Consistent with the economic diversification strategy of the Federal Government, Agriculture was selected as the main driver of the strategic vision of the Badarz administration. With the slogan "Farming is a Business", His Excellency was able to galvanize the people, particularly the youths, into a sector that was beset with a myriad of challenges - age-old model of subsistence agriculture characterized by small-farm holdings, high-level drudgery, inadequate extension services, ineffective response to periodic pest and disease outbreaks and inadequate access to high quality agricultural inputs.

This created an uncompetitive environment with low productivity, leaving the farmers wallowing in a vicious cycle of abject poverty from generation to generation. This is despite the huge comparative advantage enjoyed by the State including its 1.8 million hectares of cultivable land with over 0.4 million hectares of this being fertile FADAMA suitable for all-year round cultivation and huge reservoir of water and able-bodied youths.

Our first point of action was to develop an all encompassing agricultural policy and master plan that will provide a platform for transforming the agricultural landscape to impact on the local economy through improved productivity and value addition in production and post harvest processing. We were able to achieve this all important milestone with the technical assistance of DFID programs (SPARC, PERL, ENABLE2 and GEMS3) operating in the State.

The key objectives of the plan are to:

- Develop Agriculture along value chains
- Promote opportunities in the State for private investments
- Strengthen extension, Research and Development (R & D) in Agriculture
- Mainstream youths, women and other vulnerable groups in agriculture for employment generation and poverty reduction
- Increase irrigated land, water and alternative energy infrastructure for agriculture
- Increase level of mechanization in agriculture
- Adopt a cluster approach to aggregate small holder farmers for better management in input provision to balance the demand for large scale agri-investors with local land holder interests
THE CLUSTER FARMING INITIATIVE

The Cluster Program was established to refocus the subsistence mindset of the small holder farmer and open his eyes to the commercial potential of his farming activity. A State wide slogan of “Farming is a Business” was adopted and made the catch phrase for all activities of the Agriculture ministry in the State.

The cluster farming initiative reflects the steps taken by Jigawa State to attain the sustainable development in the agriculture sector through improvements in small scale agricultural development focusing on precision quality, input provision to poor farmers and targeted extension service to attain huge improvements in yield.

The Jigawa State Government took the initiative of registering individual small holder farmers and clustering them for target input provision and extension service.

At inception, a maximum cluster size of 50 Hectares was formed in each of the 287 wards in the state with a maximum of 5 sub clusters where a 50 hectare contiguous lot is not feasible with input provision in the form of quality seeds, fertilizer and pesticide. So far, a total of 1,306 clusters were established with 64,184 farmers participating. Average farm size was 0.8 Ha per farmer.

Results so far indicate that there has been a significant improvement in the yield of crops currently being supported under the cluster program. For instance, the average yield of rice has increased from 2.4 ton per hectare to about 5.1 tons for rice with some cluster recording yields as high as 8.0 tons. The same can be said of sesame, groundnut and wheat whose yield have increased to 0.5 tons per hectare for sesame; and 0.9 ton per hectare for groundnuts were achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>CROP</th>
<th>Average Yield – Farmer Practice (T/Ha)</th>
<th>Average Yield – Trained Cluster Farmer (T/Ha)*</th>
<th>Percentage increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>G/nut</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sesame</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: * - Maximum yields recorded for rice, groundnuts and sesame were 8.1 MT/Ha, 1.4 MT/Ha and 1.04 Mt/Ha respectively
## CROP PRODUCTION TREND IN MT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>2014/2015 (Metric Tons)</th>
<th>2015/2016 (Metric Tons)</th>
<th>2016/2017 (Metric Tons)</th>
<th>2017/2018 (Metric Tons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice (wet and dry seasons)</td>
<td>92,300</td>
<td>257,200</td>
<td>352,900</td>
<td>441,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millet</td>
<td>481,200</td>
<td>505,300</td>
<td>535,500</td>
<td>546,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>686,900</td>
<td>721,300</td>
<td>900,100</td>
<td>927,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GroundNuts</td>
<td>66,900</td>
<td>70,200</td>
<td>100,100</td>
<td>98,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame</td>
<td>59,400</td>
<td>62,400</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>74,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## EXTENSION SERVICE

Extension service is considered germane to the success of any agricultural intervention. In view of this, this administration began the identification, adaptation and dissemination of technologies on crops, livestock, fisheries and agro processing with desired results being witnessed in terms of yield and productivity. The provision of 450 motorcycles and capacity building exercise for Extension workers across the State ensured that investments in agricultural research achieve the desired impacts even in hard to reach areas of the State.

*His Excellency, Governor Muhammad Bello, Flagging off the distribution of 450 motorcycles to agric-extension service workers.*
**VALUE ADDITION**

Apart from rice and sugar mills at various stages of completion, the Government has also encouraged value addition to export crops like sesame and hibiscus by encouraging exporters to engage cluster groups for farm gate purchase which affords a better price for the farmer. These crops are then warehoused in a government provided facility for cleaning, sorting and bagging for export.

This arrangement has resulted in WACOT Ltd expanding its cut grower arrangement from 200 hectares in 2015 to 5,000 hectares for the 2017 season with 16,000 ha of sesame in the 2018 season. This has encouraged new entrants like Aaxon Link Limited to set up a sesame cleaning facility and agriculture export terminal in Andanza, Dutse.

TOONS limited is entering into the same arrangement for Hibiscus processing to assure quality assurance following the near ban on Nigerian Hibiscus by Mexico which is our largest market. In the same vein, Iya Foods LLC is exploring opportunities for hibiscus value addition for export to the United States of America.

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**POLITICAL WILL**

The agricultural sector being the economic backbone of Jigawa State has enjoyed tremendous support from the present administration. Budgetary allocation, for example, increased from a paltry 2.9 billion in 2015 to N90.0bn in 2018 (a significant 210% increase).

In consolidating the gains recorded so far in the agricultural sector, the Government is strengthening the existing institutions for efficient service delivery and sustainability of current programmes. For instance, the recapitalization of the State Inputs Supply Company, JASCO has brought more liquidity into the company thereby, guaranteeing the availability of input and farm machinery to farmers across the State. Also worthy of mention is the repositioning of Jigawa Research Institute and the establishment of the State technical committee on Agriculture. The Committee, which is headed by His Excellency the Governor meets on a weekly basis to evaluate and improve on the implementation of agricultural interventions State wide.

The support given by the Government to the agriculture sector has led to strings of achievements in the sector as already recorded in the cluster and value addition initiatives. Some of the other achievements are highlighted below:

1. Cultivated irrigation land increased from about 40,000ha in 2014/2015 to over 100,000ha in 2017/2018. 5,500 tube wells drilled across the State to improve crop irrigation

2. Over 15,000 simple farm equipment such as planters, rice mills, harvesters, sprayers, water pumps, threshers etc. provided to farmers

3. 26,930.25mt fertilizer and 58,445 t/kg of assorted agrochemicals, purchased and distributed /sold to farmers by JASCO.

4. 2,158.95 MTs of seeds of cereals and legumes produced and sold to Jigawa state farmers by JASCO

5. To protect crops from destruction, the State conducted aerial spray against Quelea birds 3 times in frontline LGAs.

6. Government’s vision to improving fishing in the State is being actualized with the distribution of fishing gears and canoes to fishermen, dams being restocked with fingerlings and the introduction of annual fishing festival in Hadaje

7. 3,282,731 heads of livestock (cattle, sheep/goat, dogs and poultry) vaccinated from 2015-2018
Some of the handheld harvesters distributed to farmers in the State.

Mobile planters distributed to farmers in the State.

Sprayers and pesticides procured by JASCO for farmers in the State.

Annual fishing festival at Kalgwai.

One of the trained crop protection agents working to control stem borer and armyworm in the State.