

## COMMUNIQUE

The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted Sugar as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most important commodity after rice and wheat in its strategic food policy as a major component of the vision 2020. In line with this, the Northern Region Sensitization Workshop organized by the National Sugar Development Council for stakeholders in the Sugar Sub-Sector was held at Tahir Guest Palace in Kano State on Tuesday, 21st September 2010, and declared open by the Special Guest of Honour, Commissioner of Commerce and Industry, Kano State, Alhaji Ahmed Ibrahim Yakassai. The theme of the Workshop is ***“Sugar Sector Contributions to the 20:2020 Vision : Nigerian Sugar Master Plan (NSMP) Strategy.***

The Chairman of the Workshop was Hon. Solomon Agidani, Chairman House Committee on Industries. The Keynote address was delivered by Alh. Ahmed Song, Managing Director/Chief Consultant, Kelele Nigeria Limited, Yola. Goodwill messages were also delivered by the Hon. Commissioner of Commerce and Industries, Gombe State, the Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture, Adamawa State and the Vice Chancellor Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. A diverse Stakeholder that includes private companies, technocrats and farmers participated in the Workshop.

Four papers delivered by carefully selected Resource Persons included:

1. Self-Sufficiency in Sugar Production the NSMP Strategy by Alh. Suleiman Abdullahi, former MD Savannah Sugar Company, Numan .
2. NSMP Lessons and Experiences of other Sugar Producing Countries by Mr. Hamed Alsharief, former Project Manager Kenana Engineering and Technical Services, Sudan.

3. Policy and Legal Framework for the Effective Implementation of the NSMP by Mr. Femi Boyede, Chief Consultant, Koinonia Nigeria Limited, Lagos.
4. Financing the NSMP: The Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Options, by Ms Evelyn Oputu, Managing Director, Bank of Industry (BOI), Lagos.

The papers were thoroughly discussed by the participants after which the following resolutions were reached:

- ❖ Going by experiences of other nations with well developed sugar sector like Australia, Mauritius, Kenya, Sudan, Brazil, etc, sugar is highly regulated in terms of production and marketing as it relates to import and export etc. The need to empower the NSDC, the focal regulatory agency on sugar in Nigeria was therefore, reiterated.
- ❖ Participants noted that the Nigerian Sugar Master Plan provides the required road-map towards the achievement of self-sufficiency in national sugar requirement and should therefore, be supported fully through adequate funding by Federal Government to succeed.
- ❖ Participants recognized the importance of sugarcane farmers in the process of achieving national self-sufficiency in sugar and advocated for adequate incentives support in terms of land development, loan facility, price support mechanism and provision of farm inputs to enable them produce sugarcane in the required quantity.
- ❖ The need to give sugar the required priority and making it the 1<sup>st</sup> in the food policy ranking of Federal Government followed by rice and wheat, in that order was stressed by the participants.

- ❖ Participants recognized that investment in sugar is highly capital intensive and therefore, stressed the need for the Federal Government to provide the necessary infrastructure support such as road to create access and dams to provide irrigation water for sugarcane, to reduce the investment cost
- ❖ Participants suggested that development banks such as Bank of Industry and NACRDB should be more responsive to the loan requirement needs of both the farmers and prospective investors.