

British High Commissioner visits Nasarawa State

During the two-day visit, the High Commissioner visited the Nasarawa State Governor, His Excellency, Abdullahi Sule. The High Commissioner commended the Governor on his achievements in his first 2 years in office including an increase in the state's education budget to 35% and improving business environment indicators and concrete investments. They also discussed current efforts to stimulate the economy in the state.

During her visit to Nasarawa State, the High Commissioner got the chance to see first hand, some of the examples of what's making Nasarawa such a popular and increasingly prosperous area to live, work and invest in. Known as the "Home of Solid Minerals", the state houses solid minerals of economic potentials such as zinc, lead, gold, tin and tantalite.

High Commissioner Catriona Laing at the Nasarawa Bus Terminal in Karu

During her stay in Nasarawa State, the High Commissioner visited the Nasarawa Bus Terminal in Karu, to witness the progress the initiative is taking as construction at the site continues. The planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system that will operate from the bus station, will improve the lives of Nasarawa residents. It also aligns with Nigeria's climate change commitments in its new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), where 22% of transport kilometres should be BRTs by 2030.

High Commissioner Catriona Laing at the Durbar in Lafia Stadium, Nasarawa

The High Commissioner also attended her first Durbar in Nigeria, at the Lafia Stadium, where she met with some of Nasarawa's traditional leaders. She thanked the leaders for honouring her and spoke about the need to continually celebrate and uphold history, culture and tradition.

The visit to Nasarawa State was an opportunity for the High Commissioner to stopover at the Kilema Local Rice Mill. The UK has helped develop flood and drought-resilient rice varieties for Nigeria and introduced techniques to reduce methane from rice-growing climate-smart agriculture.

In advancing the agricultural sector of the state, the UK Government previously supported a fertiliser distribution and livestock vaccination system that still exists in Nasarawa State. On animal vaccines, the UK leveraged a community-based organisation, FAHCI to establish a vaccinators' network and to prime the market. FAHCI has continued to stock vaccines in their Lafia office and retail to vaccinators that come from the rural parts of Lafia, Doma and Akwanga LGAs. We continue to support research and production of animal vaccines as well researching drought and flood resilient

seeds and nutritious crops.

At the end of the visit, the British High Commissioner, Catriona Laing, said:

The UK Government is increasing support for the Nigerian Government's economic reform efforts, including diversification of the economy to promote conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth. We continue to lead efforts to mobilise the international community and the Nigerian Government to do more.

Our trade and investment relationship goes across a number of sectors and we want to increase that investment, especially in the non-oil sectors that make up over 90% of Nigeria's economy and which are key to Nigeria's recovery after the COVID-19 recession.

Being here in Lafia has helped me see at first hand the many great investment opportunities Nasarawa State has to offer and I'm very grateful to Governor Abdullahi Sule for inviting me.

High Commissioner at the Shabu Cassava Processing Centre in Nasarawa State