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PRESS RELEASE

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United States Launches Private Sector Partnerships to Strengthen Nigerian Agriculture

Abuja – In the presence of Agriculture Minister Audu Ogbeh, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) launched two new partnerships with local agribusinesses Babban Gona and Hello Tractor, highlighting the U.S. government’s agricultural and private sector strategy and promoting the development of Nigeria’s agriculture sector. Under this \$2 million, two-year partnership, anticipated results include increased access to smart tractors, improved seeds, and profitable markets for over 45,000 smallholder farmers across seven states and the Federal Capital Territory.

During a ceremony at the U.S. Embassy, Deputy Chief of Mission Maria E. Brewer described the partnership as a co-investment in public goods. “Innovation and entrepreneurship hold the key to unlocking Nigeria’s agriculture potential, and the U.S. government will continue to provide support in this direction,” said Mrs. Brewer.

Under the Feed the Future initiative, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) partners with the private sector to support smallholder farmers in Nigeria. Through these partnerships, USAID addresses development and business challenges by increasing access to improved agricultural inputs and mechanization, better quality technical advisory services, and expanding market opportunities for smallholder farmers. These partnerships capitalize on the untapped potential of youth in agriculture and help build the capacity of young entrepreneurs to help grow their businesses, create secure jobs, and boost economic growth in Nigeria.

About Babban Gona: The company addresses the challenge of smallholder farmers by forming strong cooperatives called Trust Groups, which enable maize, rice, and soybean farmers to gain access to new markets and sell at premium prices. Babban Gona provides member farmers with services designed to optimize crop yields, production costs, and prices of agricultural outputs. This business model helps to increase profitability of smallholder farmers and contributes to household food

security and improved livelihoods. Through the partnership with USAID, Babban Gona will create positive impact for 20,000 smallholder farmers.

About Hello Tractor: Recognizing the need among smallholder farmers for consistent and sustainable mechanization services, Hello Tractor designed a versatile Smart Tractor with eight attachments to serve their needs throughout the farm production cycle. Each tractor is fitted with technologies, which enable Hello Tractor to pair farmers in need of services with a Smart Tractor owner nearby via text messaging. The technology allows small landowners access to affordable tractor services to increase their productivity, while Smart Tractor owners are given the opportunity to earn additional income with their machine. Through the partnership with USAID, 24,500 smallholder farmers will gain access to tractor services. The partnership expects to train 100 youth entrepreneurs on the business of owning and maintaining a fleet of Smart Tractors. In addition, some 15 young technicians will benefit from trade skills to repair Smart Tractors.

About USAID: USAID partners to end extreme poverty and promotes resilient, democratic societies, while advancing security and prosperity. In its partnership with Nigeria, the United States through USAID strengthens social stability with improved social services, supports transparent and accountable governance, promotes a more market-oriented economy, and enhances the country's capacity as a responsible regional and trade partner.

About Feed the Future: Feed the Future was born out of the belief that global hunger is solvable. As the U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future is transforming lives toward a world where people no longer face the agony and injustice of extreme poverty, malnutrition, and hunger. To achieve this goal, Feed the Future agencies work hand-in-hand with partner countries to develop their agriculture sectors and break the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger.

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