



THE WHEAT OUT-GROWER PROJECT

– A BRIEF

LOCATION: Gombe State

Introduction

The Wheat Out-grower concept revolved around improved wheat production targeting women and youth among conflict-affected populations with a view to improving household economy and building resilience through increased agricultural production and market linkage.

Working in collaboration with a Partner from the private sector, Flour Mills of Nigeria, Two Hundred and Ninety (290) conflict-affected farming households from two communities (Dadinkowa, SabonGida) of Yamaltu Deba Local Government area of Gombe state, were successfully introduced to a lucrative Wheat Farming business.

The Process

The Out-Grower scheme entails a contractual agreement between Christian Aid and Flour Mills of Nigeria which guaranteed quality agricultural outputs and access to market.

Flour Mills provided project participants with loans in form of fertilizers and early maturing, disease resistant and high yielding seeds for planting. Once mature and harvested, the farm produce was properly packaged by the farmers and sent back to Flour Mills for bulk purchase. At the point of purchase, the currency value of the in-kind loan



(seeds & fertilizers) was deducted from the total cost of sales.

To ensure a smooth incubation and harvesting process, Christian Aid supported project participants with technical trainings on Best Agricultural Practices (BAP) such as post-harvest handling, processing, and packaging. Support also included routine monitoring of the production system. This enhanced the process and standard of production as farmers harvested high quality Wheat. In its eight (8) months of implementation, the 290 Households supported harvested and sold 2.9 Tons of Wheat.

With a readily available market and increased knowledge on wheat farming, produce was easily sold off and re-planting done in anticipation of another harvest cycle. Beyond bulk sales to Flour Mills, project participants were at liberty to engage other markets of their choice, thereby expanding the certainties for sustainability.

The success documented on this project informed an on-going fresh cycle of implementation in Kano state targeting youth including young women.

Environmental Sustainability

Wheat has a relatively low carbon footprint compared to other foods. It takes around 1.0 kg CO₂e to produce 1 kilogram or 2.2 pounds of wheat, a car driving equivalent of 2.5 miles or 4 kilometers. Wheat is a widely adapted crop. It is grown from temperate, irrigated, to dry and high-rain-fall areas as well as warm, humid to dry, cold environments. Undoubtedly, this wide adaptation has been possible due to the complex nature of the plant's

genome, which provides great plasticity to the crop. The project was able to maintain an ecological balance by applying climate-smart agricultural practices to make the communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change, including droughts and floods.

Gender

Gender justice remains cross-cutting in Christian Aid's interventions across the country. It is to this end that females were given priority during the selection of participants. More than 89.7% of participants are women – a strategy to ensure more women are economically empowered and strengthened to participate in decision-making spaces.

Conclusion

Over the years, Christian Aid has found value chain development for agricultural products an effective and sustainable strategy in enhancing access to higher-value markets for farming communities. The Wheat Out-grower project is evidence of this.

Beyond agricultural products, we continue to explore other Income-Generating Activities (IGAs) that align with the community context, skills, and resources, potentially including small-scale industries, artisanal crafts, or services that can create sustainable livelihoods.

