

Welcome Address by the Business Champion at the Hub Capacitation Meeting held on Wednesday July 17, 2024

Dear esteemed members,

I am honored to welcome you all to this capacitation meeting of our Agronourish2Flourish Hub, a vital component of the HortiNigeria project. I am proud to serve as the Business Champion of this hub, and I am excited to work together with all of you to achieve our shared goals.

Firstly, I would like to express our gratitude to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their generous funding of the HortiNigeria project, and to the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) and its consortium partners for their tireless efforts in implementing this initiative.

The HortiNigeria project is built on the principles of inclusivity, empowerment, and sustainability, and we are committed to fostering a collaborative environment where all stakeholders can thrive. We believe that together, we can achieve far more than we can alone, and we are eager to tap into the unique expertise and strengths of each member of our hub.

In farming, collaboration is key to success. By working together, we can share knowledge, resources, and best practices, leading to increased productivity, improved efficiency, and reduced costs. Collaboration also enables us to address common challenges, such as climate change, soil degradation, and market fluctuations, and to identify new opportunities for growth and innovation.

Innovation is equally crucial in agribusiness, as it allows us to adapt to changing circumstances, improve our operations, and stay competitive in the market. Through innovation, we can develop new and better products, services, and processes, increase our yields, and reduce our environmental footprint. Innovation also enables us to capture new market opportunities, improve our profitability, and create new jobs and economic growth.

Building trust is also essential for our success. Trust is the foundation upon which strong relationships are built, and it is critical for effective collaboration and innovation. When we trust each other, we feel comfortable sharing our ideas, resources, and expertise, and we are more likely to take risks and try new things. Trust also fosters a sense of community and belonging, which is essential for our collective growth and prosperity.

So, how can we build trust? First, we must be reliable and follow through on our commitments. We must also be transparent and honest in our dealings, and communicate openly and respectfully. We must be willing to listen and learn from each other, and embrace diversity and

inclusivity. Finally, we must be patient and understanding, and recognize that building trust takes time and effort.

We must also be intentional, we must be ready to put in the work. By being intentional, we can:

- Create positive change in our lives and the lives of others
- Build stronger, more meaningful relationships
- Achieve our goals and realize our potential
- Develop a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment
- Navigate challenges and setbacks with resilience and adaptability

Remember, intentionality is a muscle that must be exercised regularly to see results. By making intentionality a habit, we can shape our lives and the world around us in profound and lasting ways.

Through this project, we aim to create an enabling environment for the growth of youth and women-led SMEs, drive innovation and entrepreneurship, and contribute significantly to food and nutrition security in Nigeria.

I encourage you all to actively participate in our hub's activities. Your contributions are invaluable, and your voices matter.

Let us work together to build a vibrant and sustainable horticulture sector in Nigeria, and to create a brighter future for ourselves, our communities, and our country. Let us build trust, collaborate, innovate, and thrive together!

Thank you for your attention, and let us begin this exciting journey together!