

INSIGHT INTO AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE IN NIGERIA.

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Insight Into Agricultural Sector and Rural Development Landscape in Nigeria

Nigeria is a Country with population of about 200 million located in West Africa boarding on the Gulf of Guinea between Benin and Cameroun. It has a total area of 923, 768sqkm i.e. land area 910, 768 sqkm and water surface area 13, 000sqkm with coaster line boundaries of 853 km and land boundaries of 4,047km. the boarder Countries: on the west by the Republic of Benin 773km, Cameroon 1690km, North by Niger 1497km and Chard Republics 80km and South by the Atlantic Ocean. The approximate land use are: Arable Land-33% permanent crops 3%, permanent pastures 44%, Forest and Woodland 12%, others 8%.

The agricultural sector is a complement of the rural environment as there is no where we talk about agriculture in Africa without talking about rural sector, this probably will explain this name Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Agriculture can be described as science of managing the soil, crops, animal, aquaculture and non-crops such as grass, floriculture, apiculture, exportable materials their value chains.

Rural in the western world is described as a countryside though necessarily lack the required amenities but in Africa, it is described as an environment being occupied by mostly less privilege people and with inadequate amenities and there the agriculture is being practised.

Agriculture sector falls under concurrent in the federal Republic of Nigerian Constitutions which implies that it is being practised by the three tiers of government: federal, state and local council respectively, most of the time the federal government set the pace for the other to follow.

The agriculture practice in Nigeria is being categorised in to small holder, medium scale and large scale which is being promoted broadly along the value chains ranging

I wish to stress here that the food production is predominated by small holder farmers saddled with challenges that always characterised with small scale producers.

The important feature in agriculture practice in Nigeria across includes:

- **Inputs:** crop seeds, fingerlings, improved animals; agro-chemicals: herbicides, insecticides, supplements, fertilizers, and antibiotics.
- **Land:** upland/lowland
- **Water body:** Mini-dam/water harvesting structures.
- **Mechanization:** tractors/heavy equipment,
- **Irrigations:** drips/sprinkle/flood
- **Infrastructures:** roads/silo/warehouse

THE ASSOCIATED CHALLENGES TO AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

There are numbers of challenges that saddled the development as enumerated below:

- Poor amenities in the rural area.
- Inadequate capacity building and skill development among the rural farmers.
- High cost of land preparation
- High cost of inputs such as agrochemicals/fertilizers/ seeds/ brood stocks.
- Limited extensions agencies: farmers, extension agencies ratio.
- Poor accessibility to the rural areas.

CONT.

- Poor yield per hectares e.g. 1-2 tons /ha of soybeans
- Poor production rate e.g. Milk litre/cow. Litter/sow Duration of fingerlings maturity to table size fish.
- Poor marketing structure and facilities.
- Weak value chains networks.
- High cost of machinery as being majorly imported.
- Inadequate warehousing.

CONT.

- Inaccessibility of the certification authority.
- New emerging markets imposing rules and regulations.
- World emerging new sets of standard as it affects quality and packaging materials.
- Lack of guarantee minimum price to protect the farmers.
- International Market policies.

CONT.

- High cost of farmer's production truncates competition.
- High cost of technology application as related to the small holder farms e.g. use of drone, combine harvester.
- Poor information and data generation and management,
- Very expensive transport system due to bad road and Insecurity.

Our Historical Dominance in International Agriculture Trade

- Nigeria's lost glory in the World trade of groundnut.
- Nigeria's lost glory in the World trade of Palm Oil.
- Nigeria's stagnation in the World trade of Cocoa.
- Nigeria's lost glory in the World trade of Cotton.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENTS

The federal government is up and doing to address those enumerated challenges as highlighted below:

- ✓ Establishment of relevant agricultural units, institutions and centres e.g. National Agricultural Seed Council, agricultural quarantine service, National Centre for Agricultural Mechanization etc.
- ✓ Provision of subsidy along the inputs supply, such as agrochemicals, fertilizers and Machinery.

CONT.

- ✓ Provision of infrastructure in the rural areas such as Road, culvert, market, boreholes, warehousing.
- ✓ Promotion of warehousing to ensure quality, packaging and marketing.
- ✓ Strengthen the farmer's structures along the value chains.

CONT.

- ✓ Promotion of all year round production.
- ✓ Ensuring quality materials for production along crops non-crops animal and aquaculture.
- ✓ Development of policies that is operational, market and financial oriented.

CONT.

- ✓ Promotion of agriculture cottage factory, large scale processing plant through the provision of the machinery with subsidy,
- ✓ Effective collaboration with Private Agencies—donor, National and International bodies e.g. FAO, CBN, TOAN, IFAD, AGRA etc.
- ✓ Improving investment frameworks for agriculture
- ✓ Stimulating co-investments with State government.

CONT.

- ✓ Agriculture Finance strategy- introducing Nigeria Incentive-based Risk sharing for Agricultural lending (NIRSAL).
- ✓ Moving farmers from subsistence farming to commercial system.
- ✓ Promotion of Private Driven Cluster Farms to facilitate the employment of relevant technology e.g. Machinery, Unmanned Air Vehicle, Micro- Irrigation, Renewable energy etc, and gradual introduction of Private Driven Cluster Farms for entrepreneurship to address the emerging markets demand.

THE OPERATION OF FMARD

The Ministry is made up of the following professional department:

1. Federal Department of Agriculture
2. Federal Department of Rural Development
3. Federal Department of Land Resources and Climate change
4. Animal Husbandry Service Department
5. Veterinary Departments
6. Federal Department of Fisheries
7. Federal Department of Agricultural Extensions Services
8. Agricultural Business and Marketing Department
9. Federal Department of Inputs
10. Federal Department of Cooperatives.

- The enumerated departments are reaching out to the farmers through the FMARD State offices located in the 36 States and F.C.T. Most of the Department also have organised Units, Centres, Laboratory, and Institutions through which they reached out to the farmers.
- The Departments and the State offices reached out to the farmers through the agricultural Value Chain at State, Senatorial, and Local Government and Ward level respectively.
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Conclusions:

- I enjoined the relevant Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Private: National & International to please identify the possible areas of collaboration and join hands in building robust Agri-business that will restore the lost glory in the world trade; meet up with the world emerging market opportunities and meet the national food and nutrition requirements respectively.

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Thank you.