

# A review of risk in agricultural programmes implementation in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Despite the numerous agricultural programmes and projects initiated by successful government in Nigeria and huge budgetary spending to reduce poverty, the country is still lagging behind in terms of the impact of the interventions. This article undertakes a review of agricultural programmes implemented in the country, with a view of identifying risks associated with them. The study synthesizes from different literatures on how the programmes have affected the living standard of the targeted beneficiaries, and overall gains and weaknesses of the interventions. The research concluded that the agricultural programmes achieved gains such as improved output, income and living standards, but the benefits are not long lasting in strengthening beneficiaries, future policy implementation, as well as decision making. To this end, the study recommends that subsequent interventions should be established as national strategic plan that can be maintained and sustained by a successive government. Also, value reorientation programmes should be embarked upon in order to dismantle corruption that often frizzle out the benefits of government interventions.

**Keywords:** risk assessment, agricultural programmes, policy, Nigeria.

## INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has a population of more than 170 million people- the largest in Africa. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, with about 70 percent of the population engaged in agricultural production, and provides subsistence for two-thirds of Nigerian population, most of whom are low-income earners (Ugwu and Kanu, 2012). The country is endowed with abundant human and natural

resources, numerous all-season rivers, and favourable climatic conditions. Rainfall is adequate, and well distributed throughout the year. These resources give the country the potential to become Africa's largest economy, and a major player in the global market (Atte and Atte, 2006). A retrospective look at the economy of Nigeria reveals that poverty has been on the increase over the years. Records from the Federal Office of Statistics pointed

out that 15% of the population were poor in 1960, 28% in 1980, and by 1996 the incidence of poverty was about 66%, that is 76.6 million of the citizen (Garba, 2006). The figure of those in poverty decreases to 68.7 million people in 2004, based on a report from United Nations Development Programme, UNDP indices (Own and Me, 2010). However, a recent survey carried out as shown in Table 1 established that more people are in poverty in the country though the actual percentage is

reduced compared to 1996 statistics. The result indicated that about 46 percent of the people are in poverty, representing about 90 million of the population in Nigeria (IFAD, 2011). A critical review of the incidence of poverty in Nigeria indicated that rural people are the most affected. This may be due to the neglect of the region, lack of basic amenities, the absence of small and medium industries and low impact of government policies and programmes.

Table 1. Poverty indicator

Indices	Millions or (%)
Total Population	178 million
Rural Population	95 million
Number of rural poor	50 million
Rural poverty	53%
Urban Poverty	34%
National poverty	46%

Source: IFAD, 2011

The concern for an increasing rate of poverty in developing countries particularly in Nigeria has led to the development and implementation of various poverty reduction programmes. According to Amalu (1998), the programmes vary only in nomenclature and timing of conceptualization; they focus on almost the same objectives such as increasing the productivity of farmers, provide extension services to farmers and rural dwellers, and sustainable enhancement of the income of the poor. Therefore, this paper's broad objective is to review past government agricultural programmes and interventions. The specific objectives are:

Analyse previous agricultural programmes in Nigeria.

Identify the risks, and constraints inherent in each programme.

Recommends new techniques and approaches for agricultural programmes implementation and policy decisions.

### ***Conceptual review of agricultural risks, projects and programmes***

An attempt is made at defining what an agricultural risk, programme and project constitute. Risk and uncertainty are the bane of occurrence in agriculture. According to Adeyefa, 201,; Ezekiel et al., 2011 Ayodele and Fregene, 2003 who describes risk as hazard, the probability of an event occurring which cannot be predicted with certainty. While

McIntosh (2008), stated risk as something with bad happening, an event whose outcome is adverse and the need to minimize the impact on financial stability of farm operations is therefore imperative. A project is any scheme or part of scheme for investing resources which can be reasonably analysed and evaluated as an independent unit (Little and Mirrlees, 2014). In their own view, Alabi et al., (2019) stated that projects are unique and distinctive part of a broader programme. They emphasized that project has a time frame with specific geographical location and specific activity, different from the preceding or succeeding ones. On the other hand, programme is a composition of a number of related projects implemented in a coordinated manner. According to Asiabaka (2002), an agricultural programme is a comprehensive plan that includes objectives to be met, establishing activities to be carried out, work to be performed, and resources needed to attain stated objectives. Programmes are on-going concern and never ending (Alabi et al., 2019). In essence, the concept of the programme implies the need for a specific aim and coordination of several activities so as to meet the desired goal.

### ***Review of Agricultural Programmes and Projects in Nigeria***

The concern for an increasing rate of poverty and low standard of living in Nigeria has led to the development and implementation of various palliative programmes. According to Amalu (1998), the programmes vary in nomenclature and timing of conceptualization; they focus on almost the same objectives, such as increasing productivity of farmers, enhancing income of the poor, improving access to production input, among others. Some of the agricultural

programmes implemented in Nigeria, and the inherent risk, strength and weaknesses are discussed as follows;

### ***National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP)***

It was initiated in 1972. It was an agricultural extension programme that was targeted at increasing the production of major crops such as maize, millet, rice, and cassava. It was designed to be in three phases, namely mini-kit phase, production-kit phase, and mass adoption phase. It was piloted in Anambra, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Kano, Plateau and Benue. According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012), some of the challenges inherent in the programme are that it focuses on farmers who are in cooperatives for inputs and fund disbursement, thereby leaving out other farmers. Other weaknesses pointed by the authors are a lack of farmers' participation, arising from a failure of technology demonstrated in some farmers plots, and withdrawal of fund by the federal government due to the introduction of another programme.

### ***Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)***

The programme was initially pioneered in three states in the Northern part of Nigeria in 1974. It was the successful implementation and gained benefits that led to it spread all over the states in the country. It was established and funded through the tripartite arrangement of the World Bank, Federal Government and State government (Amalu, 1998). According to Ayoola (2001), the main objectives of the programme are technical inputs support

to farmers, provision of extension services, provision of rural infrastructure, and diffusion of technology in farming. The author asserted that the programme achievements were laudable. Among which are it teaching farmers modern techniques of farming, making available improved seeds and fingerlings at farmers' doorsteps, enhancing adoption and diffusion of new techniques through pilot farms and mini-kits trials as well as provision of dams, feeder roads and boreholes. According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012), some of the early problems associated with the programme are a shortage of funds due to a global decline in oil price in 1982, which affected recruitment of expertise extension personnel, and provision of materials needed in the project. Recently, however, ADP lingering problems include high rural-urban migration, limited participation of input agency, decline funding, and hitches in technology transfer.

### ***River Basin Development Authority (RBDA'S)***

The first set of RBDA'S were established in 1973, and the number was increased to nine in 1979 (Adams, 1985). The main objective for the development of this agency is to improve the potential of existing dams and irrigation as a primary objective, and to boost generation of hydroelectric power and national water supplies as secondary responsibilities. Though according to Faniran (1972) the huge functional areas of the RBDA's may easily lead to their failure. Adams (1985) was of the opinion that the authority concentrates too much on large scales single purpose projects, such as irrigation scheme and fishery, against projects targeted at smallholder farmers. Also, the agency was overwhelmed with bureaucracy and

inefficiency in planning (Faniran,1980). There are also pockets of internal politics, overlapping responsibilities between the Federal and State Ministries, as well as controversy with state government agencies that carried out similar mandate (Are et al., 1982).

### ***Operation Feed The Nation (OFN)***

Operation Feed the Nation was launched in May 1976. The scheme was conceived to save the nation from excessive food importation which was a result of an alarming decrease in local food supply (Arua, 1982). According to the author, there are two main objectives of the programme. First, massive increase in food production that will ensure self-sufficiency and reliance. Second, active involvement and participation of all the citizen in agricultural production, both the rural and urban areas. Under this programme, the government provided inputs at subsidies rate for individuals and free to government institutes. The failures noticed in the programme are a lack of technical know-how on the majority of the people that partake in the farming, preferential treatment, and supply of inputs to government establishments and individuals in higher authority, at the detriment of poor farmers, and market glut without adequate control measure for excess production.

### ***Green Revolution***

Green Revolution was initiated in Nigeria in April 1980. According to Goldman and Smith, (1995), the common conception around Green revolution is that it involved the introduction of high yield varieties and technology in farming. It enhances massive food availability in an area with high population growth rates

such as Africa and Asia; (Booth, 1989). In Nigeria, the programme was aimed at ensuring adequate food security and sufficiency for major staple food in the country. According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012), the government provided credit facilities, improved inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides, linkages with markets to ensure the success of the programme. The author argued that however, the programme suffered from a lack of monitoring and evaluation leading to unaccounted fund injected in the execution of the programme.

Globally, some of the criticism against the Green revolution are that high yield could only be obtained under certain optimum conditions such as extensive irrigation system, optimum use of fertilizer and agrochemical in single cropping system (Pearse, 1977). Similarly, according to Glaeser (2011), the revolution strives under rich soil conditions, and poor farmers that cannot afford expensive irrigation and the high cost of pesticides are at a disadvantage.

### ***Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)***

The directorate was established in January 1986 by the Federal Government. The strategic objective of the programme was the provision of rural infrastructures that will transform the countryside and productivity. However, Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012) opined that the programme was designed to improve the life of rural dwellers regarding the provision of good roads, water, industrialization, improved nutrition and health conditions. They asserted that high level of fund mismanagement affected the impact of the programme particularly on

the poor. Idachaba (1988) corroborated that the directorate lacks coordinated focus in programme execution and accountability of fund.

### ***Better Life Programme (BLP) for Rural Women***

The programme was inaugurated in 1987, and was mostly gender specific. It was targeted at improving the life of rural women, boost their economic activities, and achieve the good living standard. According to Obasi and Oguche (1995), other objectives of the programme are to raise awareness of the right of women, education opportunities for them, job creation, and to give them encouragement to participate actively in politics, as well as occupy political offices. Bola (1995) stated that the programme remains the most extensive and coordinated programme to improve rural women till date. The author criticized the undemocratic nature of decision-making that relegated the voice of rural women to the lowest, and concluded that BLP failed to meet practical gender needs. Also, Oyesanmi et al., (2006) opined that the activities of BLP were hijacked by highly placed individuals who diverted the resources met for the programme for personal gains.

### ***National Agriculture Land Development Authority (NALDA)***

It was established in 1992. The strategic objectives are to support public land development, promote better uses of land in the rural areas, and boost employment opportunities of the rural dwellers. Another aim of the agency is to improve the productive capacity of the farmers toward food security



and self-sufficiency (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The authority is criticized for an endemic, and controversial usurpation of land by the officials of the agency.

### ***National Fadama Development Programme***

It aimed at increasing income of the beneficiary by at least 20% through expansion of farm and non-farm activities with high value-added output (Akinlade et al., 2011). It covers eighteen States including Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Fadama adopts a socially inclusive and participatory process in which Fadama users will collectively identify their development goals and pursue it when assisted by specialist. Currently, the programme is in the third phase due to its success recorded in the States that adopted it.

### ***Growth Enhancement Support-GES***

The Growth Enhancement Support (GES) Scheme was a component of the Agricultural transformation Agenda (ATA). It was launched in 2012. According to FMARD (2012), the GES Scheme represents a policy and pragmatic shift within the existing fertilizer market stabilization programme, and it puts the resource constrained farmer at its centre, through the provision of incentives to encourage the critical actors in the fertilizer value chain to work together. It was aimed at improving productivity, household food security and income of the farmer (Simonyan and Omolehin, 2012). Ayoola (2012) and FMARD (2012) asserted that electronic wallet system is a key component of the GES in which only the farmers whose biometrics have been

captured in a validated database are expected to have access to the subsidized agricultural inputs. In essence, the GES was a form of agricultural financing support (in kind) to smallholder farmers. Despite, the laudable achievement recorded in the programme, lack of continuity by present government cripples the successes of the programme.

### ***Anchor Borrowers Programme - Abp***

The Anchor Borrower Programme (ABP) was launched by President Muhammad Bukhari (GCFR) on November 17, 2015. The intention of the programme was to create a linkage between larger processing outfits (anchor companies) involved in the processing of agricultural produce, and small holder farmers, who specialize in the production of the required key agricultural commodities (CBN, 2016). According to Okelola (2019) as in??? February 2018, about 80% of the farmers in Nigeria who received credit under the programme were rice producers. Farm produce captured under Anchor Borrower Scheme includes Cereals (maize, rice, and wheat), Tree crops (oil palm, cocoa, and rubber), Legumes (soyabeans, sesame and cowpea), Livestock and Tomato. The programme is presently in operation in 14 States namely Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto, Jigawa, Kebbi, Zamfara, Adamawa, Niger, Plateau, Lagos, Ogun, Cross-Rivers and Ebonyi. The programme is still ongoing with positive impact on the participants that key into it.

## **CONCLUSION**

The concern for an increasing rate of poverty in developing countries, particularly in Nigeria, has led to the development and implementation

of various poverty reduction programmes. The interventions vary mainly in nomenclature and timing of conceptualization; they focus on almost the same objectives. The programmes resulted in landmark achievement particularly during implementation, but most of the gains are short lived. The outcomes have been greatly impaired by a lot of factors such as corruption, wrong approach in program design, and lack of connectivity among government sectors (inter/intra agency disconnect).

Moving forward, the study recommends the following;

1. There is a need for government to sensitize and mobilize stakeholders in agricultural sector for the conceptualization and development of projects and programmes. This is particularly germane for grassroot farmers, processors, agro-input dealers, extension specialists, among others, who will eventually be the direct beneficiaries of the interventions.
2. Collective efforts in terms of value re-orientation and enabling environment should be mapped out to tackle corruption that have been a hydra headed problem in the realization of programme objectives. Simple, straightforward and less bureaucratic procedures, that are open to all stakeholders, should be adopted in programme execution.
3. Programmes and projects should be conceived and developed as national strategic plan in order to entrench the benefits and gains of intervention for long period of time. This is also necessary to avoid

frequent evolution of different programmes by successive administration.

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## Pregled rizika u implementaciji poljoprivrednih programa u Nigeriji

### SAŽETAK

Unatoč brojnim poljoprivrednim programima i projektima koje je pokrenula uspješna vlada u Nigeriji, kao i ogromnoj potrošnji novca iz budžeta za smanjene siromaštva, zemlja i dalje zaostaje u smislu utjecaja (rezultata tih intervencija). Ovaj članak donosi pregled poljoprivrednih programa implementiranih u zemlji, te identificira rizike koji su s njima povezani. Studija donosi sintezu iz različite literature o tome kako su programi utjecali na životni standard ciljanih korisnika, kao i sveukupne koristi i slabosti tih intervencija. Istraživanjem je zaključeno da su poljoprivredni programi postigli koristi kao što su poboljšani dobiti, proizvodnja, dohodak i životni standard, ali te koristi nisu dugoročno osnažile korisnike programa, buduću politiku implementacije, kao ni donošenje odluka. Stoga studija predlaže da bi buduće intervencije trebale biti ustanovljene kao nacionalni strateški plan koji naredna vlada može poduprijeti i nastaviti. Također, trebalo bi započeti s programima reorijentacije vrijednosti kako bi se uklonila korupcija koja često smanji/poniži koristi od vladinih intervencija.

**Ključne riječi:** procjena rizika, poljoprivredni programi, agrarna politika, Nigerija.