

How to Succeed in Sawah Eco-Technology Transfer: Experiences at Bida, Zaria-Nakala UN Villages, FCT-WAKO and Kebbi state, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture Extension is not a one short and kill effort. This is so because it deals with people, land, relief and other natural phenomenon etc. And as we look closely to all these, they cannot be maneuvered easily. It therefore has to take some time before things get fine grained into the desired points. This is why in all Agricultural Extension, regular visits and trainings are brought into play as it is a paramount structure for bringing about success. Other issues that are of good back up for success of work implementation are determination, interest, SAWAH knowledge, prowess in message dispensation amongst others. The technical staff therefore need to be well equipped for SAWAH success.

INTRODUCTION:

Nigeria no doubt has vast rice growing areas, amongst which we find also appreciable lands, suitable for rice cultivation in Bida (Niger State) Zaria (Kaduna State-UNDP Millenium Villages) and Brinin Kebbi (Kebbi State) all in Nigeria.

With this in mind, we have a great task in improving our rice status from the low production point of view. The only way that can address this is the SAWAH rice Farming Technology System. We indeed have begun with this system and have achieved some level of success. Right now, we have

penetrated into some fourteen (14 Villages) in Bida found in Middle belt of Nigeria. In Zaria (UNDP Millennium Villages) we have surfaced in three villages, while in Kebbi state we have demonstrated in four towns.

Without mincing words, these successes have come on board because of the Vital roles played by the Researchers, Extensionists and the farmers. And of course in all places where with we have demonstrated, personal practice had begun and farmers have totally depended on this technology.

2. WAYS CONSIDERED AS PARAMETERS FOR ACHIEVING SAWAH DEVELOPMENT.

We have enumerated ways in which we operated and belief that they have assisted immensely in the SAWAH EXPOSITION in BIDA, ZARIA, and KEBBI State as already proscribed in the foregone write up. To achieve meaningfully, there must be utter rules and guidelines to follow. Without traling on some of the issues stated below it would be impossible to record successes.

2.1 Extension must make regular visits and training.

Indeed regular visits and trainings play major roles in SAWAH development. This very important practice help to capture farmers interest. They view it as something that should have to do with a meaningful purpose, because of the time, finance, energy put into it.

As for the training, please avoid training which are not practical oriented. Try to demonstrate what you say on the field with the farmers. Farmers often times prefer to work with technical staff that love field work. Avoid giving instruction and telling a farmer to do after you had left. In most cases the operations are not done or done badly.

2.2 EXTENSION MUST HAVE GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF SAWAH.

SAWAH we know is a package. It consists of so many things that needed to be done right from site selection up to Harvesting. Hence a good knowledge of the processes gives or is adequate tool for work.

Good knowledge leads to excellent impartation of such to the farmers. Inadequate knowledge can lead to distortions that can cause failures or make ones message inarticulate. To avoid confusion we therefore must have a sound knowledge about SAWAH development

2.3 MUST HAVE EXTENSION EXPERTISE TO RELAY MESSAGE.

The regular visits can be good, coupled with good knowledge concerning SAWAH Rice Farming, but if there is no proweness to relay message for farmer to understand may not create interest in Farmer to stick to SAWAH.

It is therefore proper to learn the art of Relaying informations to farmers, so that they can easily understand and get convinced, for appropriate action. Hence there is need to have verbal coherent ability for message delivery.

2.4 Clarify work division issues before commencement of work.

When a Farmer indicate his interest in SAWAH, we must have to iron out issues before any commencement of work.

It is certain that two parties are involved in this programme-one is the project (SAWAH) and the second party is the farmer. This programs no doubt is of a farmer participatory approach. In terms of roles to be played, each has functions to perform. These functions need to be well clarified before work starts. We must not allow work to get middle way or end point, before we talk of way vital things that need to be discussed at the start. This can cause friction, or mar progress of work. An example could

be on transplanting, if Farmer is not aware of doing the work from inception at time of Transplanting may think that it is the duty of the project to do the work.

2.5 SOLVE FARMERS PROBLEMS

Surely problems will emanate. When problems crop up in the field in terms of pests, disease or machine, try to get problems solved immediately. Delay or not showing much concern is not good.

Other problems will come not associated with SAWAH. You will be viewed as their welfare officer, try to assist though may not be directly. Help by getting them to people, places where they could get assistance. Don't make fake promises.

2.6 Maintain Cordial Relationship With Farmer.

Good cordial relationships with farmers is also a very important factor for SAWAH development implementation. The farmers may not develop good understanding and interest for SAWAH, but if relationship is sagged. Excessive quarrels and dabbling into Village Local Issues should be avoided please. Note that your major reason in these Villages is to Extend SAWAH technology. Pay homage to the Village head, community leader intermittently. And incase you have problems or needed assistance, let them know for assistance.

2.7 NEVER QUIT WHEN YOUR FIRST ATTEMPT FAILS.

If in your first operation, you are not able to get good result, don't quit as quitting is dangerous. Always observe critically to know the basis for failure. Surely you will get reasons. Make your reasons known to the farmer in a way he could understand, and encourage him for another trial. One thing is that if farmers can know what caused problem, they easily understand and don't get discouraged. But when

no reasons can be identified to show for depreciated result, may find it difficult to continue.

2.8 Concentrate on Areas Where Farmers Needed Advise.

During field observations, always hammer on areas where farmers needed advise for corrections or amendments.

2.9 NEVER HIDE RESULTS OF RICE YIELDS

Results from SAWAH fields are always encouraging. At end of harvests transfer information to other Villages in the environment most especially where they are yet to practice. For now, the results are used to convince farmers, We encourage farmers to visit SAWAH fields on their own and when coincidentally we meet them in the field, we explain facts to them on how we have arrived to that standard.

3.0 Use correct tools and Malarial-to ease work dispensation in the field.

3.0 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND SOLUTIONS

SAWAH development are not with out problems. If not from the Extensionist, can come from the farmers or the Natural environment. Problems that we do have are Location Specific. Hence they are treated under the various vicinities

3.1.0 BIDA (Niger State)

3.1.1 Problems

- Lack of interest
- Fear Government will take over Land
- Capital
- Land Degradation

3.1.2 SOLUTIONS

-Lack of interest by some farmers was common at inception of this programme. It is not very common now. However, we don't ignore them, but from time to time enlighten them on the effect the SAWAH which is a food producing venture which has positive advantage on the totality of their livelihood. Nevertheless, we don't tie ourselves to them permanently trying to encourage them. We move ahead to see those who can take the technology for us to work with. And of course when we make progress, those that had no interest get to hear or are told of landslide victories we had with the interested farmers in the practice,. Through this their percentage disinterest is reduced.

- At inception of SAWA, fear gripped most farmers, because they taught of it as a thing Government has trickishly allowed, so that she could take over their rice fields from them. Indeed, we had to talk intensively and extensively with ward, Village, community heads as well as farmers that their thinking is wrong. Also that the information is not true. However since then to now, no single farmers field had been captured fro him. The farmers taught n this issue had subsided. Farmers taught that unless you had much capital SAWAH is not easy to approach. What we told them was to redeem small portions of their fields to SAWAH annually, so that they will not have to use much money at a time. This solves the problem of CAPITAL. And within a period their whole field will be under SAWAH. Hence a farmer can put his whole farm into SAWAH over a time frame.

- LAND PUT INTO SAWAH becomes degraded.

Another problem we encountered was farmer's rumors that if a power tiller puddles a field, the Resultant activity that follows will be erosion

leading to degradation of land. We have taken such farmers having that notion to most fields where SAWAH is in practice and cannot see any malformed land due to activity of SAWAH. Unlike portions of land where bull dozers had worked and grown such lands to untold land degradations.

3.2.0 ZARIA (Kaduna State-UNDP Millenium Villages)

3.2.1 Problems

- Crop yield failures in 2007 & 2008, when rice variety wita 4 (faro 52) a long duration variety was used.

3.2.2 SOLUTION

Indeed because this place is found in the North of Nigeria that witness short rainfall also less quantity, this rice crop could not be grown here favorably. In 2007, crop had very good vegetative growth but unable to mature due to water shortage. In total failure was the result. In 2008, 20% loss was witnessed.

Solution was by use of a shorter hybrid variety-faro 44 (CP) And since 2009 to 2011, the harvest had been great. The yield this year has given the best so far.

3.3.0 KEBBI State (North West Nigeria)

3.3.1 Problems

- Improper management of Farmer Group
- Operators unmastery skills in power tiller handling.

3.3.2 SOLUTIONS

-Time was set aside and farmers trained on how to manage group. Farmers are therefore becoming perfected.

The SAWAH demonstration just got to this place this year 2011. Therefore it is expected that operators have to work on power tiller operations by 2012 before they can attain some level of perfection.

4.0 WORK SCOPE AND SUCCESS

Indeed work scope in terms of site coverage as mention earlier can be put at 25-30 villages and towns. On area coverage it can be put at 100ha. On yield, we have recorded yields not on data computation but physical paddy production turn out of 4.27/ha, 5.67/ha and 7.27/ha.

5.0 COMMENTS ON FARMERS

Farmers for sure love to associate with some thing that could increase their crop yields for the betterment of their livelihood. So it is with this SAWAH Technology.

Farmers are not difficult in accepting technologies as they are normally rated. But if the message is not clear, or archaic can scare them away. This system farmer see it simple, unchaic, and practicable. My suggestion or advice is to be more upright in our approach to them. We have seen that farmers are our best friends as far as rice farming is concerned. So we need to avoid taking tracks that will bring frictions with them.

6.0 CONCLUSION

We have tried to put our experiences into this report hoping that even if some were left out will not be much. Indeed since SAWAH operational guide booklet will need to be made, I have tried to escape going one after the other, the SAWAH package operations. This is treated to avoid bulkiness of Report.

On success, Extension has already gotten to some appreciable footing. I therefore see no reasons why we cannot cover effectively the areas intended to cover in the nearest future in Nigerian.

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