

AGRA impact series



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Improved farming knowledge doubles harvests for Nigeria’s farmers

Abubakar Ahmed Rufai, is a 40 year-old smallholder farmer and community-based advisor from Giwa Local Government Area, Kaduna State. He cultivates soybean, maize and rice on his farm.

Abubakar, like many other farmers in Giwa, does what his forefathers did for years - he usually buys seeds from an open market and saves some of his seeds for planting the next season.

But he realized he has been farming the wrong way all along after he participated in one of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) training under the Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation (PIATA) activities on Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) before the 2020 planting season. The PIATA extension services seek to empower farmers both in skill and practice to ensure food security in the country and Africa as a whole.

During the training, Abubakar and other participants learnt Good Agricultural Practices (GAP): the benefits

of using improved seeds, the right fertilizer application methods and spacing for different crops. With these lessons, he decided to practice what he learnt and also bought improved seed varieties for his crops from Premier Seeds Ltd.

During the 2020 harvest, most farmers in Giwa got more than twice their usual harvest from same size of land; Abubakar produced 1.9MT/ha compared to his usual 0.9MT/ha.

Through the PIATA activity program he was also linked to AFEX - a structured offtake market to buy his soybeans. He was happy about the available market and used the income from his harvest to buy more seeds, fertilizer, agrochemicals and farm implements for the next farming season. In addition to the training, he also learnt about post-harvest handling and business development. This enabled Abubakar to minimize post-harvest loss, negotiate, and secure AFEX as an off-taker.

Abubakar was excited about the outcome of 2020 planting season specifically for the extra profit made. He said: *“I am glad to be enrolled in the AGRA-PIATA Activity. Before I was enrolled, I bought seeds from the open market and saved some seed for next season. I am happy I stopped doing that. Now I only go for improved varieties which are profitable”.*