



## AN OVERVIEW OF THE EFFECTS OF SOME AGRICULTURAL POLICIES IN NIGERIA-1960-2020

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### Abstract

This review provides a systematic exposition of some selected classes of agricultural policy issues and challenges in Nigeria. The objective of this study is to examine the role of agricultural policies in economic development and integration in Nigeria. The study involved a literature review for retrieving documents and analysing them. The findings of the study indicate that from 1960 to 2020, there were numerous policies aimed at enhancing agricultural development and economic integration in rural and urban areas. These policies were meant to address various challenges to agricultural development on a spatio-temporal basis, with different objectives but common responsibilities. However, these policies and programmes record success at different time intervals depending on the commitment from the government's side and assimilation from the farmers' side. Despite that, the policies were constrained by various challenges: technical, social, political, and economic. This study recommends that the existing policy barriers to increasing productivity, sustainability, and resilience should be removed, redirect government spending to ensure the availability of public goods and services that benefit producers, consumers, and society as a whole, and encourage the establishment of the localized agricultural policies at state and local government levels.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, Policy, Policy change, Nigeria

### Introduction

Agriculture is defined broadly as the set of activities that use land and other natural resources to produce food, fibre, and animal products for direct consumption (self-consumption) or for sale, either as food or as input to the manufacturing industry. Forestry, fishing, and hunting are typically classified as agricultural activities (Cafiero, 2003; Dellal and Bolat, 2019). Agricultural policy refers to a set of laws that govern domestic agriculture as well as imports of foreign agricultural products. Agricultural policies are typically implemented by governments with the goal of achieving a specific outcome in domestic agricultural product markets. In Nigeria, agricultural policy is shaped around the axis of increasing productivity and competitiveness, ensuring food security and safety, and promoting long-term development (Akinbamowo, 2013; Owolabi *et al.*, 2016; Pawlak and Kołodziejczak, 2020).

Agricultural policies and practises are critical for building and strengthening the resilience of agricultural landscapes and agricultural-based livelihoods to social-

ecological shocks and stresses, especially in developing economies, typically in Sub-Saharan Africa (Dellal and Bolat, 2019). The primary goal of Nigerian agricultural policy in the early years was to increase production in response to the growing demand for food. Because of national priorities and needs, a protective policy with government interventions was implemented. Nigeria was regarded as Africa's largest economy in 2014. The agricultural sector employs roughly two-thirds of the total labor force in the country (IFAD, 2012; Owolabi *et al.*, 2016). In 2002, agriculture's value added to total GDP was 50% (World Bank, 2012; Owolabi *et al.*, 2016). Despite being the world's largest producer of cassava, yam, and cowpea, Nigeria is a food-deficit country that relies on imports of grains, livestock products, and fish (Owolabi *et al.*, 2016). The history of Nigerian agriculture policy should undoubtedly begin during the colonial era, when the Colonialists sought to orient Nigerian farming systems toward meeting and serving the demands of their home companies while also creating jobs in their countries. As a result, structures were put in place primarily to improve the transportation

and evacuation of high-value and exportable commodities (Okuneye and Ayinde, 2011). Prior to the 1960s, agriculture was assumed to play a dominant role in the Nigerian economy. With little government support, Nigerian agriculture was able to grow at a sufficient rate to provide adequate food for an expanding population, raw materials for a burgeoning industrial sector, increased public revenue and foreign exchange for the government, and employment opportunities for an expanding labour force. The government's limited support for agricultural development was focused on export crops such as cocoa, groundnuts, palm oil, rubber, and cotton, as self-sufficiency in food production did not appear to be a problem worthy of public attention (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Rural Development, 2010).

Agriculture has long been regarded as the "mainstay" of the Nigerian economy, with numerous roles to play in the country's economic development. Among the traditional roles of the agricultural sector in a growing economy are those of providing adequate food for an increasing population, supplying adequate raw materials to a growing industrial sector, constituting the major source of employment, constituting a major source of foreign exchange earnings, and providing a market for the products of the industrial sector (FMAWRRD, 2010). However, the fundamental relationship between government policy toward agriculture requires analysis on multiple levels. The approaches taken by governments to agricultural production are shaped by ideas of economic development, economic interests, the prescriptions and requirements of international agencies (such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) and regimes, local environmental conditions, and the legacies of national and subnational institutions, among others (Lencucha *et al.*, 2020).

### Methodology

This study involved a literature review. Articles related to this study were retrieved from reputable databases, such as Scopus, Elsevier, ProQuest, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The documents were accumulated from search engines using relevant search terms, including "agricultural in Nigeria" OR "agricultural policy", "regional agricultural policy" OR "national policies on agriculture" OR "agricultural development in Nigeria" OR "national development plan" etc. The abstract of the retrieved documents was extensively reviewed for categorisation into a range of themes and associations. At this stage, duplicate documents were discarded, thus leaving only the relevant original documents for further review. Articles written in other than the English language and published after 1960 and beyond 2020 were excluded. Articles reviewed in this study were selected as indicated in their title or abstract pertaining to agricultural policy. Besides, full-text review and assessment of documents that report agricultural policy as well. The objective of this review is to examine the role of agricultural policies in economic development and integration in Nigeria. This review focused only on

post-independence agricultural policies as they were formulated by Nigerians and reflect the interests of Nigeria. The paper will serve as a policy guide to stakeholders for decision making in the agricultural sector. The paper provides critical insights into the merits and demerits of various agricultural policies in the post-independence history of Nigeria and the implications for agricultural and economic development.

### The post-independence agricultural policies in Nigeria

The main thrust of sustainable development in Nigeria is the improvement of its citizens' living standards. This should be accomplished by stimulating economic activity in all critical sectors, particularly agriculture. Agriculture is a well-known sector that can improve people's living conditions for long-term development (Nnamani, 2009; Fankun and Evbuoman, 2017). A substantial number of policies were formulated to govern agricultural production in the country. The post-colonial era was focused on more equitable agricultural growth, and policies to promote this were implemented, particularly in the pursuit of export-led growth. The country was divided into three regions: The Western Region (cocoa), the Northern Region (groundnut), and the Eastern Region (oil palm) (Christian, 2020).

#### *First National Development Plan (1962–68).*

Nigeria's post-independence development planning began in 1962, with the adoption of the First National Development Plan (1962–68). This plan had a total investment expenditure of ₦2, 132 million, comprising ₦1, 352.3 million from the public sector and ₦780 million from the private sector. It also set a target growth rate for the economy of 4% per year (Iwuagwu, 2020). It emphasised the introduction of more modern agricultural methods through farm settlements, co-operative (nucleus) plantations, the supply of improved farm implements (e.g., hydraulic hand presses for oil palm processing), and a greatly expanded agricultural extension service, among other things (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011; Ugwuanyi, 2014; Christian, 2020). Agriculture received ₦ 160 million because it contributed approximately 60% of national income, export earnings, and provided a source of living for more than 70% of the population (FAO 1966; Sokari-Geoge, 1987). This allocation was for both capital and recurring expenditures, but due to budgetary constraints, the plan document states that "the highest priority has been given to agriculture, industry, and training of high and intermediate level manpower" (First Plan 1962; Sokari-Geoge, 1987). In addition, the Plan emphasises a strategy for agricultural regionalization. This is a giant leap into the unknown. The responsibility for agricultural development strategies was transferred to regional governments under the regionalization strategy (Ukwu 1983), but there was no strong national government pressure to coordinate the agricultural programmes of the various regional governments (Sokari-Geoge, 1987). During this era, some governments established publicly owned

Agricultural Development Corporations, commodity boards, and a number of farm settlement schemes, but these actions were justified more by social considerations and by encouraging community participation in agricultural activities than by direct intervention on their part (Okuneye, 2011). From 1962 to 1968, agricultural policies were largely based on regional governments' efforts and orientation toward economic development and the agenda of that region. The era saw some central and regional policies that led to the formulation of various policies and programmes governing agricultural activities, such as the marketing board to regulate agricultural commodities, the Niger dam to improve agricultural production, and extension services. The early 1960s also witnessed the establishment of several agricultural research institutes and their extension research liaison services. Some of the major institutions are: The Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Service (AERLS) at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, established in 1963; the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), established in 1967; the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA) etc. Some specialised development schemes initiated or implemented during this period includes:

#### ***Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS) (1960-1964)***

Farm settlement is a government initiative that promotes rural development by providing small farmers with resources and land for commercial farm operations, efficiency in the utilisation of land resources, and dignity in farming through the provision of infrastructure (Jaeger, 1981; Shafto, 2017). This was initiated by some Nigerian regional governments and was a critical component of the Western Nigeria Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy of 1959. The main goal of this scheme was to settle young school leavers in a specific area of land, making farming their career and thus preventing them from moving to cities in search of white-collar jobs (Olatunbosun, 1964; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Christian, 2020). The

secondary goal was to raise the standard of living in rural communities at a low cost while discouraging rural-urban migration (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Abiodun *et al.*, 2020). Unfortunately, the scheme went into obscurity with the few available ones in jeopardy because some of the settlers were too young and inexperienced in farming, resulting in a high percentage of drop-outs among the settlers (Amalu, 1998), a lack of funds, politicking with the program, and a lack of understanding of the meaning and implications of the scheme by some settlers who assumed that through their participation in the scheme they would eventually get paid jobs. They were discouraged, and some withdrew as soon as the allowances stopped being paid. Some of the participants were discouraged by the high cost of establishing a viable farm settlement in terms of cash and staff. Finally, the scheme's expenses were primarily for the construction of infrastructure for the settlers, such as houses, schools, markets, and roads, which did not directly result in an increase in agricultural output by the participants as intended (Roider, 1968; Jaeger, 1981; Amalu, 1988; Iwuchukwu and Igokwe, 2012; Ambali and Murana, 2017; Shafto, 2017; Abiodun, 2020; Christain, 2020). Clark (1963) pointed out the major challenges of the 1962–68 agricultural policies, stating that the regional agricultural planning groups worked independently on the planning process, developing their own programmes and employing their own methods of review and evaluation. Strong rivalry among governments frequently hampered plans' coordination, limiting regional exchange of ideas, information, or personnel. While various agricultural development strategies were pursued by the various regional governments involved in agricultural planning, the strategies were never clearly formulated and their implications were never scrutinised. In some cases, tacit assumptions about the course of policy to promote development predate the plan framework itself, and failure to examine the assumptions is at the root of many criticisms of regional agricultural policies and some of their disappointing outcomes (Stolper, 1966).

**Table 1: Summary of major agricultural policies in Nigeria**

Policy	Objectives	Expected outcome
National accelerated food production programme (NAFPP) 1972-1973	The policy goal of NAFPP was to make Nigeria self-sufficient in food production.	The programme was expected to achieve a significant increase in maize, cassava, rice, and wheat production in the northern states through consistent production over a short period of time.
Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) 1974-1986	The objective of this policy is to increase food production and farm incomes for the majority of the rural households in the defined project regions, thus improving the standard of living and welfare of the farming population, with the hope of reducing abject poverty	The programme was expected increasing food production for rural dwellers and raising the income level of small-scale farmers by making provision for improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, credit facilities and infrastructural facilities.
River Basin-Development Authorities (RBDAs) 1976	The objective of this programme is each authority operates in an assigned geo-morphological and political boundary and work to improve agriculture and rural development through irrigation, control of river pollution and also to assist farmers in processing food crops	The programme was expected to provide framework on how to ensure agricultural development through provision of water for irrigation (to ensure all-year farming), fisheries projects, mechanized farming and livestock development. Also, expected to improve navigation, hydro-electric power generation and encourage the establishment of industrial complexes that could bring about the private and public sectors in joint business partnerships.
Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) 1976 – 1980.	The objective of the policy was that Nigeria would attain higher levels of food production-and thereby the assurance of self reliance and self sufficiency in food output.	The policy was expected to increase food production on the premise that availability of cheap food would lead to a higher nutritional level which, in turn, would affect national growth tremendously.
Green Revolution Programme (GRP) 1981 – 1983.	The policy goal of GRP had the dual purpose of curtailing food importation through boosting crop production, and promoting big mechanised farming.	The expected outcome of GRP was the attainment of self-sufficiency in food within the shortest possible time; production of enough livestock products for the domestic and export markets; and the revival of the declining trend in the production of traditional export crops, such as cocoa, oilseeds, rubber, cotton and coffee.
National Development Project (NFDPP) 1990	The main objective of NFDPP-1 was to sustainably increase the income of the Fadama users through expansion of farm and non-farm activities with high value-added output	The Fadama project is expected to foster development, increase output along valley bottom areas and increase income of users of the rural land and water resources on a sustainable basis.
Agricultural Transformation Agenda (2011-2015)	The specific objective is to increase, on a sustainable basis, the income of smallholder farmers and rural entrepreneurs that are engaged in the production, processing, storage and marketing of the priority commodity value chains	The intended outcome of the agenda is to promote agriculture as a business, integrate the agricultural value chain and make agriculture a key driver of Nigeria's economic growth.
The Agriculture Promotion Policy (2016 – 2020)	The objective of the agricultural promotion policy is to enhance food security, import substitution, job creation and economic diversification.	The Policy was expected to deliberately designed to end decades of failed policies and create a sustainable plan for the advancement of the agriculture sector and incorporates the contents of the previous (ATA) policy, examined why it failed and fine-tuned for better delivery.

### ***National accelerated food production programme (NAFPP) (1972-1973)***

The NAFPP, as it became known, was launched as a pilot programme in eight states in 1973: Benue, Kano, Plateau, Anambra, Imo, Oyo, Ogun, and Ondo. The project's research and extension components were developed between 1974 and 1977 (Njoku and Mijindadi, 1985; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Ani, 2013). Mini-kit, production-kit and mass adoption phases were the three phases of the programme (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Ani, 2013). According to (Njoku and Mijindadi, 1985). Four features make the NAFPP unique as a strategy for increasing food production in Nigeria: (a) Crop-based research and extension efforts are organized; (b) the farmer is involved directly from the start in identifying the improved seed varieties and cultural practices that are most acceptable to him; (c) extension workers receive intensive training in crop production techniques and are closely involved in research; and (d) the supply of production inputs is transferred to the producer. In essence, eleven major innovations were recommended to participating farmers under the NAFPP technological package. These include (1) the use of high-yielding seed varieties, (2) the use of chemical seed dressing, (3) the use of chemical fertilizer. (4) planting time (5) plant spacing (6) weeding time (7) planting position (8) harvesting time (9) the use of hired tractor service (10) Using modern farming processing facilities; (11) Using modern processing facilities (Akinola, 1986). It provided direct and immediate feedback from farmers because it was simple to confirm that a farmer did not accept or would not adopt an innovation if the farmer did not participate in any of the phases, particularly the production kit and mass adoption phases (Bartlett and Fajemisin, 1981; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Ani, 2013). The project consists of three major interrelated components--research, extension, and agro services (Njoku and Mijindadi, 1985). The NAFPP could have moved faster if not for some major constraints. These constraints include: the non-adoption of improved crop varieties; the insufficient number of skilled extension staff; and the government's lack of support for the programme (Bartlett and Fajemisin, 1981; Njoku and Mijindadi, 1985). Several improved varieties of sorghum, millet, and wheat have been developed through research at the Institute for Agricultural Research, Samaru-Zaria, the majority of which have been found to be acceptable to farmers in various parts of the Northern States. Problems of a socioeconomic nature, on the other hand, continue to reduce the rate of adoption. High-yielding, short-stalked, quick-maturing, and disease-resistant sorghum varieties have been developed. Farmers have been slow to adopt these varieties because their short stalks limit their usefulness as fencing materials after harvest. Farmers' preferences are also a source of contention. In some cases, the colour and flavour of seed have rendered food prepared from specific varieties unpalatable to farmers. Other shortcomings of NAFPP include; inadequate number of extension officers to supervise NAFPP field operations; farmers' sponsorship (financially) of the last two phases

of the programme; abrupt/premature withdrawal of funding by the Federal Government due to the introduction of Operation Feed the Nation (Bartlett and Fajemisin, 1981; Njoku and Mijindadi, 1985; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Ani, 2013).

### ***Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) (1974-1986)***

The Agricultural development programme originated in Malawi and was designed to overcome the issue of poverty in rural areas. The "basic concept was transferred to Nigeria in 1974 with the establishment of the first three enclave projects in the Northern part of the country. This includes: Funtua, Gusau and Gombe Agricultural Development Programmes" (Omonijo *et al.*, 2014). The program's earlier impressive results led to its replication in 1989 in all nineteen states of the Federation (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). According to Omonijo *et al.* (2014), average yields have increased for all the major crops in Nigeria since the inception of the ADPs compared with the period before the establishment of the ADPs. Yield data for Bauchi, Kano, Sokoto, Ilorin, and Oyo-North Agricultural Development Programmes from 1982 to 1991 revealed that yields increased in millet, cassava, and cotton in the Bauchi State. Agricultural Development Programme; rice in the Kaduna Agricultural Development Programme; cassava in the Ilorin Agricultural Development Programme; and yam and cowpeas in the Ondo Agricultural Development Programme (World Bank, 1993; Aliero, 2008; Omonijo *et al.*, 2014). Some issues that arose during the project's execution included a lack of funds due to a drop in oil prices that began in 1982, which caused delays in recruiting competent staff and the provision or purchase of materials and facilities required for the project's launch. As a result, implementation took much longer than expected. Second, ADP emphasises modern/high input technology such as sole cropping, whereas the majority of farmers practise mixed/relay cropping. There was also a delay in the supply of subsidised input for the programme. Other challenges include, among others, the high frequency of labour mobility, limited involvement of input agencies, dwindling funding policies and counterpart funding, and the intricacies of technology transfer (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012).

### ***River Basin-Development Authorities (RBDAs) (1976-2020)***

The River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs) are mandated by law to develop, supply, and manage Nigeria's basin water resources. River Basin Development Authority (RBDA) Act CAP 396 LFN 1990, Section 1 (1) (Adeoti, 2020). In 1976, the RBDAs were given an unusually broad range of functions. Irrigation, flood control, watershed management, pollution control, fisheries, and navigation were among them, as were activities unrelated to water resources such as seed multiplication, livestock breeding, and food processing. Their mandate also included a number of activities that would be shared with state agencies, such as agricultural services and rural electrification

(Adams, 1985; Danladi and Naankiel, 2019). The RBDAs were also supposed to perform more comprehensive economic and social functions, like bridging the gap between rural and urban centres and discouraging migration from rural areas to urban centres. These objectives were to be achieved through surface impoundment of water by constructing dams that would enable all year-round farming activities in the country (George, 2019). The following issues were discovered in the programme: a number of authorities grew out of proportion, and the operations of some suffered from extensive political interference. Furthermore, substantial public funds were squandered in order to streamline the size and functions of RBDAs through the sale of non-water assets (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Adeoti, 2020). However, nearly four decades after its inception, the RBDAs have failed to meet expectations. The RBDAs have simply failed to harness the country's water resources in order to boost agricultural development within the country through irrigation farming (George, 2019).

#### ***Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) (1976–1980)***

The Operation Feed the Nation was one of the attempts made by the Nigerian government to popularize agriculture and to uplift the life of rural dwellers and that of all Nigerians (Nwosu, 1990). Operation Feed the Nation was a national agricultural extension and mobilization program as a measure to achieve self-sufficiency in food crop production and inspire a new generation to return to farming. The movement to increase entrepreneurship in the sector also involved a government mandate to the Nigerian Agriculture and Cooperative Bank to increase lending to farmers and agricultural credit scheme was initiated by the government. Government involvement included extension services, subsidised fertiliser distribution, and a desire by large scale farmers to increase commercial farming. Pesticides were sprayed with aircraft, and poultry chicks were distributed to farmers. Furthermore, the government purchased large tracts of land in order to establish agricultural estates, with plots leased to farmers who receive government extension assistance (Forrest, 1981; Arua, 1982; Anikpo, 1985; Offu, 2013). Except for the issue of raising awareness of the country's food situation, the majority of studies that examined the contribution of OFN yielded failure verdicts (Akinbode, 1980; Akinbode, 1982). For example, the increase in aggregate food production recorded in the program's first year was not sustained beyond that year. In fact, 88.3% of farmers polled in Oyo State decried the program's poor planning (Akande, 1980; Akinbode, 1982). The initiative to use it to uplift not only agricultural production but also the standard of living of rural Nigerians was, therefore, lost from inception (Nwosu, 1990).

#### ***Green Revolution Programme (GRP) (1981–1983)***

In April 1980, the Green Revolution (GR) was launched. The programme aimed to increase food and raw material production in order to ensure food security and self-sufficiency in basic staples. Second, it aimed to increase

livestock and fish production to meet domestic and export demands, as well as to increase and diversify the country's foreign exchange earnings through export crop production and processing (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The Green Revolution is unquestionably one of the Nigerian government's series of pro-poor policy reforms. A reform is defined as the government's deliberate effort to redress perceived errors in prior and existing policy and institutional arrangements (Grindle and Thomas, 1991; Dare Kolawole, 2012). Interventionist policies aimed at agricultural intensification, for example, were always in place in Nigeria during and after independence. As a result, the Nigerian Green Revolution is a continuing process. The federal government ensured the program's success by providing agrochemicals, improved seeds/seedlings, irrigation systems, machines (mechanisation), credit facilities, improved marketing, and favourable pricing for agricultural products (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The green revolution was thus conceived as a result of advanced plant technology, the complexity of which resulted from combining separate inputs to increase grain yields. Its success became reliant on combining inputs and the availability of scientific knowledge be used on the inputs (Famoriyo and Raza, 1982). The programme did not achieve its goal of increasing food supply because most of the projects involved in the programme were delayed. In addition, there was no monitoring or evaluation of the projects for which large sums of money were spent (Famoriyo and Raza, 1982; Dare Kolawole, 2012; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012).

#### ***National Fadama Development Project (NFDP) (1990-2020)***

Under World Bank financing, the first National Fadama Development Project (NFDP-1) was designed in the early 1990s to promote simple low-cost improved irrigation technology. The primary goal of NFDP-1 was to increase the incomes of Fadama users in a sustainable manner by expanding farm and non-farm activities with high value-added output. Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Imo, Kaduna, Kebbi, Lagos, Niger, Ogun Oyo, and Taraba were among the twelve states covered by the programme, which also included the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Presently the program is in phase III (Olaolu *et al.*, 2013; Alawode and Oluwatayo, 2019; Christian, 2020). The National Fadama Development Project I (NFDP I) was primarily concerned with the promotion of simple low-cost irrigation technologies in order to increase food production, but it largely ignored downstream activities such as processing, preservation, conservation, and rural infrastructures designed to ensure efficient evacuation of farm produce to markets. Furthermore, the project did not take into account farmers involved in other areas of agriculture, such as livestock and fisheries. This resulted in not only perpetual conflict among users, but also limited benefits to only those involved in crop production (Adegbite *et al.*, 2008). While the Fadama II project is carried out using the Community Demand Driven (CDD) approach, which emphasises stakeholder participation at the

community level in order to develop participatory and socially inclusive Local Development Plans (LDPs), which serve as the foundation for support and funding (Agwu and Abah, 2010). The Fadama experiment in constructing social capital for development arose from lessons learned over the years from the implementation of various agricultural and rural development projects (Eze, 2014). The sole aim is to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of rural dwellers by building local capacity to fulfil the country's agricultural potential. According to Bature *et al.* (2013) and Benjamiin and Victoria (2014), the "Fadama III operation will support the financing and implementation of five main components designed to transfer financial and technical resources to the beneficiary groups in: (i) institutional and social development; (ii) physical infrastructure for productive use; (iii) transfer and adoption of technology to expand productivity, improve value-added, and conserve land quality; (iv) support extension and applied research; and (v) provide matching grants to access assets for income-generation and livelihood improvements". Certain constraints, as well as its restriction to crop production only, resulted in some conflict issues (Onoja, 2004). These conflicts, which primarily arose between farmers and other Fadama users, particularly pastoralists and fishermen, concerned stock routes, crop destruction, and encroachment and the unskilled handling of water application through irrigation can degrade and deplete the soil of its productive capacity (Agwu and Abah, 2010; Agunloye *et al.*, 2017; Christian, 2020).

#### ***Agricultural Transformation Agenda (2011-2015)***

The Federal Republic of Nigeria implement the National Economic Transformation Agenda, with the goal of diversifying the economy away from reliance on oil, ensuring food security, and creating jobs, particularly for youth. In accordance with this, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development implement the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) to promote agribusiness, attract private sector investment in agriculture, reduce post-harvest losses, add value to local agricultural produce, develop rural infrastructure, and improve farmers' access to financial services and markets (FRN, 2013; Obiora, 2014; Ajani and Igbokwe, 2014; Adesugba and Mavrotas, 2016; Meludu *et al.*, 2017).

However, the "ATASP-1 were implemented in four Staple Crops Processing Zones (SCPZs) of Adani Omor, Bida-Badeggi, Kano-Jigawa, Kebbi-Sokoto and cover 21 LGAs in seven States: Anambra (Ogbaru and Orumba North LGAs), Enugu (Uzo Uwani LGA); Jigawa (Hadejia LGA); Kano (Bunkure, Kura and Rano LGAs); Kebbi (Argungu, Bagudo, Birnin Kebbi, Dandi, Ngaski, Shanga and Suru LGAs); Niger (Agaie, Gbako, Lapai, Lavun, Katcha and Mokwa LGAs); and Sokoto (Kware LGA). The Processing Zones are specially delimited contiguous expanses of land in areas of high agricultural production and potential where the localised provision of a well-developed physical infrastructure such as access roads, energy, as well as

water, are necessities to support production, processing, and marketing activities for selected commodities (FRN, 2013; Adesugba and Mavrotas, 2016; Alhassan *et al.*, 2019). The ATA was founded on the premise that agriculture is a business, and that policy should support it. The policy's main priority was to "reset the clock" and reintroduce the Nigerian economy to sustainable agriculture based on a business-like attitude driven by the private sector. The strategy was in place from 2011-2015 (FMARD, 2016). The ATA is constraints with following challenges; (i) Poor implementation of various policies and initiatives aimed at boosting Nigeria's agriculture sector, as well as attracting investors and increasing private sector participation, (ii) Non-coordination of the efforts of the various agencies in charge of the agricultural development programme, (iii) Rural smallholder farmers' inability to obtain financing to take advantage of profitable technology packages designed to boost productivity and lift them out of subsistence, (iv) Poor infrastructure (poor roads and electricity), particularly in rural areas, the nation's agricultural base, remains a major challenge (Owoade, 2019). Other challenges of ATA include GES's limited focus and exit strategy set aside, with material implications for Ministry's budget, hence the sharp rise in indebtedness to banks. The system has many leakages from farmer registration and data capture to supply and distribution mechanism. Insufficient access to improved variety seeds e.g. still a 300,000MT gap between demand and supply of seeds, credit access particularly for small holders remains weak, Nirsal's 2013 change in credit guarantee rules disrupted market for agriculture financing until mid-2015 when rules were reviewed again, Backlog of unpaid GES loans (estimated at ₦39 billion) has slowed down bank lending, of USD 8 billion in domestic and foreign investor commitments often cited, only limited volumes actually moved from idea to reality (FMARD, 2016).

#### ***The Agriculture Promotion Policy (2016–2020)***

The Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) main focus is eliminating various constraints which affect agricultural productivity in Nigeria. The inability to meet domestic food demand and the failure to deliver quality yield for the export market are the two key identified gaps in the agricultural sector in this new plan. These gaps were the highest priority component of the plan to put Nigeria's agricultural sector on a path to long-term growth. The policy aims at moving Nigeria more rapidly towards unlocking her full agricultural potentials. Contained in the agenda are set targets aimed at increasing agricultural production, expanding and improving quality export and ensuring that essential infrastructure and farm inputs are available for farmers at all levels (FMARD, 2016; NANTS, 2018).

The policy captured the majority of the challenges faced by the smallholder segment of food growers, particularly smallholder women farmers, and offered solutions in the form of a commitment to resolve the setback within a specified time frame. This policy provides a window of opportunity for groups or

associations of smallholder female farmers to change age-old socio-cultural practises that disadvantage women in terms of land ownership, particularly inherited family lands. According to this policy, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) will work with state governments and relevant regulatory bodies to address gender discrimination in land ownership levels (FMARD, 2016; 2018; Action Aid, 2018; NANTS, 2018). On the hand the APP intends to improve soil nutrients by addressing key constraints in the distribution and easy accessibility of farm inputs such as fertilisers through better delivery to communities where use is profitable, while also improving cost effectiveness through the use of technology. The policy's goal is to make fertiliser more accessible by ensuring a simple supply of cost-effective fertilisers to small and large-scale farmers. It also identified the need to educate smallholder farmers on the fundamentals of soil enhancement mechanisms and management, as well as other climate-adaptive farming methods levels (FMARD, 2016; Action Aid, 2018; NANTS, 2018).

### Conclusion

Reviewing and categorizing peer-reviewed English literature provides a rigorous and standardised method of characterising what we know about Nigerian agricultural policies. The study used review-based methodology to guide analysis, involving an extensive assessment of current knowledge based on expert input and review. The merits of systematic literature review are widely acknowledged, but the process's transparency has been called into question: what literature is reviewed? What keywords and databases were used to find relevant literature? However, herein the study developed. The study here develops such an approach to tracking agricultural policies in Nigeria, recognising that the approach holds great promise for other areas of agriculture, health sciences, and climate change research. The findings of this study offer an insight on the pros and cons of agricultural policies and the constraints associated with identified policies in Nigeria right from independence.

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