

Topic: Role of Government in Agricultural Development

Lesson Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Identify the various **roles of government in agriculture**
 - Understand how **finance, credit, and subsidies** support farmers
 - Explain the importance of **agricultural education and extension services**
 - Mention and describe some **government agricultural programs and policies** (e.g., OFN, ADP)
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1. Introduction

Agriculture is the **backbone of many economies**, especially in developing countries.

To ensure **food security, employment, and national development**, the **government plays a key role** in supporting agriculture.

2. Role of Government in Agricultural Development

a) Provision of Finance, Credit, and Subsidies

Finance and Credit:

- Many farmers lack the **capital** to buy seeds, fertilizers, and machines.
- The government provides **loans and credits** to farmers through:
 - **Bank of Agriculture (BOA)**
 - **Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)** agricultural schemes
 - **Microfinance Banks**

Importance of Agricultural Credit:

- Helps farmers **buy improved seeds and inputs**
- Supports **purchase of machines and tools**
- Allows farmers to **expand farm size**

Subsidies:

A **subsidy** is when the government **pays part of the cost** of farm inputs to make them cheaper for farmers.

Examples of Subsidies:

- **Fertilizer subsidy**
- **Seed subsidy**
- **Machinery subsidy**

Benefits of Subsidies:

- Reduces the **cost of production**
- Increases **farm productivity**
- Encourages **more people to farm**

b) Provision of Education and Extension Services

Agricultural Education:

- Training farmers on **modern farming techniques**
- Establishing **agricultural schools and universities**
- Organizing **workshops and seminars**

Extension Services:

Extension workers visit farmers to:

- Teach **new farming methods**
 - Demonstrate how to use **machines and chemicals**
 - Advise on **pest and disease control**
 - Help farmers adopt **improved seed varieties**
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Importance of Extension Services:

- Bridge the gap between **research and rural farmers**
 - Promote **technology transfer**
 - Increase **agricultural output**
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c) Agricultural Policies and Programs

The government initiates **policies and programs** to support agriculture.

Examples of Agricultural Programs in Nigeria:

Program	Meaning & Purpose
OFN	Operation Feed the Nation (1976) – Aimed to increase food production by encouraging everyone, including students, to farm
ADP	Agricultural Development Programme – Provides farmers with extension services, credits, and inputs in rural areas
RBDAs	River Basin Development Authorities – Promote irrigation farming and manage water resources
NALDA	National Agricultural Land Development Authority – Helps open up new lands for farming
Green Revolution	Launched in 1980 to boost food production through mechanization
FADAMA	Focused on supporting farmers in lowland (Fadama) areas , especially for irrigation
Anchor Borrowers Program	Introduced by CBN in 2015 to link small farmers with agro-processors and provide loans

3. Summary of Key Points

Government Role	Examples
Finance & Credit	Bank of Agriculture loans

Government Role	Examples
Subsidies	Reduced cost of fertilizers and seeds
Education	Training farmers in new methods
Extension Services	Extension officers guide farmers
Policies & Programs	OFN, ADP, RBDAs, NALDA, FADAMA

4. Importance of Government Involvement

- **Increases food production**
 - **Reduces poverty and hunger**
 - **Provides employment opportunities**
 - **Promotes agricultural exports**
 - **Enhances technological development** in agriculture
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5. Challenges in Government Agricultural Programs

- **Corruption and mismanagement**
- **Lack of continuity** when new governments come in
- **Poor infrastructure** (roads, storage facilities)
- **Limited access to credit for small farmers**
- **Inadequate number of extension workers**