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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **USAID Launches ‘Water for Agriculture’ Activity Promotes Livelihoods for Farmers in the Northeast**

**Abuja** – The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded a three-year, \$8 million Cooperative Agreement to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) that will boost the livelihoods of crop and livestock farmers in the conflict-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe by improving the water supply in crisis-affected zones in northeast Nigeria.

‘Water for Agriculture’ will also improve the capacity of local governments and communities to govern and manage water infrastructure and resources in the region, where smallholder crop farmers and livestock herders dependent on water for their livelihoods, which are increasingly threatened by climate change, inadequate investment and destruction of infrastructure, poor water management and practices, and population growth.

“Water for Agriculture will play a critical role in USAID’s strategy to develop new sustainable water sources in rural communities where displaced populations are returning,” USAID Mission Director Stephen M. Haykin said at the launch ceremony. “It will contribute to our promotion of agriculture-led economic growth to improve resilience and nutrition and stronger governance of the water and sanitation sector.”

‘Water for Agriculture’ will reach at least 4,000 smallholder farmers and 50,000 livestock herders by constructing new earth dams and systems for crop production and livestock watering, strengthening water governance and management, improving production and helping mitigate conflict between farmers and herders.

“It is delightful that the implementation of the program will lead to employment generation, increased food production, food security, and enhancement of economic base of the target rural communities.” the Director of Irrigation and Drainage, Ministry of Water Resources, Engr G. Bello said at the event.

To implement the activity, CRS will partner with Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria, Search for Common Ground, Diamond Development Initiatives, the Pastoral Resolve, the Maiduguri and Yola Justice, Development and Peace Commissions, and relevant government agencies.

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***ABOUT USAID:** USAID leads international development and humanitarian efforts to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance and help nations progress beyond assistance. In Nigeria, USAID supports health systems strengthening, transparent and accountable governance, basic education, and a more market-led, trade-friendly economy. For more information about USAID and its programs, please visit [www.usaid.gov/nigeria](http://www.usaid.gov/nigeria) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @USAIDNigeria*

***ABOUT CRS:** Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. The agency alleviates suffering and provides assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through programs in emergency response, HIV, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. For more information, visit [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org) or [www.crsespanol.org](http://www.crsespanol.org) and Facebook, Twitter at @CatholicRelief*

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