

PROPOSED QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH MR. JOSEPH KIMOTE, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL CEREALS AND PRODUCE BOARD (NCPB) WITH TV 47

1. Briefly tell us about NCPB?

National Cereals and Produce Board is a State Corporation which was established in 1985 through an Act of Parliament (Cap 338). It is a Statutory Board under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives

2. What is the function of NCPB?

NCPB trades commercially in grains, provides grain post-harvest services, deals in fertilizer and other farm inputs like seeds, and offers clearing and forwarding services. It is an agent of the Government in the procurement, management and distribution of National Food Reserves (NFR) and Famine Relief Stocks. In addition, NCPB distributes subsidized through the e-voucher system on behalf of the government.

3. How does NCPB play its role in National food security?

NCPB is involved in government interventions in food security initiatives such as procuring, managing and distribution of National Food Reserves (NFR) and Famine Relief Stocks; distribution of subsidized fertilizers and affordable commercial fertilizers and seeds; offers affordable grain post-harvest services like drying, storage, grading and aflatoxin testing to reduce post-harvest losses;

provides a market for grains such as maize, rice paddy, green grams and beans to Kenyan farmers.

4. How is your presence in the country?

We are headquartered in Nairobi but our presence is in 46 counties. NCPB has six regional offices based in Nakuru, Eldoret, Mombasa, Kisumu and Embu. We have 110 depots distributed nationally and silo complexes located in Nairobi, Eldoret, Moi's Bridge, Bungoma, Kisumu, Nakuru and Narok. NCPB also has a rice milling plant located in Sagana depot, Kirinyaga county.

5. What are your major challenges as an organization, and how are you addressing them?

The main challenges NCPB is facing are working capital and aging infrastructure which lessen efficiency and slows down service delivery. Efforts are at an advanced stage to improve working capital base and refurbish facilities. The Board is promoting private sector partnerships in an effort to re-engineer its operations and modernize the infrastructure.

6. How do you relate with government agencies, county governments and the private sector?

NCPB is successfully implementing various government initiatives while at the same time maintaining good working relations with relevant government agencies. We also have working collaborations with county governments and Universities. For example, we have successfully distributed fertilizer on behalf of Machakos County government and are working with County of Taita Taveta in bringing services

closer to the people by setting an Agricultural Hub within the County.

We are also offering grain post-harvest services such as grain storage to many county governments. In addition, NCPB has forged partnerships with the private sector in the distribution of fertilizer, seeds and hermetic bags. In this regard, we are distributing fertilizer on behalf of Minjingu Fertilizer Company Limited, Maisha Minerals and Fertilizer Limited, KEL Chemicals and Soil Health. Besides that, we have entered into agency agreements with seed companies to distribute seeds on their behalf and with AgroZ to sell hermetic bags on their behalf. More partnership frameworks are at advanced stage of development.

7. What is the strategic direction and Vision of NCPB?

NCPB aims to be the leading player in agricultural commodities handling, trading in a variety of grains, warehousing, and distribution of farm inputs and provision of efficient post-harvest services. NCPB will be a major component of the Warehouse Receipt System and KOMEX initiatives and we are poised to play an important role in the system's set-up.

We have set up agricultural hubs within our depots to bring services and products closer to our customers. A Hub is a center of effective business activities which operates as a one stop shop where various products and services are offered to customers.

To achieve all the above, we reviewed our strategic plan 21/22/23 which we are currently implementing. The Strategic

Plan informs and shapes our strategies for the future and leverages on private sector partnerships in an effort to enhance productivity and business performance.

8. What Reforms are currently Being Undertaken at NCPB?

The Board is currently undergoing reforms to make it more efficient and responsive customers' needs. In the new NCPB, there will be a Trading division; the NCPB Trading, which will be a commercial arm of the NCPB and The National Food Reserve division which will deal with procurement and management of National Food Reserve kitty (formerly handled by SFR).

NCPB Trading will trade in products, both grains and farm inputs and in post-harvest services besides handling all NCPB Warehouse Receipt System activities.

Under NFR, there will be the Food Balance Sheet committee which will oversight the NFR. The Balance Sheet Committee will advise on food situation in the country through research and situational analyses from production to consumption and advise accordingly on government interventions. To actualize the reforms, the NCPB Act Cap 338 is being reviewed to reflect the Board's current mandate and give legal backing to the new NCPB structure and its attendant functions.