discourse titled: climate smart agricultural (CSA) technologies, innovations and management practices (TIMPS) was anchored by Dr. (Mrs.) Aderinoye-Abdulwahab while the second technical paper was delivered by Mr. Olumoh Abdulrahman from Kwara State Ministry of Environment, Ilorin. Dr Abdulwahab charged stakeholders to encourage farmers to imbibe smart agricultural practices especially those measures that will help to reduce the amount of emissions going back into the environment. Examples of such practices are: mixed farming, agroforestry, planting of cover crops, etc.

Mr Olumoh also emphasised the need for government to enforce afforestation as well as sanctioning those who fall trees indiscriminately. A pre-discourse survey was distributed among participants who were asked questions about CSA-TIMPs. The technical session ended with a question and answer session and the responses were adequately fielded by the facilitators. The discourse, thereafter, went into a breakout session where participants were formed into four groups with one panellist heading each group. The groups reconvened after deliberations on policy issues that arose based on the discussions. The panel discussion was

to come up with actionable roadmaps towards increased uptake and integration of CSA TIMPs into policy in the zone. A post-discourse survey was distributed to the participants in order to be able to measure their level of understanding of the topic of discourse. Dr. O. L. Abdulrahman thanked all the participants, panellists, invited guests and NIFAAS members present and wished them journey mercies to their various destinations.

The State of CSA TIMPs Knowledge and Uptake in the North Central Zone

From the presentations and panel discussion, it was found that farmers in the zone have a moderate knowledge of CSA-TIMPs and are practicing some of them at a very low level. Some CSA-TIMPs identified include; use of improved varieties of crop/livestock (drought-tolerant, disease resistant, flood tolerant, pest resistant, early maturing, etc), irrigation farming, mixed farming and intercropping, mulching, use of cold water to reduce heat stress especially in poultry and use of organic manure (poultry droppings).

Farmers are already carrying out these practices which they may not understand to be CSA-TIMPs. They are doing it but not as a deliberate effort against climate change impact due to low/insufficient knowledge. There is a need for more enlightenment and awareness campaigns so that farmers will have better knowledge of these TIMPs and practice them as a conscious effort to mitigate the effects of climate change. It is when farmers begin to practice these CSA-TIMPs in a conscious and deliberate manner, that their impact can be effective and sustainable towards building resilience to climate change.

Challenges to CSA-TIMPs uptake and Integration of CSA into Policy in the zone

The panel discussion revealed the challenges to CSA-TIMPs uptake in the zone to be high cost of farm tools and equipment required for irrigation system, low coverage of extension activities with untrained and poorly motivated personnel on CSA activities, lack of functional agricultural insurance scheme in situations where farmers incurred losses on their farm. Moreover, culture/tradition was also indicated as one of the challenges that inhibit the uptake of CSA. There is also the need for strong relationship between NIFAAS and NIMET so that first-hand information in terms of prediction of weather condition and its implications on agriculture can be stepped down to farmers through appropriate extension agencies.

It was further identified that CSA uptake and integration of CSA-TIMPs in North Central Zone of Nigeria suffers from poor attitude of policy makers to CSA, bureaucratic bottle neck

and lack of mainstreaming of CSA into the Extension Policy. In light of the discussion, it was highly recommended that awareness campaign and advocacy on CSA should be implemented by ADP/Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, NIFAAS and NGOs through the media and opinion leaders, employment of qualified extension personnel by state ministries with the re-introduction of monthly technical Review Meeting (MTRM) across all ADP zones.

Other challenges identified to be limiting the uptake and integration of CSA in the zone are: inadequate funding of ADPs towards adequate scaling down of weather forecast by the state government through NIMET.

Policy or Practice in the Zone that have integrated CSA issues

There was no record of any policy that has integrated CSA issues in the zone. The only related policy mentioned is that of ban on falling of trees and people may not be aware of the relationship of this policy to CSA-TIMPs. However, several practices as listed in this report points at integration of CSA issues although most of these practices are being done unconsciously.

The meeting thus proffered some actionable roadmap for strengthening the uptake as well as integration of CSA-TIMPs in the extension policy.

Actionable Roadmap to increasing CSA uptake and integration into Policy

S/N	Recommendations	Implementing Body	Resources to be used	Timeline for Implementation
1	Awareness campaign and advocacy on CSA TIMPs	ADP/ Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, NIFAAS and NGOs	Human resources across the agencies, Media and Opinion leaders	2 nd quarter, 2022
2	Enforcement of existing laws that support CSA- TIMPs	Ministry of Environment, Relevant law enforcement agencies	Personnel of the relevant Ministry and law enforcement agencies	2 nd quarter, 2022
3	Budget allocation of minimum of 10% for agriculture and CSA- TIMPs	Policy makers and Legislators, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture	Media and Personnel of relevant institutions	1 st quarter, 2022
4	Use of e-extension, community radio and training	Government at all levels/ Research institutes/Radio stations	Media; Mass and Social, Extension agents	1 st quarter, 2022
5	Creation of CSA Departments/Stations in each state	Ministries	Staff in the Ministries	2 nd quarter, 2022
6	Commercial farmers should incorporate CSA	Ministries/ADPs/Commercial farmers	ADPs/Commercial farmers	1 st quarter, 2022
7	Smart Ranching/Controlled grazing	Ministry/ seed industry/ researchers/Feed industry/	Staff of relevant organizations	2 Years
8	Adequate funding of ADP towards adequate scaling down of weather forecast	State governments	NIMET Information	3 rd quarter, 2021
9	Intervention such as MTRM should be reintroduced across all ADP zones	State government/Donor agencies	Standard ADP hall, mobility	First quarter of 2022
10	Employment of qualified extension agents	State governments	ADP staff	First quarter 2022

RESULTS: PRE-EVALUATION SURVEY (NORTH CENTRAL)

Results of the survey conducted during the training of NIFAAS CSA TIMPs in North Central zone are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The pre-discourse survey on CSA-TIMPs (Table 1) showed that participants were relevant stakeholders in the field of agriculture which included researchers, civil servants from Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, Extension agency (ADP), farmers and others who were from related private agencies. Though, appreciable number of participants were already aware of some of the CSA-TIMPs; 56.8% indicated they have average level of knowledge of these practices. As regards CSA policy in the North Central zone, 97.3% of the participants were not aware of any CSA policy in North Central zone, as only one 1 participant indicated the awareness of ban on deforestation. This is an indication of little or lack of existence of CSA-TIMPs in the policies in states of the North Central Zone. The results further showed that acquisition of more knowledge and skills about CSA-TIMPs, boosting of knowledge about Climate Change and CSA practices, to generate and come up with suggestions for CSA policy document, were the leading expectations of participants before the discourse.

Table 1: Pre-Survey: Policy Discourse in North Central Nigeria

Variables	Freq. (n=37)	Percentage%
Occupation		
Farming	6	16.2
Civil servant (Ministry of Agriculture/Environment)	4	10.8
Researcher	19	51.4
Extension agency (ADP)	4	10.8
Private agency	3	8.1
Others	1	2.7
Have you heard about CSA before now? (Yes)	32	86.5
Knowledge level of CSA before now		
Very low	5	13.5
Low	4	10.8
Average	21	56.8
High	7	18.9
Awareness of any CSA policy in North Central zone (No)	36	97.3
List of CSA policy aware of in North Central zone		
Ban on deforestation	1	2.7
Awareness of CSA TIMPs (Yes)	32	86.5
List of CSA TIMPs aware of		
Soil management practices	28	75.7
Crop management practices	25	67.6
Use of improve crop varieties	31	83.8
Water conservation strategies	22	59.5

Pest and diseases management practices	23	62.2
Weed management practices	20	54.1
Mixed farming	23	62.2
Agroforestry	16	43.2
Ranching	15	40.5
Grassland intensification	4	10.8
Controlled grazing	17	45.9
Expectations of the policy discourse		
How farmer can adoption of CSA practices	1	2.7
Acquisition of more knowledge and skills about CSA TIMPs	13	35.1
Acquisition of knowledge and promotion of CSA practices	2	5.4
Better understanding on inclusion of CSA into workable policy to build resilience to CC impact	3	8.1
Boost my knowledge about Climate Change and CSA practices	5	13.5
Developed actionable strategies for youths and women to adopt CSA practices	1	2.7
How adoption CSA technologies could increase agricultural produce	2	5.4
Mainstreaming CSA into agricultural policy and practices	2	5.4
Produce policy roadmap for CSA in agriculture	2	5.4
To generate and come up with suggestions for CSA policy document	5	13.5
Improved knowledge of agric. Climate technologies	1	2.7

REPORT: POST EVALUATION POLICY DISCOURSE SURVEY

The discourse served as an eye opener for participants as results showed that many of the stakeholders had limited knowledge of certain climate smart technology innovations and management practices. Results of the post-survey data as illustrated in Table 2 indicated that the discourse was helpful in improving the knowledge of all participants on CSA-TIMPs, as there was significant increase in percentage of participants that indicated improved knowledge in the CSA-TIMPs in grassland intensification, ranching and agroforestry that were previously not known among majority of the participants. A t-test analysis of difference between participants' knowledge before and after the CSA-TIMPs discourse further established that there was a positive significant increase in knowledge of all the CSA-TIMPs after the discourse at $p \leq 0.01$ level. It can therefore be concluded that the discourse on CSA-TIMPs has a positive implication on the relevant stakeholders that participated in the discourse.

Table 1: Awareness of Participants on CSA TIMPs in North Central zone

CSA TIMPs	Before discourse (n=37)	After discourse (n=44)	t-test of difference @95% interval of the Difference		
	f (%)	f (%)	Mean diff.	t-value	p-value
Soil Management Practices	28 (75.7)	40 (90.9)	.273	4.016*	0.000
Crop Management Practices	25 (67.6)	38 (86.4)	.295	4.246*	0.000
Use of Improve Crop Varieties	31 (83.8)	41 (93.2)	.227	3.556*	0.001
Water Conservation Strategies	22 (59.5)	38 (86.4)	.364	4.957*	0.000
Pest/Diseases Management practices	23 (62.2)	38 (86.4)	.341	4.716*	0.000
Weed Management Practices	20 (54.1)	36 (81.8)	.364	4.957*	0.000
Mixed Farming	23 (62.2)	29 (65.9)	.136	2.606*	0.013
Agroforestry	16 (43.2)	35 (79.5)	.432	5.717*	0.000
Ranching	15 (40.5)	31 (70.5)	.364	4.957*	0.000
Grassland Intensification	4 (10.8)	28 (63.6)	.545	7.183*	0.000
Controlled Grazing	17 (45.9)	32 (72.7)	.341	4.716*	0.000

*Significant difference at $p < 0.01$

CONCLUSION

The discourse was overwhelmingly applauded as it served as a knowledge hub for majority of participants who were not even fully aware of the consequences of climate change. Participants were of the opinion that farmers may be practicing, albeit unconsciously, some CSA-TIMPs; there is a low level of their awareness of the grave consequences of climate change. Participants from ADPs in the zone concluded that the CSA-TIMPs would be stepped down to extension agents so that they can consolidate the efforts of NIFAAS at strengthening the uptake of CSA-TIMPs in their zones.

Participants also opined that lack of fund and political will are among the challenges that may hinder the roles they intended to play. They therefore, charged NIFAAS to work on creating a synergy between Government and all stakeholders in order to strengthen the uptake of CSA-TIMPs through massive awareness and advocacy drives as well as strive at integrating CSA in the extension policy. NIFAAS can achieve this by putting in an un-relented effort at influencing policy implementers through similar programmes but which will stress on sensitization and advocacy.

Appendix ii Group photograph of participants



The Panellist for the Policy Discourse.



Some of the participants in a group photograph.