

## COMMUNIQUE

The 2011 Northern Sensitization Workshop for Stakeholders in the Sugar Sub-Sector organized by the National Sugar Development Council (NSDC) was held at Kwara Hotel, Ahmadu Bello Avenue, Ilorin, Kwara State, on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2011. The theme of the Workshop was “ *The Nigerian Sugar Master Plan: Potential Contribution to Economic Development*”.

2. The occasion was presided over by HRH, Alhaji A.K. Abdullahi, the Etsu Tsaragi, Former Chairman, NSDC Governing Board, Abuja, while the Special Guest of Honour was Alhaji Umar Bawa Aliyu, Honourable Commissioner for Industry and Solid Minerals, Kwara State who was ably represented by Mrs. Aramide Oyeyemi, Director, Industries, Ministry of Industry and Solid Minerals, Kwara State. The keynote address titled: ” The Potential of Sugar Value Chain in the Revitalization of the Nigeria Economy” was delivered by Mr David Adulugba, Executive Director Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Abuja represented by Mr. Chris Mbamalu, Federal of Ministry Trade and Investment, Abuja.

3. Goodwill messages were delivered by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Makurdi, Benue State, Prince Andy A. Uwouku, Honourable Commissioner for Industry and Solid Minerals, Kwara State who was represented by Mrs. Aramide Oyeyemi Director, Industries, Dr. A.C. Wada, NCRI Badeggi; Dr. J.O. Olaniyan, Unilorin Sugar Research Institute, Ilorin and Mr. Daniel Ekele, FCT Agriculture Secretariat, Abuja.

4. The Sensitization workshop attracted participants from both private and public sectors of Nigerian economy including Organized Private Sector (OPS), Technocrats, Research Institutes, Academia’s, as well as Sugarcane Farmers. Other notable participants include Royal fathers.

5. Three (3) papers delivered at the workshop were as follows:

- Creating Enabling Environment for Sugar Investment in Nigeria by – Alhaji Ahmed Song – MD/CEO Kelele Nigeria Limited, Yola
- The Problems and Prospects of Establishing New Sugar Industries in a Developing Economy by – Alhaji Abdullahi Suleiman – Former MD/CEO Savannah Sugar Company Limited, Numan
- Financing the Sugar Value Chain in Nigeria: The Role of DFIs, Bank and Financial Institutions by Paul Eluhiwe, Director, Development Finance Department, Central Bank of Nigeria, Abuja represented by Dr. M.A. Olaitan.

6. After lively discussion on the various papers presented by the resource persons, participants adopted the following resolutions.

- Government should adopt the proposed Nigerian Sugar Master Plan (NSMP) for implementation as a National Strategy to enhance productivity of the sugar sub-sector.
- Government should be ready to provide intervention funds, feasibility studies, and investment guarantee and create necessary awareness of these packages to farmers in the sugar sub-sector as incentives to stimulate investment.
- Stakeholders stressed the need for Government to increase funding of Research and Development in order to harness the huge benefits inherent in the Sugar Value Chain
- Participants called on Government at all levels to create the necessary enabling environment such as input and infrastructural support as well as favourable tariff regime in order to boost Investment in local sugar production.
- Current Sugar Levy and Tariff rates should be reviewed upwards to discourage dumping of imported cheap sugar so as to encourage local sugar production.
- Participants called on Government to demonstrate strong political will to ban or stop further establishment of sugar refineries in order to stimulate investment in the production of sugarcane, the main raw material for sugar production locally for the purpose of creating employment.

- All stakeholders, both private and public should be involved in sustained sensitization/enlightenment campaign with all sincerity to encourage investment in the industry.
- Sugar Refineries should be encouraged to intensify efforts on their Backward Integration Programme and phase out the importation of raw sugar within a specific time-line.
- Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of privatized sugar companies so far and therefore called on NSDC and BPE to monitor the activities of these companies to ensure compliance with their post acquisition plan.
- Participants identified inconsistency/poor implementation of Government Policies as the bane of Nigeria's development and therefore urged for sustenance of popular policies that are capable of improving the general well-being of the citizens in terms of employment generation, poverty alleviation etc.
- Participants also noted that land acquisition by private investors from the Communities could be very difficult and therefore recommended that government should facilitate the process of land acquisition through active involvement of the host communities.
- Stakeholders urged the Central Bank, Bank of Industry and other DFIs to intensify efforts to sensitize the public about their products and address the problem of inaccessibility to the pool of funds in their portfolio for the development of the sugar sub-sector by setting up Agricultural Desks in all Financial Institutions.

**National Sugar Development Council, Abuja.**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2011**