

# YEASA

## NEWSLETTER

# Inception Workshop of the IFAD, ABUAD, IITA, AfricaRice and UAC project on Youth Employment in Agri-business and Sustainable Agriculture (YEASA) funded by IFAD

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The three-year project which targets 1000 unemployed youth (650 from Nigeria and 350 from Benin Republic) is now at inception at Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) on June 30 - July 3, 2019. The overall goal of the project is improving rural livelihoods of the youth living on agriculture and agriculture-based enterprises. The objective is to train the youth for enhanced technical, business/entrepreneurial skills for increased incomes and creation of employment opportunities both in Nigeria and Benin Republic.

The Founder of ABUAD welcomed all partners, stakeholders and everyone to the event as he stated his passion for agriculture right from his childhood and how his life and time on the farm in his early years have been the fulcrum upon which his subsequent successes and achievements in various spheres of life rested. He emphasized the role of discipline as a critical ingredient required to achieve success. He disclosed that ABUAD is a not for profit university which he decided to establish so it could serve as a model on how functional university should run after experiencing firsthand the challenges faced by public universities, especially University of Lagos, Nigeria during his tenure as Pro-Chancellor of the university.



Group Photo at the inception: IFAD representatives, ABUAD, IITA and AfricaRice

A delegation from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), led by Dr Malu Muia Ndavi, IFAD Lead Technical Specialist on his part thinks that Africa needs to pull back and re-examine her model of education as he praised the founder of ABUAD and suggested that other universities in Nigerian and Africa should make ABUAD their model.

### YEASA Project Inception Workshop 2019 Key Objectives:

- Overview of IFAD project life cycle: Inform on documentation to be submitted at each stage of the cycle.
- Annual Work Plan and Budgets Procurement Plans compliant with IFAD guidelines: Obtain IFAD no-objections.
- Withdrawal Applications and Statement of Expenditures: Obtain timely disbursements.
- Financial and project Audit Reports: Comply with the new IFAD requirements.
- Progress Report on technical and knowledge management achievements: Allow straightforward performance monitoring.
- Project overview and action plan: A detailed start-up work plan presented to emphasize implementation arrangement and operations work plan.
- Terms of the project partnership (collaboration modalities and sub-agreements).

The IFAD team leader Dr Malu Ndavi stated the concerns of IFAD about youth unemployment and went down memory lane regarding the IFAD/ABUAD project. He is of the opinion that like the founder of ABUAD, IFAD looks far ahead on how to tackle the problem of youth unemployment in Africa, hence this project. He also stated that the project is a product of mission, ambition and aspiration of all stakeholders and expressed his concerns on reasons why he could be pessimistic about the success of the project; however, he stated his optimism about the success of the project and advised that the trainings be formalized for youths so that the project could serve its purpose of providing jobs and increasing incomes for youths in the rural areas.

Dr Malu suggested that success in the current project could serve as a catalyst for bigger projects and thereby urged the Project Manager, Professor Amos Onasanya to be confident and steer the wheels of the project to the right direction and stated that ABUAD would be the first university to partner with IFAD on such projects and that he looks forward to a long term partnership between both institutions.

Prof Amos Onasanya, doubled The Project Manager presented on Project Overview and Action Plan and gave background information on the project as regards the objectives of the project which includes tackling youth unemployment, improved income generation and livelihood of 1000 youths in both Nigeria and Republic of Benin with a male: female ratio of 65:35. He stated that the project also aims to enhance business and entrepreneurial skills of youths while the expected outcome involves number of youths empowered. He also stated that the project would have a linkage with existing projects in both target countries. He mentioned that a total of 780 youths would receive the starter pack of \$500 provided by the project. He also presented a table showing the distribution of the number of youths to be trained by each partner and the number of youths that would benefit from the starter packs across the three centers.

The agreement were reached on the revised terms of selections, Oyo and Ekiti States were finally selected states in Nigeria while Parakou and Cotonou were selected regions in Republic of Benin. Prof Amos indicated the commodities each of the partner institutions would train youths on: **ABUAD** – mango, moringa, feedmill, fishery and equipment and machinery fabrication; **IITA** – cassava, soybean/cowpea, plantain, maize and equipment and machinery fabrication; **AfricaRice** – rice (both paddy and seed) and equipment and machinery fabrication. Trainings would be given on each of these commodities and the associated value-addition.



At the dinner: IFAD, IITA and AfricaRice