SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KATSINA STATE, MALAM DIKKO UMARU RADDA, PhD AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE ECOWAS-FMHAPA-WFP STABILIZATION PROJECT PHASE 2 IN KATSINA STATE

Protocols

I welcome you all to Katsina State, the Home of Heritage and Hospitality.

Introduction:

I want to thank the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Federal Government of Nigeria through the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (FMHAPA) and the United Nations World Food Programme (UN-WFP) on the choice of Katsina State among the two States for the implementation of the

ECOWAS Stabilization Fund for food and nutrition interventions in both the Phase I and the current phase II of the project.

This gesture which I am aware is based on empirical evidence in terms of needs and vulnerability, demonstrates consistency which is required if we want to achieve meaningful results in the attainment of regional goals and global aspiration especially in the areas of poverty and hunger. That the interventions will be anchored and implemented by the United Nations World Food Program is another plus, as this implies efficiency, impartiality and will meet the humanitarian principles which stand at the core of food and nutrition interventions.

The proposed intervention and the Katsina State Vision:

The four specific components of the ECOWAS/FGN/WFP project are very central to the Katsina State development plan which the current administration holds so dearly:

1. **Food Security through Cash Assistance:**

Katsina State Social Investment Programme Agency (KASIPA), which was recently institutionalized in the State to coordinates the State Operations Coordinating Unit (SOCU) and the State Cash Transfer Unit (SCTU), these two Units under KASIPA works in an integrated manner by registering the Poor and Vulnerable Households (PVHHs) in the State into the State Social Register (SSR) and then provides

cash to those households to smoothen their consumption. The establishment of KASIPA demonstrates our commitment and Katsina State is one of the few States who has domesticated this Federal approach at the state level. Therefore, KASIPA and its expected deliverables fit into the first pillar of the project.

2. **Nutrition Support to Women and Children:**

The State acknowledges the status of malnutrition problems in the State and therefore has continued to prioritize adequate funding of the State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA) under the State Ministry of Health, albeit the treatment of severe malnourished children. We therefore appreciate the prevention approach to malnutrition

which this project brings forth – as we all know that prevention is better than cure.

3. **Livelihood support:**

This third pillar of the project is very dear to the current administration. While we are ready to support our citizens who become vulnerable due to banditry, kidnapping, cattle rustling among other factors, we will also want to deliberately empower them and others so they can become independent and contribute to the State Economy. The State is working with many Development Partners, Donor Agencies among others on this through several State Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). As such, this is also in line with the State Vision.

4. **System and capacity strengthening support:**

I want to specially thank ECOWAS, FMHAPA and WFP for this component of the project, this is the surest way to bring continuity and sustainability to all the noble ideas of this project, as this will live on even upon the expiration of the project. I therefore look forward to the core areas which this pillar will be addressed and focused.

I want to believe that this component will adopt learning by doing approach; I therefore expect a significant improvement in the operations and delivery of humanitarian assistance in Katsina State at the end of the project.

I remember that in one of the strategic engagement with WFP before the launch of this project today, we have agreed on a structure termed - Katsina State Task Force which comprises of important Ministries, Departments and Agencies including the SDG Office, I therefore want to emphasize that I expect that this project will empower and transfer best practices to the state institutions during implementation and there will be room for continuity and technical collaboration even upon the expiration of the project.

I want to assure you that Katsina State under my leadership will be ready to provide a conducive environment for such continuous partnership to continue.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I want to thank ECOWAS once again, the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation and WFP for this avowed to Katsina state and we look forward to more of such partnerships and collaboration.

On this note, I hereby declare open the launch and commencement of the ECOWAS/FGN/WFP 2024/25 phase II interventions for the benefit of the good people of Katsina State.