

# COMMUNIQUE

The Southern Sensitization Workshop for Stakeholders in the sugar sub-sector organized by the National Sugar Development Council (NSDC) was held at Grand Hotel Convention Center and Resort Asaba, Delta State, on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>, October 2011. The theme of the Workshop was ***“The Nigerian Sugar Master Plan: Potential Contribution to Economic Development”***.

The Chairman of the Occasion was Senator Nenadi Esther Usman, Chairman, Senate Committee on Investment and Industries Abuja, who was ably represented by the Vice Chairman, Senator Ibrahim Musa, while the special Guest of Honour was the Honourable Commissioner for Commerce and Industries, Delta State, Mr. Kingsley Eze Emu. The Keynote address titled ***“The Potential of Sugar Value Chain in the Revitalization of Nigerian Economy”*** was delivered by Mr. Femi Boyede, Chief Consultant, Koinonia Ventures Limited, Lagos, who was represented by Mr. H. Kolawole, NSDC.

Goodwill messages were also delivered by Honorable Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Delta State who was represented by Mrs Stella Ovie Egede, Senator Gbenga Obadara, member, Senate Committee on Investment and Industries, Abuja, Mr. F.J. Osemekhe, CEO Palfid Ventures Nigeria Limited, Abuja. Alhaji Idris Momodu, Vice Chairman Nigeria Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), Delta State and Mr. Alex Aligbe (Sugar Scientist). Other Goodwill message came from Chief (Mrs) Rita Lori and Apostle T. Bunu.

The workshop attracted participants from both Private and Public Sectors of Nigerian economy. They include organized private sector (OPS), technocrats, the academias, as well as farmers.

Three papers were presented by carefully selected Resource Persons;

1. Creating Enabling Environment for Sugar Investment in Nigeria by Dr. Silas Agbana – former Agric Manager, Josepdam Sugar Company Limited, Bacita
2. The problems and prospects of establishing New Sugar Industries in a Developing Economy by Engr. Braimah Ogunwale, Dangote Sugar Refinery Apapa, Lagos.
3. Financing the Sugar Value Chain in Nigeria: The Role of the DFI, Banks and Financial Institutions by Ms Evelyn Oputu, MD/CEO, Bank of Industry, Lagos. She was ably represented by Mr. Ibrahim K. Ahmed, Zonal Manager, BOI, Asaba Zonal Office.

After a lively discussion on the various papers presented by the resource persons participants adopted the following resolutions:

- Nigeria must have a clearly defined sugar policy on a long term basis and to be widely disseminated to Stakeholder to attract investors into the Industry;
- Sugar tariff should be reviewed upward, as obtainable in other sugar producing Countries to protect local industries;

- Participants noted lack of awareness by other foreign investors on the Nigerian sugar potentials and the need to intensify efforts in this regard;
- Establishment of the National Sugar Production target: The Council should be empowered to be involved in all aspects of sugar business e.g. production, marketing, export etc;
- NSDC should be well funded and the Raw sugar import levy restored and the proceeds made available to NSDC to enable it play its role in the development of the Sugar Industry.
- Government should be ready to provide intervention funds, feasibility studies and investment guarantee;
- All Sugar Refineries should be given specific targets for phasing out importation of raw sugar and intensify backward integration drive for Nigeria to benefit maximally from the sugar sub sector;
- Participants urged the Bank of Industry and other DFI's to intensify efforts to address the problem of the inaccessibility to funds in their possession for development of the sugar sector;
- Sugar sector must be accorded the necessary priority by the Federal Government if the country intends to achieve the target of the vision 20-2020 of 100% self sufficiency in sugar production;
- Participants noted that with the present national focus on Agricultural sector, Federal and State Government should truly re-invigorate the sugar sectors by providing the necessary infrastructure to create enabling environment for investors;
- Participants noted that outgrowers scheme is a vital instrument for transformation of the sugar sector. Therefore the Federal Government in conjunction with Private Investors should endeavour to establish more outgrowers scheme in potential sugarcane growing areas by providing them with improved varieties and also micro credit to support the development of the sector;
- Stakeholders emphasized the need to ensure that Government provides minimum guaranteed price mechanism. The State Government and the Investors should be encouraged in PPP arrangement to establish sugar factories particularly in the South-South and South East.

**National Sugar Development Council,  
Abuja  
25<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**