

## CONCLUSIONS AND COMMUNIQUE

### Conclusions

Each of the plenary session was followed with interactive session with respect to questions, clarifications and comments on the papers presented. Speakers and presenters equally had the opportunities to react to questions, comments and other input from the audience. These and others guided the forum in coming up with the Communique or resolutions of the 2 days forum.

### Communique

Participants bemoaned the seemingly low participation and involvement of Government, especially Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development in such an event wherein the issue of rice, an important subject is the focus. The organizers were equally charged to make more efforts to secure government attention in subsequent editions.

Furthermore, the communiqué agreed upon by the participants at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nigeria Rice Investment Forum that was held on 6 – 7 December, 2016 at Ladi Kwali Hall, Abuja Sheraton Hotel & Towers include:

- i. The efforts of government to diversify the nation's economy from her over dependence on oil to other sector, particularly agriculture because of its potential, was lauded and encouraged to sustain.
- ii. Rice has become undoubtedly, the most important staple in Nigeria with the resultant huge foreign exchange to meet the shortfall in supply. Therefore, government and other stakeholders should sustain and improve on the current efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and exportation on or before 2018.
- iii. Private sector participation is very important to the nation's 2018 self-sufficiency in rice target.

- iv. Government should at all times, carry the private sector along and other stakeholders in the design and formulation of policies and strategies for the growth of the rice sector.
- v. Enhanced paddy production is very critical to self-sufficiency in rice production. It should not therefore be relegated in efforts to increase integrated rice mills.
- vi. Government should adequately fund the National Cereals Research Institute Badeggi (NCRI) as well as all other research institutions on rice and agriculture across the country.
- vii. There is need for effective coordination of efforts between the research institutions/universities and actors in the rice value chain for effective dissemination and adoption of research results.
- viii. There is urgent need to further develop the seeds sector if 2018 self-sufficiency in rice will be a reality.
- ix. Low demand hinders the desired growth in the nation's input sector. Government therefore needs to review its purchasing strategies and preferably dealing more directly with the input providers.
- x. Right Practices and Technologies are synonymous to enhanced yields and improved quality.
- xi. A more transparent and effective commodity buy-back scheme is being suggested to boost rice production.
- xii. Smallholders' actors (farmers, processors and marketers) in the nation's rice value chain are very important to the achievement of self-sufficiency in rice and therefore require all the support from government and other stakeholders.
- xiii. There is need to revive the agricultural extension services for its important role with respect to the dissemination of

modern practices, technologies and methods to the rural farmers.

- xiv. The current tempo with respect to the out growers' scheme in the rice value chain should be sustained and improved upon.
- xv. CBN's Anchor Borrowers Programme (ABP) is lauded as a desirable intervention. The Apex Bank however needs to review and improve on its feedback mechanism to be more prompt in dealing with complaints from participants, especially the rural farmers.
- xvi. Standards and Codes of Practices are essential to competitiveness of the Nigeria Rice Industry. SON and other bodies involved in this respect need to conclude efforts without further delay.
- xvii. NCAM need to be adequately funded for effectiveness in the provision of simple, efficient and locally fabricated machineries for the nation's rice value chain.
- xviii. Rather than outright ban on importation of rice, increased tariffs and other fiscal measures are being suggested.
- xix. Land tenure system under the Land Use act hinders desire development of agriculture in the country and should therefore be amended.
- xx. Frequent and effective dialogues are being suggested to put to an end, the issue of insecurity of farmers, especially, the constant clashes with herdsman.