



CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT GROUP

Public and Private Collaboration Addresses Transport Challenges

What is 1,149 kilometres long and helps feed the nation? If you guessed the road and rail network extending from Lagos through Ogun, Oyo, Kwara, Niger, Kaduna and Kano states to the Jibiya border in Katsina State, you are correct. To address constraints in the transport network, USAID/MARKETS has established a management group for this critical Lagos-Kano-Jibiya (LKJ) Corridor.

Corridor management groups (CMGs) are well known in Africa for bringing together government and the private sector in a single body to identify, discuss and resolve problems associated with transport along a defined route or corridor. Such a structure provides a forum where members can debate solutions and define priorities, working together to make improvements - something not easily achieved by stakeholders working in isolation.

A CMG benefits both government and the private sector. Private sector members such as hauliers raise concerns directly with government agencies including traffic law enforcers, road agencies or police. Hauliers identify where road conditions are deteriorating and help road agencies prioritise where urgent maintenance actions may be carried out. Similarly, law enforcers will be advised of traffic congestion and delays, so that prompt action is taken to smooth traffic flows.

Likewise, through a CMG, government agencies talk directly to industries and groups under their regulatory authority. Road safety officers can consult and advise on efforts to conduct safety enforcement and secure better cooperation from industry in terms of adhering

to vehicle and driver safety standards.

CMGs also undertake research and information dissemination, helping members plan business operations or conduct regulatory research. CMGs may gather data on common operational problems and then disseminate this information to help transporters plan journeys based on road conditions, delays, accident black spots and areas where there are security concerns. Similarly, such data are useful for government agencies in addressing road safety, focusing resources where the need is greatest.



Improved road safety and reduced informal check points are benefits that may be brought about through the Corridor Management Group.

Each corridor is different and hence the issues and priorities addressed by CMGs also differ. MARKETS has sponsored two CMG workshops since November 2009. These workshops identified stakeholders interested in joining the CMG and defined the group's core activities. The organizational structure was debated and a proposal is expected shortly.

MARKETS will continue to coordinate the establishment of the LKJ CMG through 2010. A core Advisory Group is being assembled to lead the initiative and a follow-up workshop will be held in May to finalize the formation of the CMG and adopt a work plan for future activities. It is hoped that, through ongoing participation of the Government, parastatals and the private sector, this initiative will replicate the success of other corridors throughout Africa. Readers interested in participating in the CMG or receiving further information are encouraged to contact the USAID MARKETS Transport Manager, Uba Mohammed, at ubam@nigeriamarkets.org or 08077550695. •

Planning for the Agricultural Cycle: NAEC Training with FADAMA III

After Alhaji Mu'azu Umar, 55, retired as a primary school teacher in Gusau, he quickly embraced farming as a source of income. He cultivates maize, sorghum and millet for a yield of between 20 and 25 bags of produce, and sought to improve his production. In 2009, he attended a simulation exercise of the Nigerian Agricultural Enterprise Curriculum (NAEC) organized to train smallholder farmers to employ commercial approaches in their agricultural activities.

Results from Umar's harvest are in: "I can now keep record of my farm activities, know when to buy fertilizers, when to sell my produce, and how to manage my family expenditure without incurring debts," says Umar, who adds that his farm yield had improved from between 20 and 25 bags to more than 40 bags. "I now have more wealth in my family, and I am now financially better than I was as a teacher."

Alhaji Umar represents a larger group of beneficiaries. To raise the quality of life of Nigeria's farmers, USAID/MARKETS, collaborating with the World Bank-assisted Fadama III Project, has initiated the roll-out of NAEC by training 500 Fadama facilitators and 76 staff members who are expected to step-down the knowledge to 250,000 farmers across the country.

More than 500 Fadama III facilitators have been trained across the country using the flexible, comprehensive and easy-to-replicate NAEC. Each facilitator was provided with a NAEC training kit. These facilitators will empower small-scale producers working in the various agricultural value-chains to be more competitive and commercially oriented in their practices. •

MARKETS facilitates fertilizer distribution to 400,000 farmers

MARKETS' fertilizer voucher program works to develop private sector markets for agricultural inputs, increase farmers' yields and income and ultimately alleviate hunger. In 2009, more than 192,000 farmers in Taraba and Kano states received subsidized fertilizers (many for the first time in ten years), thanks to the efficient fertilizer voucher program implemented by MARKETS.



NAEC training simulates the agricultural cycle, leading participants through a typical year; purchase of inputs, planting, family events, and harvest. Investing in the farm, financial record keeping and planning techniques are experienced.

Building on 2009 successes, the MARKETS 2010 fertilizer voucher program will put high quality mineral fertilizers directly into the hands of 400,000 farmers in four states: Kwara, Taraba, Kano and Bauchi. In agriculture, farmers' use of fertilizers improves their fields' nutrient composition and helps to increase farmers' yields and ultimately their food security.

Through an innovative public-private partnership between state governments, private sector distributors and MARKETS, the state governments of Kwara,

Taraba, Kano and Bauchi, are contributing a 40% cost share of nearly US\$1.3 million with MARKETS to implement the program and reach 400,000 farmers. Each state is financing 100% of the subsidized portion of the voucher, totaling US\$15 million, while private sector fertilizer suppliers are investing heavily in expanded distribution networks and reaching substantially more farmers.

Taraba state governor, Danbaba Suntai, recognizes the program's impact and declares, "This year, a lot of farmers are raising their hands up in thanksgiving to God for an effective fertilizer distribution system." Not only do these states see the program's immediate benefits, they also understand the sustainability of the voucher system for future farming seasons. •