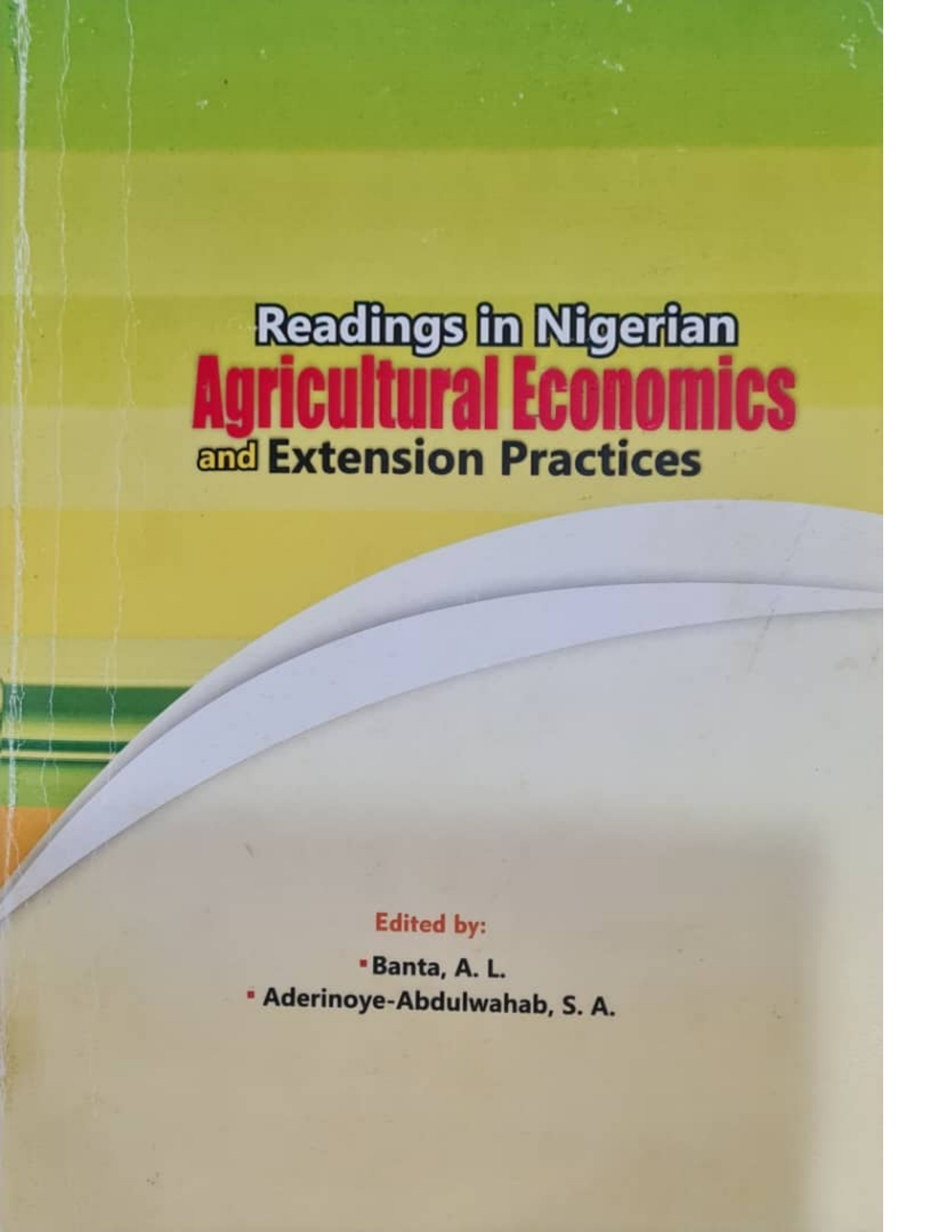




Readings in Nigerian Agricultural Economics and Extension Practices

Edited by:

- **Banta, A. L.**
- **Aderinoye-Abdulwahab, S. A.**

Readings in Nigerian
**AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
AND EXTENSION PRACTICES**

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PREFACE

The book, which serves as a guide for beginners or new entrants into the field of agricultural economics and extension, is a blend of both theoretical concepts and practical approaches to agricultural economics and extension from various studies carried out in Nigeria, hence the title readings in Nigerian agricultural economics and extension. The book is unique in that it presents empirical data that embedded theoretical concepts and is therefore rich with insights from the field.

The book comprises thirteen chapters starting with green economy versus green economics: whither Africa in the post-Paris era? The second chapter dwells on agricultural business: marketing and value chain which was presented to introduce students of agricultural economics to the basic concept of agribusiness and marketing. The third chapter was a review of the agricultural policy variations and its consequences on economic stability in Nigeria immediately followed by the aging process and strategies to improve arable crop production. These are closely followed by issues of profitability, entrepreneurship, and value addition in agricultural production.

The second section of the book presented topics on agricultural cooperatives, participation in community development activities, and information dissemination in extension practices. The book wraps up with a chapter on utilisation of information communication technology in disseminating extension information among farmers. It is anticipated that the book would stand the test of time; as students and professionals in both fields are expected to make good use of it. The book thus constitutes a unique resource and would, therefore be of great importance to students, academics, professionals, development consultants, as well as trainers in the field of agricultural economics and extension.

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Agricultural Policy Variations and its Consequences on Economic Stability in Nigeria

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Introduction

This chapter appraises the agricultural policies that had been used in Nigeria over the years, in order to be able to determine whether to consolidate on their successes and gains or if there is a need to re-strategize going forward. It should be noted that numerous agricultural policies had been enacted by almost all administrations in Nigeria and changed by each succeeding administration. While unpacking the inherent concepts, this chapter will attempt to determine the consequences of those agricultural policies on the economic stability of the nation. The key concepts that are integral to the topic of discourse were conceptualised in Agriculture, Policy, and Economic Stability. The scope of the chapter is limited to Nigeria because the two main variables of discourse in this chapter (Agricultural Policies and Economic Stability) are tools designed by Nigeria and for Nigerians.

Agriculture and the Nigerian Economy

Agriculture, which may simply be defined as the growing of crops and raising of livestock for human consumption and industrial use, remains the base of the Nigerian economy, in spite of the oil wealth. It provides the main source of livelihood for most Nigerians and also captures employment generation, education, ecology, energy consumption, protection, processing, consumption, preservation, and war against wastage, as well as transport and supply of adequate raw materials to a growing industrial sector. Agriculture remains the largest sector of the Nigerian economy and it employs two-thirds of the entire labour force. Yet, the production constraints have significantly stifled the performance of the sector. Thus, agriculture entails the elevation of human livelihoods through land and soil management, import and export of products, formulation, and implementation of agricultural policies, among other things. The evaluation of the performance of the Nigerian agricultural sector should therefore be based on the extent to which the mentioned roles have been satisfactorily achieved. Invariably, the achievement of the agricultural sector is associated with the success(es) of the policies in force.

The economy of Nigeria before the 1960s, largely depended on agriculture and this sole role of agriculture was taken for granted. With the dominant level of agricultural production in the time past, the country was able to feed its increasing population, support the industrial sector, and earn adequate foreign exchange. Despite this, the sub-sector has been declining in its contribution to economic growth. The decline in agricultural production began to surface immediately after independence (the period from 1960-69) and as time went by (about a decade after independence, from 1970-

79), the agricultural situation in the country worsened and there was not enough food to feed the rising population. Additionally, a sharp decline in government revenue and rapid deterioration in foreign exchange earnings from agriculture became evident coupled with the residual effects of the civil war further compounded the situation. Of notable significance was the impact of droughts and government fiscal and monetary policies.

Predictably, agriculture is expected to deliver growth to the nation and it is for this reason that the agricultural sector must remain a prerequisite for industrialization through increased rural incomes and provision of industrial raw materials, provision of a domestic market for industry and above all, the release of resources to support the industry. The neglect of agriculture sector in favour of the industrial sector had led to slow economic growth and inequality in income distribution. Therefore, despite the fact that agriculture may be unable to single-handedly transform an economy, it is a necessary and sufficient condition in kick-starting industrialization, in the early stages of development. In order to appropriately position agriculture, some agricultural projects were recently launched in the country. They include The Accelerated Agricultural Development Scheme (AADS- 2017), the Rice Mill by West African Cotton Company Limited (WACOT- 2017) in Argungu, Kebbi State which can produce up to 120,000 metric tonnes of rice. Others are African Soil Information Service (AFSIS- 2018), Olam Farms (operating since 1989 in Nigeria, but was established in Kaduna and Kwara States (2017). All these projects were geared towards enhancing productivity, which in essence, depicts the relevance of agriculture in the economic growth of any nation. Agriculture remains the main indicator or parameter on which the growth of Nigeria's economy is hinged on, and the seemingly lack of attention directed towards it, necessitates the government to come up with certain policies to address the identified issues. Experiences from these policies have further made clear to government and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector, that there is no alternative to well-articulated and properly-designed agricultural policies; as instruments for promoting agricultural growth and development in Nigeria. Perhaps, this realisation prompted the government to adopt a comprehensive package of policy instruments largely designed within the framework of successive rational development plans from 1937-1952, 1970-1974, 1975-1980, 1981-1985, that took the country through 15 years (1985-2000) and finally from 2000- 2020.

Contextualising Policy for Strategic Direction

The policy is not a tightly defined concept and it is sometimes used loosely and could imply what is to be done, who is to do it, how it is to be done and for (or to) whom it is to be done. There are different types of policies and this could range from personal policy, organisational policy, to public policy. People tend to think or believe that policies are mainly issues for governments and bureaucrats, however, the world is full of policies. For instance, in a given family, there could be a policy of "No TV

except on weekends or until homework is done". Agencies and organizations also make policies that guide the way they operate. Companies do have return policies; for example, goods can only be returned within one week of purchase provided they remain in the exact condition they were, at the time of purchase. Workplaces can have policies about dress codes and what to wear on certain days of the week. Schools have policies that describe the way they expect children to behave and the kind of play that is allowed. However, the FAO defined policy as a set of methods, ideas, or plans that is written by governments, institutions, groups, or individuals to guide present and future decisions. It is a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes.

Policies are a guideline consisting of principles and rules, governing the behaviour and action of persons in an organization. However, it is necessary to state that policy differs from rule of law and whilst a law can compel or prohibit behaviours, policy simply guides actions that will most likely help to achieve desired outcomes. Agricultural policy is therefore a statement of action and a fundamental tool employed in achieving agricultural development. It is also pertinent to state that new policies could be developed or an existing one could be changed if the desires of a people are not being met, if there is non-compliance or ineffectiveness of existing laws, and if the existing or emerging conditions portends danger to the general well-being of the people.

Traditionally, there are two broad stages in policy and these are Policy formulation (analysis and making) and Policy implementation. More recently, these two stages have further metamorphosed and are conceptualised in six steps according to Cairn (2012): the steps are agenda setting, formulation, legitimation, implementation, evaluation, and policy maintenance, succession or termination (Cairn, 2012). Agenda setting is the step where problems or gaps are identified. What problems exist? How big is the problem? What needs to be done? Is it worth addressing? Who should we talk to? are questions that may arise at this stage and once the decision to address those questions are taken, then an agenda has been set. Normally, such questions are usually raised by policy influencers or policy makers themselves, but these questions would not have been considered without prior evidence being established.

The second step would then be how to formulate or establish the policy that would drive or address the identified problem. This is the stage where policy influencers (researchers, public officers at strategic levels, civil societies, etc.) would need to swing into action in order to make the policy a reality. The third stage is legitimation and this is where all paper works are carried out in order to ensure that the policy brief is not only developed but properly documented and gazetted so that it can become a guide. Implementation stage is arguably the most obvious of all the stages where previous efforts (agenda setting, policy formulation, and legitimation) can be seen and/or felt by everyone including all stakeholders. This is the stage where

the policy manifests and become noticeable by the populace and we can then begin to utilise the formulated policy. The next step is evaluation where we may want to check if the policy is addressing the issues raised and how effective the policy is. Policy maintenance, succession or termination is the sixth and final stage where, after evaluation, we may want to check if the policy is being run the way it has been prescribed, what happens next after some time or whether to discontinue the policy based on feedback from the society.

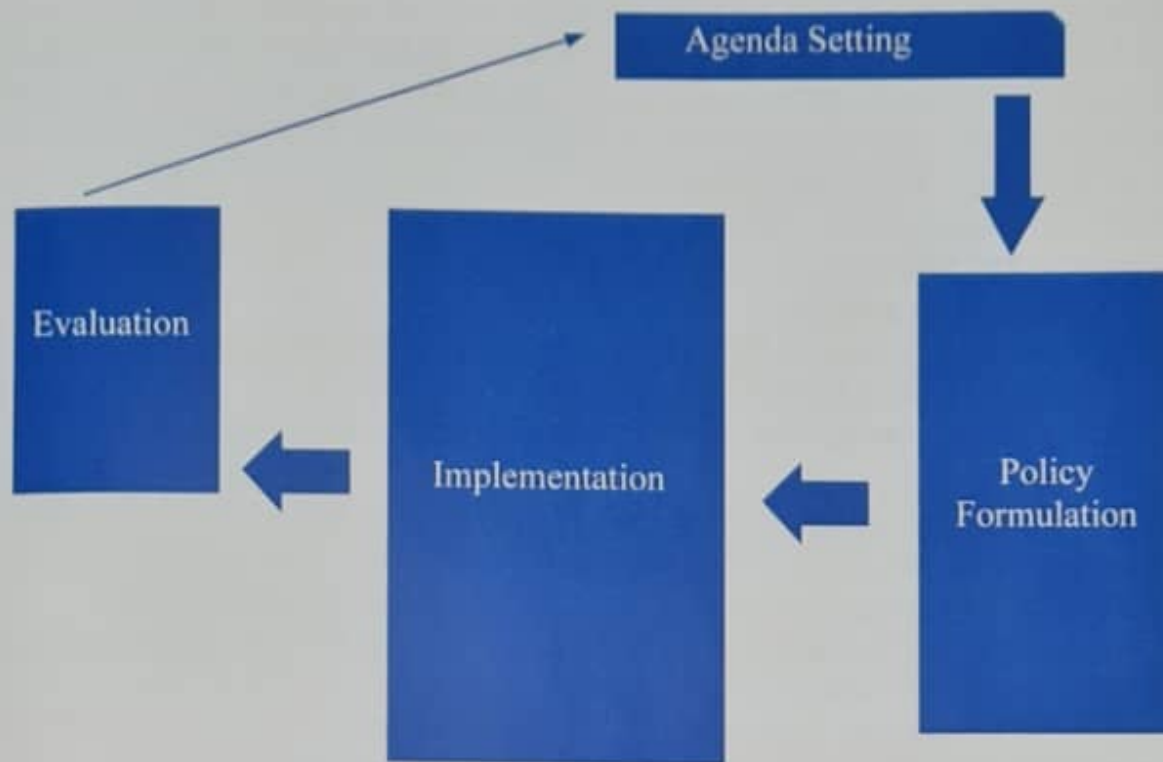


Figure 1: Steps Involved in Policy Document

However, policies are formulated to affect the reality, hence, political realities must be taken into full account. Certain elements of policies are recognised and subsequently discussed.

Policy objectives: These serve as the end of the policy. That is, what the policy intends to achieve. For example; a policy objective could be the attainment of increased agricultural production exports and self-sufficiency in agricultural produce (for example self-sufficiency in rice production and tomato paste, the export of yam, and fairer access to grazing lands).

Policy instruments: These are tools, means or the actions used to achieve the objectives. Examples can include economic tools such as taxes, spending incentives;

fertiliser subsidy, import tariffs on dairy products and rice; and regulations which could be voluntary or legal. At this juncture, it has become relevant to take a closer look at agricultural policies enacted by successive governments in Nigeria, over the years.

Agriculture and Policy Variations in Nigeria

It has become a part of governance in Nigeria that once there is a change in administration, the existing policies cease and new ones are formulated. This has contributed to the reason why agricultural policies and programmes have undergone several changes, especially in the postcolonial era. The primary means of identifying policy discontinuity is proper policy documentation and there has not been improvement in livelihoods as a result of changes in policy, because the policies and programmes only vary in nomenclature and organizational network, but not in terms of objectives. For example, policies over the years have been formulated to address food security and sufficiency, export of excess product (which are no longer in excess) to other countries to generate foreign exchange, and to provide rural dwellers and farmers the necessary support for development. These objectives have not changed, despite all the variations in policies and Nigeria is yet to attain food security. Hence, one would not but wonder, why there is a need for new policies in the first place.

The general objective of the livestock sub-sector for example is to put all available livestock resources into best use, so that the country can be self-sufficient in livestock production. While trying to achieve this, the livestock sub-sector also aims at improving the nutritional status of Nigerians, through the domestic provision of adequate protein, provision of employment through livestock, and maintenance of a balance in the ecosystem. These array of aggregated objective for the livestock sub-sector has not changed, hence, strategies could have been modified; as such creating a new policy under different names would not have been necessary.

Ecological specialisation is another long standing policy which support the raising of different kinds of livestock in various ecological zones of the country. This is because some species of livestock may thrive better in certain regions, because they have proven comparative geographical production advantage. Again, this is a policy whose objective remains relevant since its inception many years ago. As such, there is no real need for formulation of new policies in that regards. The grazing route policy (wherein pastoralists are supposed to navigate through when grazing their livestock) has been in existence for decades, yet, Nigeria is not free of farmers/herdsmen conflicts, occasioned by trespassing of cattle on farm lands.

If this is the case, why then do we need to set another agenda for policy formulation when we are yet to solve a problem for which policies were raised in the first place? Agriculture continues to suffer from inertia associated with these policies and programme reformation that pervade Nigeria. To be successful, Nigeria's reform

and agricultural programmes in particular need to be backed up or initiated through a policy or policies, coupled with increased and better co-ordinated technical and financial assistance.

History of Nigeria's Agricultural Policies

There have been several agricultural policies in Nigeria since pre-independence and they include: non-price incentive support programmes (e.g. Farm Services Centres; National Agricultural Cooperative Management Centre; World Bank Assisted Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs); River Basin and Rural Development Authorities; Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme; and so on); price incentive programmes (e.g., price and tax incentives, guaranteed minimum price introduced, subsidies on inputs and so on); macro-economic policies (e.g., fixed and stable exchange and interest rate policy); direct government participation in agriculture; and institutional changes (e.g., re-organization of commodity boards). More specifically, we have had the Forest Policy of 1937 which was revised in 1945. There was also the Agricultural Policy of 1946 which was the first all-embracing policy statement in respect of Agriculture, then in 1948, we had Policy for the marketing of oils (oil seeds and cotton). The year 1952 heralded the Forest Policy for the Western Region, while there was yet another Agricultural Policy in 1952 which, perhaps culminated into the Agricultural policy for Nigeria in 1988. The aim of the agricultural policy of 1988 was self-sufficiency in food and agricultural raw materials. A close look and critical analyses of these policies would show that the current Nigeria circumstance is not different from what we had post-independence. So, a question, one would be tempted to ask is, why the parade of policies over the years, when our requirements in terms of policies remain the same?

Other policies, as enacted by the Nigerian government since independence (i.e. post-1960) are Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and Green Revolution. Others are Livestock and Fish Production policy, Industrial Raw Material production, Agricultural Extension Technology Transfer, Agricultural Credit, Agricultural Insurance, Agricultural Processing, Agricultural Research, and many more. The OFN was an agricultural policy introduced by General Olusegun Obasanjo during his tenure as Nigerian Head of State in 1976. The policy was in place from May 1976 to 1980, with the aim of increasing local food production and reducing imports. The Green Revolution of the Shehu Shagari regime was a follow up on the OFN. It was birthed in April 1980 and lasted till 1985, with the aim of increasing productivity to attain food sufficiency, by promoting high yielding varieties and the spread of technologies. It was also aimed at increasing the production and processing of export crops to boost and enhance foreign exchange earnings.

Again, this policy was discontinued or died naturally after inauguration of another government in 1986. Since this period, we have had the structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the Better Life Programmes. Every successive government comes in with its policies and the unwholesome thing about those policies is that

a new administration marks the end of a particular policy. More recently, we have the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) of the Jonathan Administration. The government in 2011, began a reform of the agricultural sector after several years of neglect.

In a bid to redirect the sector, the government implemented a new strategy (the Agricultural Transformation Agenda- ATA) which was built on the principle that agriculture is a business, and therefore; policy should be about supporting it. The main priority of the policy was to “reset the clock” and reintroduce the Nigerian economy to business-like sustainable agriculture that would be driven by the private sector. That policy was in place from September 2011-2015. ATA however, like previous policies, also faced challenges and did not deliver on all the targets identified. For example, during the time, Nigeria still imported about \$3 to \$5 billion worth of food annually, especially wheat, rice, fish, and sundry items, including fresh fruits.

The lack of food security, high rate of wastage, as well as low foreign exchange earnings, made the Buhari-led administration to come up with the Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) with the claims that it can build an agribusiness economy capable of yielding sustained prosperity by meeting domestic food security goals, generate exports, and support sustainable income and job growth. Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP), also known as the Green Alternative, was formulated by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) to end decades of botched policies. This policy document was consequential to an intensive consultative process, involving multiple stakeholders beginning from November 2015 through April 2016. The APP was consequently established in June 2016.

Taking a cursory look at all the listed policies, one would immediately notice that all of them hinge on food sufficiency, foreign exchange earnings, and stable economy. Are we suggesting that Nigeria no longer needs to feed its nation thereby warranting the development of new policies since OFN in 1976? Could we not have saved resources as a nation to achieve other things instead of spending so much on mobilisation of multiple stakeholders, who, for several months, deliberated on the formulation of new policies?

Consequences of Policy Variations on Economic Stability

Economic development is a process of structural transformation with continuous technological innovation and industrial upgrading, which increase labour productivity, and accompanied improvements in infrastructure and institution, that reduce transaction costs. Economic development is a branch of local economy whose focal point is aimed at developing human, social, organizational and physical resources. Economic development has its set rules which the society will first of all have to naturally comply with, and bring its positive functions into play. After compliance, the society can then make moves at conquering the negative effects

through national power. This is because a country is as strong as the economic base of the whole society, gross productivity and gross production relations. On the other hand, agricultural development loosely entails how to get agriculture moving. So far in Nigeria, it has focused mainly on the role of small farms; and increased investor interest suggests that there could be real potential in large scale commercial investments. A key question is: what policies and institutions are necessary to enable countries to get the most out of these investments in terms of stability, economic development and food security?

Policy-making bodies of government set development goals and objectives, such as to achieve food security or surplus agricultural production that would stimulate economic growth, or provide health care and education for community development. It is the responsibility of government extension organizations to help meet these goals by formulating sub-objectives and strategies to attain them. In recognition of the continuous failure of Nigeria's economy and the potential for further deterioration, the Federal Government has developed a medium-term Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP). Whilst trying to achieve the objectives of the APP, the ERGP was birthed to resuscitate the economy of the country. The ERGP, which was conceived in 2016, is a reform strategy aimed at building on the budget of change of 2016, yet implementation did not take place until a year after. Hence, the ERGP was introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria in April 2017 to achieve a growth rate of 7% by 2020 to address the country's socio-economic challenges. The reform strategy was as a result of a negative growth of -1.5% in GDP, recorded in 2016.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) aims to sustain inclusive growth through economy recovery in the short term and diversify the economy through structural reforms in the long run. In trying to revitalize the economy of the nation; the government, through the ERGP, aims to create jobs as well as empower the youths. The three broad strategic objectives of the ERGP are to: restore growth (less investment on foreign exchange, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSMEs), macro-economic stability), invest in human capital (social inclusion, job creation, and youth empowerment, health insurance) and build a globally competitive economy (invest in infrastructure and improve business environment).

According to the ERGP, a deliberate effort will also be put in place to develop human capital and infrastructure. The ERGP encompasses the micro and macro-economy, oil and gas, agriculture, health, education, industrial and manufacturing, power, and transport sectors; tourism as well as real estate.

The Consequences of Policy Variations on Agriculture and Economic Stability
Impact, according to the Department for International Development (DFID) is 'positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended'. It could be measured

during or after a programme, measurements of impact are used to determine to what extent the intervention had achieved what it was set out to achieve; determine other effects, positive or negative; decide whether to stop, continue, scale up, replicate or adapt the intervention; and to draw lessons for other similar interventions. So how have the changes in agricultural policies impacted on economic stability in Nigeria?

Policy inconsistency affects the Nigerian economy in several unimaginable ways. First of all, the lack of stability and continuity in policies, by succeeding governments is the foremost challenge that may hinder the attainment of its economic and developmental goals. Very few policies have stood the test of time and abrupt cessation of such policies, from one government's tenure to another, is the bane of Nigeria's stunted growth and development. A major setback for the country to achieve the continuity of policies is a lack of political will. There is a dire need for successive governments to build on existing policies, rather than designing new plans that may not have reached fruition by the end of their tenure. It is highly beneficial for us, as a country, to imbibe the principle of continuity of tested procedures that are working; than for us to develop new lofty ideas, that may not be achievable within a short period. Unfortunately, governments, though, centred on everyone and not a few people; have consistently relied on a few people, while taking major decisions that will affect the entire populace. This has necessitated that full implementation of newly enacted policies eventually become a mirage and may meet stumbling blocks, especially if certain elements in governance do not believe or key into the plan.

The lack of policy cohesion and sustainability has prevented the sector from growing to its full potential whilst the issue of discontinuity was noticeably rooted in the military era, and since then; subsequent governments have adopted the same attitude towards policy. For instance, General Yakubu Gowon introduced the National Accelerated Food Production Program Policy (NAFPP) in 1975, while General Olusegun Obasanjo's regime came up with the Operation Feed the Nation policy in 1976. During President Shagari's regime, Nigeria operated The Green Revolution Policy and this continued with each administration. By 1983, General Buhari came into power and he used another policy all together and the same went for General Babangida. We could go on and on.

The lack of coherence in policy management has strongly affected the implementation of budgets, as investors in agriculture have faced difficulty in accessing lands and occupancy related issues. Other consequences of policy inconsistencies on Nigerian economy may include non-existent of access roads to project sites, (weathered roads and erosion), lack of power supply, lack of water supply, difficulty in accessing incentives prescribed for agricultural projects, heavy import duty cost on agricultural equipment(s), difficulty in accessing loans from banks, due to protracted processes and stringent requirements, and price competitiveness of local farm produce when compared to the imported products due to low import duty. All the afore-mentioned

can largely be ameliorated, if Nigeria remains consistent in implementation of policies or if we do not relent on our resolve to allow policy continuity, even after an administration's tenure elapses. One way of achieving this is to imbibe a culture that will ensure the fostering of good policy advocacy and implementation strategies.

Additionally, farmers are not able to access loans to power their farming activities; this is largely due to disruptions occasioned by impromptu policy changes that would not allow a policy/programme to have reached its terminal stage, before its abandonment for a new one. Hence, there is a need to rework certain other strategies that may impinge on the continuation of relevant existing policies. There is also a need to relax rules guiding policies such that the private sector can, to a large extent, take certain decisions without recourse to the government in order to be able to commercialise, as well as eliminate government involvement in certain areas. Examples can be found in the distribution of fertilisers by government and replacing it with private sector distribution. There are other consequences such as the deteriorated;insufficient and abandoned irrigation facilities that would have boosted agricultural production; but, they could no longer be utilised due to the fact that our governments have moved and has kept moving on. On a final note, the incessant farmers-herdsmen clashes, the multi-dimensional corruption challenges which should not be overlooked, as well as the poor investment climate emanating from the low income and savings are all a fall out of policy discontinuity. There was a time in Nigeria when, as a matter of principle (War Against Indiscipline), one could not throw litters up and about, without severe sanctions. This is, however, no longer existing in the country, due to lack of continuity and/or inconsistencies. The lack of predictable policy making has been singled out as one of the reasons why foreign investors keep their distance. Similarly, Nigerians are also skeptical about investing in their own country because they do not trust the system and are reluctant to buy into the national government agenda, due to the long history of patchiness in government policies. These attributes can only help to aggravate the already worsened economic situation of the country.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It must be stressed that there is a dire need for successive governments to demonstrate strong political will, to maintain policies of previous administrations, in order to forestall an economic break down. It is high time the Nigerian citizens realize that the country belongs to all and that government officials are elected into offices to carry out their wishes. Hence, a non-cooperative government should no longer be tolerated. Once a policy has been identified as suitable, enduring, economical and people-centred, then such policies must be upheld by subsequent administrations, until such a time when the populace may feel there is a need to review for possible upgrade. It should, however, be noted that without a fully implementable policy, the agricultural sector will continue to dwindle, because no government will be able to perform, where policies are not sustainable. The implication is that both government

and stakeholders in agriculture, need to work hand in hand and thus; for the strategy to be successful, there needs to be a synergy between and among other components of the agricultural sector; such as the transport, industry, and power components. It is imperative that the government no longer ignores the total execution of the numerous standing policies to enhance agricultural production in the country.

Specifically, the government should adequately fund agriculture, to enhance yields in agriculture and boost employment in Nigeria. It is also pertinent that irrigation facilities should be urgently expanded while existing ones are overhauled to boost agricultural production. Incentives to engage private organizations to venture into commercial farming as a business, needs to be introduced. The incessant herdsman-farmers' clashes can no longer be ignored and must be tackled squarely, in addition to vigorously working the plan, already spelt out to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. The government would need to guarantee a minimum price for food crops to stabilise prices and revise the land use act to enable easier access to land for investors.

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