

VALUE CHAIN ANALYSES OF SELECTED COMMODITIES AND STRATEGIES OF THE NIGERIA AGRICULTURAL SECTOR FOR MEETING NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY

BY

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ABSTRACT

Arising from the recurring under-performing nature of the Nigeria's Agriculture sector, the present administration of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan introduced an ambitious Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) which aims at achieving a hunger free Nigeria through assorted thematic strategies, involving commodity and financial value chains. These strategies are expected to reduce the risk of implementation failure by defining delivery mechanisms and linkages among the various stakeholders. This paper essentially highlights and discusses ATA implementation strategies and stresses areas requiring focus and adjustments. This study depends mainly on secondary information and content analysis. It revealed that urgent steps need to be taken with respect to: role clarification within the institutional structure; administration of the Growth Enhancement Support Scheme with due cognizance to existing farmers' capacity; unclear linkage of extension to the input support system and the confederating extension approaches; enhancing synergy between ATA and the on-going programmes/projects; inadequate investment in the sector/low budget implementation; weak policy enforcement cum framework for bio-technology. The ATA strategies are robust and pragmatic enough to facilitate the achievements of the proposed targets and achieve the ultimate objective of food security, however, key adjustments in the weaknesses highlighted, needed to be made in order to move the implementation of the Agenda forward.

Keywords: Agricultural Transformation Agenda; Implementation Strategies; Value Chains.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) is an offshoot of the National Transformation Agenda of the present administration of the Federal Government of Nigeria, which itself draws from Nigeria's Vision 20:2020 and drives government priorities, policies, projects and programs. The Agenda is aimed at achieving an industrialized high-growth, diversified economy, job provision, wealth creation, and food security attainment for the populace, through a technology based, demand-driven, and market-oriented agricultural activities (FMARD, 2012). It involves import substitution, export promotion and growing value-added agro-processing sector to leverage on foreign direct investment and backward integration into higher value-added manufacturing. The vision in the strategy is essentially to achieve a hunger free country through an agricultural sector that will drive income growth, accelerate achievement of food and nutritional security, generate employment and transform Nigeria. Essentially, ATA

policy aim to change the face of agriculture in Nigeria, through fixing: fertilizer procurement and distribution; commodity and financial value chains; marketing institutions and agricultural investment framework (FMARD, 2011). This paper therefore highlights and reviews the strategies within these thematic Value Chain Implementation mechanisms, with the view to stressing areas of focus and adjustments.

The paper is based on content analysis of publications of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), National Programme for Food Security (NPFS), existing policy documents, reports of ATA Value Chain Team Leaders and the National Planning Commission.

Overview of Agricultural Transformation Agenda Strategies for Achieving Food Security

ATA implementation strategies involve building the capacity of relevant actors and the end users towards actualizing and achieving the ATA's stated objectives. The aim of the strategic framework is to ameliorate the risk of implementation failure by defining the delivery mechanisms and linkages among the various stakeholders. The strategies for formulating the Agenda were through a participatory process, involving the private sector and were formulated against the need for proper programming of the various components. According to FMARD (2012), the critical aspects of the strategies were expected to be formulated in terms of the commodity value chain plans of all the prioritized commodities, implementation manuals, budget implications, logical framework, among others. The overview and review of the various ATA strategies have been undertaken with focus on the various thematic sub-sectors and the commodity value chains.

Crop Sectoral Strategies

The key objective of the crop policy is to enhance food and fiber production, while improving farm productivity, income and quality of life of the rural dwellers. The policy further aims at facilitating the production of industrial raw materials for agro-based industries, especially for the twelve targeted prioritized commodities. Thus, implementation strategies aligned to achieve these objectives cover: (i) cash crop development focusing on cotton, oil palm, rubber, cocoa and sesame; (ii) root and tuber programme for production of flour, starch, pellets and chips; (iii) food crop development programmes for cereals, pulses, fruit trees and vegetables, with focus on maize, tropical fruits, rice and vegetable oils; and (iv) mobilizing youths to participate in industrial crops production under the various State programmes.

Cassava Value Chain

The implementation strategies for the development of the cassava value chain focused on building effective value chains for cassava products through steady supply of cassava tubers to processors and encouraging modern technology in manufacturing activities. Attention is also on cassava processing, use of cassava starch as replacement of corn starch, use of fructose cassava syrup as substitute for sugar, use of cassava ethanol to support the 10% ethanol content policy in gasoline ethanol blending and the utilization of high quality cassava flour as 10%-40% composite of wheat flour for bread and confectionaries. Focus is further directed on certification of industries to prescribed environment standards and encouragement of the use of modern technology in manufacturing activities. According to FGN (2012), the key strategy of the cassava transformation is to turn the cassava sector in Nigeria into a major player in local and

international starch, sweeteners, ethanol, high quality cassava flour, and dried chips industries by adopting improved production and processing technologies, and organizing producers and processors into efficient value-added chains. The strategy consists of two pillars, which involves (i) incentivizing the formation of clusters of farmers around small and large scale processing factories, while providing improved production packages to increase productivity and (ii) providing a market for farmers' harvests through the creation of effective supply chains to existing cassava processing factories. The establishment of a guaranteed minimum price scheme with government as buyers of last resort is also expected to be a key aspect of this strategy.

Rice Value Chain

The key strategies under the rice value chain involves (i) setting affordable prices to engender competitiveness; (ii) using improved rice varieties and organizing farmers into clusters around medium and large scale mills, such as to effectively benefit from the growth enhancement support; (iii) increase in paddy production anchored on yield improvement per unit area (intensification) raising average yield per hectare from 1.5 to 6.5 Mt per hectare; (iv) linking farmers to credit sources and to the benefits derivable from the activities of Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) in the purchase of farm equipment and machinery; and rehabilitating existing irrigation schemes to full capacity for paddy production. The lowland rice is to have the highest priority for reduced production cost, followed by the irrigated and upland rice. Immediate focus will also be on existing irrigation schemes, where irrigation investment is a sunk cost rather than construction of new schemes. To enhance effective implementation, the rice transformation project is to be implemented in 20 major rice producing states in the first instance and will be gradually expanded to cover all the states. Farmer participation is also to be in two categories, namely, category 1: farmers located around rice clusters and category II: farmers having isolated farms. Other key strategies in use include; area expansion in lowland terrains and the use of improved varieties amongst others.

Sorghum Value Chain

The strategy involves increasing output through combination of local and exotic varieties diversifying the sorghum sector into three value chains (Fortified nutritious foods blended with soya-beans, malt for use in beverage; and packaged plain flour for ready to cook solid foods such as noodles, macaroni, biscuits and cookies) fast tracking the release of two newly developed sorghum hybrids, use of mobile threshers, stimulating up to 500,000 metric tons of industrial use of sorghum in malt, malt beverages and drinks. Stimulating industrial use of fortified sorghum diversification of production and processing areas from the critical ecological zones of North East and North West to other parts of the country, organizing states into clusters within which farmers are organized into groups of out-growers. Specifically, the strategy will entail (i) state sector collaboration to support the sorghum value chain through building the capacities of private companies for seed production, training, grant provision, infrastructure development, marketing and seed dissemination technique; (ii) creation of six clusters to facilitate farmer-led transformation intervention and creation of new sorghum farmers to ramp total farming to 1,020,000 as a result of hybrid sorghum cultivation and increased yield; (iii) strong partnership with public and private organizations to move the processing and product value chain forward and (iv) enforcing agreements on farm gate pricing, contractual agreements for buy

payment of premium price for quality product delivery amongst key players along the value chain; and continuous capacity building.

Cocoa Value Chain

The target is to double output from 250,000 Mt to 500,000 Mt by 2015 and improve the livelihood of 250,000 farm-households. The strategies included: rehabilitation of 200,000 hectares using high yielding materials, strengthening local capacity for grading cocoa, establishing cocoa agribusiness centre, encouraging backward integration, with a view to ensuring the sustainability of this value chain. Specifically with regards to input supply, strategies will cover; support for input dealers and state input supply outlets, increased surveillance to reduce agrochemical adulteration, operation of special on-lending credit facilities to be accessed through registered cooperatives, facilitating access to fertilizers through the voucher scheme, etc. For on farm production, employed strategies include facilitating organization of farmers into cooperatives, training of youths, support for plantation establishment, etc, and with respect to downstream activities, on-going strategies cover quality control, provision of loans to processors, publicity, adherence to international standards, amongst others. The key policy goals expected from these strategies include improving the livelihood of 100,000 farmers by increasing yield per hectare, addition of 390,000 jobs to the cocoa sub-sector, increasing processing capacity of factories, establishing small and medium scale enterprises to produce fast moving cocoa products and improving cocoa marketing.

Cotton Value Chain

The strategic direction entailed expanding production through productivity enhancement and Integrated Contract Cotton Farming approach using functional ginneries, facilitating efficient marketing through Public-Private-Partnership (PPP), expanding cultivable areas, encouraging seed buy back, facilitating phased acquisition of domestic capacity, aggressive cotton multiplication; promoting clean cotton by using 2.62 million locally sourced cotton and extending the Growth Enhancement Support to cotton farmers. Specific strategies include: breeder, foundation and certified seed production; regulation of private seed companies/contract out-growers; certification of private seed companies and out-growers/farmers with respect to certified seeds; facilitating participants within the value chain to benefit from the Cotton, Textile and Garment (CTG) ₦100 billion scheme. Others include promotion of domestic and foreign investment in CTG enterprises; promotion of industrial partnership among CTG players; establishment of a Cotton Development and Marketing Corporation; specialized CTG technical support and building capacities of institutions.

Oil Palm Value Chain

The key objective is to drive economic growth in the producing areas, through replacing importation of 300,000 Mt of vegetable oil worth \$US 500 million annually. For vegetable oil production (from oil palm), strategies being implemented include promotion of planting materials, support for upstream and downstream processing and market development. As regards planting and agro-input dealership activities, focus is on advocacy/sensitization on improving productivity and implementation of smallholder youth farms (5ha/youth farmer),

identification/registration of participating homesteads, support to NIFOR for annual production of 9 million sprouted nuts to plant 60,000ha, capacity building of staff/nursery workers amongst others. With respect to the processing and downstream refining, strategies include assessment of installed national milling and refining capacities, applied technologies and downstream refining needs, capacity building on timely processing of fresh fruit bunches for premium crude palm oil, negotiating/fixing the line of credit support for upstream and downstream refineries. Strategies outlined for market/trade support covers the establishment of Oil Palm Marketing Corporation (OPMC), regulation of product standards, capacity building among others.

Livestock Sectoral Strategies

The Livestock sub-sector aims at achieving self sufficiency in meat and promoting large scale livestock farming in the livestock value chain. The strategies include through selective breeding and artificial insemination; expanding hatchery capacity to 25 million day old chicks per week by 2015; provision of support facilities for livestock development, acquisition of land for lease allocation to grazers, strengthening expansion of veterinary public health services. Others included increasing the capacity of feed mill industry by 50%, extension and capacity building. For the beef value chain, primary cow-calf production, herd replacement, fattening and finishing of slaughter animals. Others include marketing and investment support, processing and value addition, opportunities for youths and women empowerment. With regards to the sheep and goats, genetic profile of local sheep and goats; increasing population and productivity; strengthen capacity of farmers; financial linkage; promoting sheep and goat milk in view of health benefits; and supply of 10% additional quality skins to the leather industry. Basic strategic plans under this value chain are confederated along the beef, diary, leather, poultry, sheep and goats sub thematic sectors.

Fishery Sectoral Strategies

This involves creating enabling environment for increased and sustainable production over 1 million MT of aquaculture; capacity development within the sub-sector, development of fish farm estate, promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in local feed mill, development and accessories; promoting the production and harvesting of fish from deep sea trawling, water and artisan resources; creation and operation of fishery institutions; enforcing existing rules and regulations on fisheries operations; supporting the states in promulgating enabling laws, with a view to encouraging appropriate fishing methods and preventing the depletion of fishery resources. Emphasis is also on market development, especially linkage to fast food outlets, School Feeding Programme, prison and hospital.

Agricultural Extension Services

The agricultural extension transformation agenda was packaged to effectively and efficiently drive ATA toward meeting the development objective of the Agenda. The strategies

on ground to drive this objective include: revitalization and modernization of agricultural extension to empower farmers, maintaining a Extension Agent :Farm Family ratio of 1:800-1,000, establishment of a national coordinating department within the FMARD, resuscitation of the States' Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) and use of modern and functional extension service approaches in form of Management Training Plots (MTP). Other strategies include adoption of the Farmers Field School extension approach for farmer empowerment, group development and faster transition from subsistence farming to agribusiness, formal institutionalization of the Research Extension Farmer Input Linkage System (REFILS), with greater participation of the private sector, facilitating dedicated sources of critical funding for extension, capacity building of key actors, use of pluralistic extension approaches and advocacy for legislated agricultural extension policy. Focus is also on: sustainable ICT platform that will operate based on fair cost sharing arrangement without recourse to charity funding continually; collaborative capacity building for unemployed youths and unemployed graduates in skill acquisition and enterprise development/management; support for women and vulnerable groups; and collaboration with the private sector to support outreach programmes.

Growth Enhancement Support (GES) Scheme

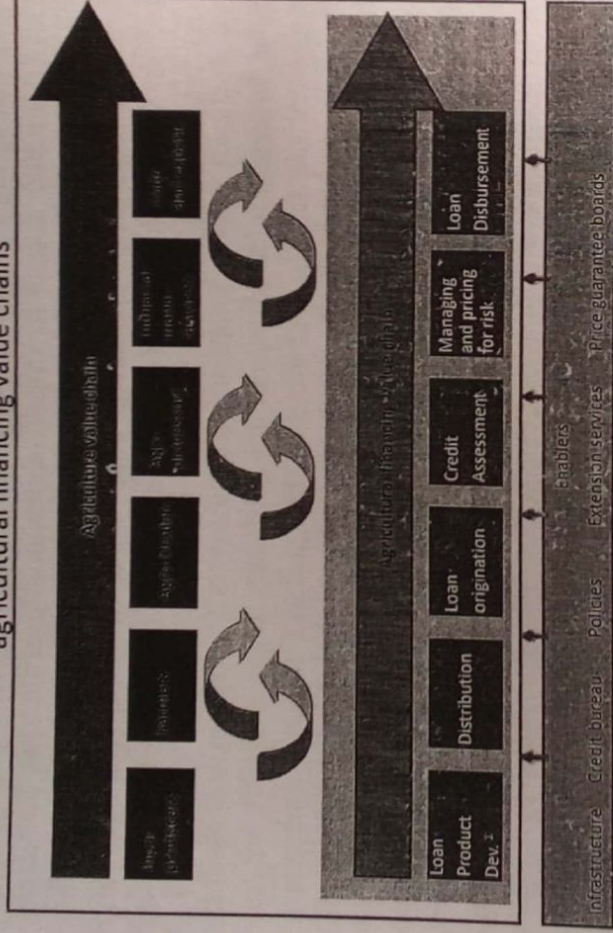
The GES strategy entails the reformation of the input sub-sector, through withdrawal of government from input procurement and distribution, while encouraging private sector take over. It aims at the liberalization of the foundation seed policy to allow private sector to commercialize seeds. The GES involves cost sharing on equal basis, consisting of 25% contribution each from the Federal and State Governments, making a total of 50%, with the private sector and farmers accounting for the rest. Other strategies include: sovereign guarantee on financing of seeds and fertilizers by the FGN through the Federal Ministry of Finance; establishment of a national farmer data base through registration of farmers and harmonization of existing data bases; validation of agro-dealers and introduction of registered cooperatives that can serve as agro-dealers to suppliers; monitoring of fertilizer quality, supply and utilization. Attention is also on training and validation of agro-dealers, conduct of fertilizer market survey, facilitating the passage of fertilizer bills that will enhance farmers' access and reduce adulteration; support for integrated soil management in conjunction with land resources. The value chain is targeting the registration of 20 million farmers by 2015, with input support through the electronically driven e-approach (See Table 1).

Table 1: Growth Enhancement Support Investment

Farmers Group	Phase	Period
Group 1 5 Million Target Farmers	1	2012-2015
Group 2 5 Million Target Farmers	2	2013-2016
Group 3 5 Million Target Farmers	3	2014-2017
Group 4 5 Million Target Farmers	4	2015-2018

Source: Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (2011)

NIRSAL integrates an end-to-end agriculture value chains with agricultural financing value chains



5

Figure 1: NIRSAL Strategic Logic Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (2011)

Content Analysis of ATA Strategies

Generally, the formulation of a strategy involves a time bound prioritization and selectivity. This process requires knowledge (evidence-based) and the making of choices to achieve a particular goal. In effect, a strategy refers to a set of actions to achieve a particular goal based on questions such as: what do we do? For whom do we do it? How do we achieve our goals? (FMARD, 2010). These processes are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

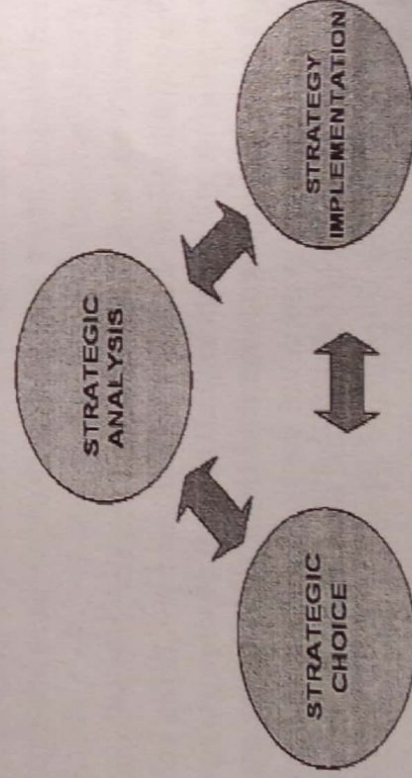


Figure 2: The Strategy Formulation Process

Source: Adapted from the National Agricultural and Food Security Strategy (2010)

In assessing the viability and suitability of ATA implementation strategies, a SWOT analysis was undertaken based on the nature of existing agricultural peculiarities of the country, stakeholders' expectation, and an understanding of important internal and external factors and challenges impeding agricultural development in the country.

The critical challenges facing the agriculture sector on which the ATA strategies are expected to address include: (i) limited access to improved technologies such as fertilizer, improved seeds, cuttings, breed, vaccines and agrochemicals; (ii) poor research and extension services; (iii) infrastructural inadequacies, including poor road network, markets and storage/processing facilities, as well as inadequate irrigation facilities; (iv) weak financial market, (v) policy ambiguities, among others.

Analysis of Thematic Sectoral Strategies

The discussion of ATA implementation strategies was undertaken holistically on thematic sectoral basis, without prejudice to the various sub-thematic units. With respect to the crop sectoral strategies, it is a step in the right direction that the crop value chain is focusing on technology utilization, productivity enhancement, creation of sustainable demand, output diversification and inclusion policy, farmer clustering amongst others. These strategies are bound to enhance productivity of the prioritized commodities; engender effective demand and create employment as envisaged under the Agenda. Likewise, the emphasis on import substitution will enhance national income and upscale export, while the promotion of increased marketing opportunities for starch, sweetener, chips and flour will further improve the country's income base. However, the issue of bio-technology (BT) cotton development should be taken with caution, given the experience of India, where many farmers who benefitted from the technology were unable to recover their costs of production and repay the loans collected (Alika, 2012). In addition, there is presently no real legal framework for bio-safety of genetically modified crops (GMO) in Nigeria, even though effort is already being made to sign the bio-safety laws to enable the country join the league of BT cotton producing countries. On the other hand, the weak policy enforcement in the country could be a limiting factor to effective implementation of the 10-40% cassava flour substitution for wheat in bread. However, there is the need to ensure that high quality cassava flour are available in sufficient quantity, in order to avoid possible supply side issues. A major area of concern too is the focus of ATA on sole cropping and commercial farming which is in contradiction to the obvious benefits ascribed to the mixed practice mixed cropping. This runs contrary to the obvious benefits ascribed to the mixed cropping system, which amongst others include fertility improvement and risk reduction during crop failure.

To succeed, there has to be: (i) concerted and sustained efforts in ensuring technology development, involving crossing local varieties with the most promising varieties for optimum yield, amongst other gains; (ii) a psychological process of convincing farmers to adopt technological packages and adhering to recommendations; (iii) facilitating the availability of sufficient credit to ginger investments in improved seeds, fertilizers and agrochemicals; and (iv) sustaining the political will of political leaders, as was the case in countries which have implemented successful transformation programmes (Nigeria Agriculture Digest, 2012). With respect to cassava in particular, there is the need to sustain the gains of the roots and tuber

expansion programme and the Presidential Initiative on cassava. As regards the livestock sub-sector, domestic production is currently about 30 percent below the domestic demand (FMARD, 2012). Though attention is on support facilities for effective production, public health policy, modernization of the sub-sectors, annual import reduction, amongst others, there is the need to place emphasis on phased implementation approach, with focus on key primary challenges such as weak livestock commodity associations, unorganized livestock marketing system, low literacy of primary producers, weak quality control and standard enforcement. Away from these, there are fears that inadequate investment in the sector, arising from low budget implementation may limit the effectiveness of strategies and hinder the achievement of targets. Thus, focus should be on ensuring adequate funding for the proposed value chains through regular budgetary sources and dedicated funds.

On fisheries, attention is on (intensive) aquaculture, while open water fishing activities is to supplement fish supplies in the country. Even though, global trends point clearly in the direction of targeted aquaculture as the best approach to meeting growing world demand for fish, the current 1.3 million Mt fish demand, suggests a strategic phased simultaneous development of the aquaculture and artisanal systems, with a view to avoiding further degeneration of the latter. Focus should be on addressing the constraints of weak downstream sector, financial linkage, food safety and standards, market development as envisaged in the value chain plan.

In the area of agricultural extension strategies, the focus seem adequate, particularly the arrangement being made for a coordinating Extension Department, resuscitation of the State Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs), proposal for pluralistic extension approach, agro-business development, cluster capacity building approach to farmer developments and the focus on gradual replacement of extension agents. It is however worthy of mention that, the problems of extension transcends the creation of a Coordinating Department, given the experience under the defunct Projects Coordinating Unit (PCU) and National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA). The weak, uncoordinated, poorly funded Research Extension Farmer Input Linkage System (REFILS) remained an issue on one hand, while the inability to harmonize and upscale the confederating extension approaches under the various on-going donor supported projects/programmes continued to limit the attainment of effective extension delivery. In addition, the unclear linkage of the proposed extension system under the Agenda to the Growth Enhancement System (GES), which is the input procurement and distribution arm, could be a problem for the effective achievement of the ATA development objective. Arokoyo (2012), noted that an effective and efficient extension service without the necessary growth-enhancing inputs of fertilizers, agrochemicals, improved seeds and credits at the points needed and at the right points and quantities will not make the desired impact. Issues being witnessed presently on the field in many states suggest that lots of work still needed to be done in this direction.

With respect to the Growth Enhancement Input Support Strategy, the withdrawal of the public sector in input procurement and distribution and gradual take over by the private sector was well conceived; while the cost sharing arrangement under input procurement and distribution was novel. It is also commendable that 4.5 million farmers have been registered with biometrics, while the e-wallet has been developed and rolled out, with 500,000 Mt of assorted fertilizers already supplied through the system. The electronic wallet scheme is a platform being used by registered farmers under ATA for accessing information on agricultural inputs through

mobile phones. However, the non accessibility of some farmers to mobile phones and the low capacities of some of the agro-dealers on board are critical issues to be addressed, given that many farmers are yet to redeem inputs for the 2012 farming season. The capacity of the e-wallet consulting firm(s) to effectively coordinate the administration of GESS alone also seems doubtful, given the complexity of the country and multiplicity of problems being faced by farmers on the field. To effectively meet up with ATA targets and redress these challenges, there is the need for; continuous registration of farmers in order to ensure effective and wide coverage, developing the capacities of the agro-input dealers and the micro finance institutions, complementing the e-wallet with paper vouchers, while simultaneously facilitating the access of farmers to mobile phones. The plan to distribute mobile phones to farmers is a welcome development. As regards infrastructural development strategies, the emphasis on development of Staple Crop Processing Zones is commendable; however, there is the need for targeted cluster infrastructural development, including services such as water supply, support for dedicated support services amongst others. There also seems to be some contradiction between the ATA strategy and those of the donor supported programmes and projects, given the focus on business as against the development orientation. This development continues to negate effective synergy and the obvious benefits of capacity and experience on the value chain approach strategy from these programmes/projects.

On the institutional strategies, It is worthy of mention here that numerous institutions have been created at all levels of implementation to facilitate the implementation of ATA, with the Agricultural Transformation Implementation Council (ATIC) being headed by President Goodluck Jonathan already driving the implementation of the Agenda. However, there seem to be grey areas regarding implementation and coordination arrangement at the State and Local Government Areas level, while great overlaps exist in the current mandates of the technical departments, value chain leaders and consultants. There is also some doubt on the regularity of the statutory oversight meetings at the various coordinating level. Thus, there is the need for urgent review of this arrangement, with a view to ensuring effective implementation of ATA and its review of budgetary provision and adequacy under ATA, NANTS (2012), noted that while the proposed policies and objectives under ATA are laudable, their achievement will however depend amongst other factors on how much commitment the nation demonstrates towards the latter was pertinent given Nigeria's well known record of poor implementation of policies and programmes. Thus, given the current level of the 2012 budget implementation, there is doubt to the effective deployment of the proposed strategies and the optimal achievement of the targets and objectives. This has grave consequences on the achievement of the desired growth in the sector and attainment of food security. In addition, the difficulty in pursuing rural operational policy changes may limit the efficacy of the NIRSAL and by extension the opportunity to effectively fix the financial value chain.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper undertook an overview of some key strategies being employed under the ongoing ATA and stresses the areas of focus and adjustments. These cover; role clarification at lower tiers of implementation and within the technical departments and desk

administration of the GES with due cognizance to existing farmers' capacity, unclear linkage of extension to the GES and harmonizing the gains of the confederating extension approaches, inadequate investment/low budget implementation, weak policy enforcement cum weak framework for bio-technology and ambitious targeting. Arising from the fore-going, it is clear that ATA offers a holistic strategy to agricultural development, involving a double headed value chain approach, comprising both the commodity and financial value chains, backed up by an ICT propelled input support scheme. However, key adjustments in the weaknesses highlighted need to be made in order to move the implementation of the Agenda forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To effectively drive the Agricultural Transformation Agenda strategies towards achieving national and home-level food security, wealth and jobs creation, and making Nigeria a global competitor in the world food market, there is the need to:

- i. Ensure effective role clarification among the key players at all levels of ATA implementation.
- ii. Urgently fast track the legislation of the proposed ATA policies, especially those bordering on reforming the fertilizer sector, import/commodity substitution, staple crop processing and bio-technology.
- iii. Ensure complementary linkage of the extension system and input distribution mechanism, with the view to ensuring that relevant inputs and associated extension messages reach the targeted farmers.
- iv. Involve more technical partners in the implementation of the e-wallet strategy, given the peculiarity and vast nature of the country.
- v. Streamline/stagger implementation and focus on limited commodities given the peculiar funding constraints and low budget implementation associated with the Country.
- vi. Align the ATA crop production strategy with the mixed farming system practiced by majority of the small scale farmers in the Country.
- vii. Ensure phased implementation of the livestock strategies and focus attention on key primary challenges such as weak livestock commodity associations, unorganized livestock marketing system, low literacy of the primary producers, weak quality control and standard enforcement.
- viii. Ensure simultaneous development of the aquaculture and artisanal systems, with a view to avoiding further degeneration of the latter. Focus should also be on addressing key constraints of weak downstream sector, financial linkage, food safety and standards, market development, etc.

- ix. Put in place an enduring monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that will drive the planning process, ascertain progress through periodic reporting, review and the capture impact.

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