

CHAPTER 4

The Role of Government and Non-Governmental Organisations in Agricultural Development

Objectives: At the end of the chapter, students should be able to:

- state the roles of government in agricultural development.
- discuss past and present agricultural programmes and policies of government.
- explain the meaning and importance of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in agricultural development.

4.1 Introduction

Government has consistently carried out agricultural programmes to tackle the problems facing agricultural production, such as the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), Back to Land programme, Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) and Farm Settlement Schemes. Therefore, the roles of government in agricultural development have been enormous.

4.2 Roles of Government in Agricultural Development

The government at various levels performs the following roles which help to increase agricultural development.

- 1. Provision of loans:** Loans are given directly to farmers and indirectly through banks and other financial institutions. For example, farmers were assisted directly with loans through the FADAMA project.
- 2. Provision of credit facilities:** Farmers are granted credit facilities by the government in lieu of major purchases/ acquisition such as farm machinery or farm inputs like tractors and incubators.
- 3. Provision of subsidies:** Subsidies are given in cash or kind by the government to producers or consumers who need assistance. Such subsidies may be granted on farm inputs, such as improved seedlings, new varieties, livestock, fertilizers, pesticides and farm implements to reduce the cost of agricultural production. Subsidies can also be granted on agricultural product prices (to enhance farmers' revenue) and on commodity prices that consumers pay. Subsidies, unlike credits or loans, are not repayable.

4.3 Past and Present Agricultural Programmes and Policies of the Government

The government has made attempts at boosting greater production of crops and animals through establishment of several national programmes in Nigeria. These include the

following:

â **National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP):** The programme was launched in 1974 by the then Military Government to combat the critical food shortage that occurred in Nigeria after the Civil War.

This programme aimed at increasing food production practices through the use of improved seeds, fertilizers, chemical and other modern technology.

The NAFPP was also designed to encourage Nigerian farmers to increase production of food crops. Government's strategy was based on four fundamental principles:

- (a) strengthening of research and extension teams specializing in one crop;
- (b) getting farmers to play an essential role in identifying improved varieties;
- (c) intensively training workers and closely involving them in applied research activities; and
- (d) effectively distributing inputs (fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, etc.) through agro-service centres.

The NAFPP agro-service unit was designed to provide the farmers with necessary inputs and ready markets for selling their produce. About 187 of these centres were established as of 1978.

â **National Seed Service:** In 1975 the Federal Government established National Seed Service (NSS), whose activity was designed to complement that of the NAFPP.

The NSS was set up to effectively co-ordinate seed production and certification for rice, maize, wheat, sorghum and millet throughout the country.

â **Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)**

â The OFN programme was launched in 1976 by the Federal Military Government with the primary purpose of encouraging more self-reliance and self-sufficiency in food production.

â The purpose was to encourage food production by non-food producing sectors and an improvement in the feeding habit of the average Nigerian.

â The OFN policy instruments include the use of fertilizers, improved seeds, pest control, agro-service centres, Guaranteed Minimum Price (GMP) and other specialized schemes.

â It is estimated that through the programmes of OFN and NAFPP, food production in Nigeria increased by 3% in 1978.

â **The Green Revolution (GR)**

â The GR programme was launched in 1980 by the then civilian president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, to replace the OFN Programme.

â The objective of GR is similar to that of the OFN.

â The focus of the government then was to encourage large-scale farming/production of crops and livestock.

â The GR programme produced poor results particularly in most part of the southern states of Nigeria due largely to bad implementation of the programme and corruption of the facilitators.

â **The River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA)**

â The RBDA was established in June 1976.

â It is now called River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDAs).

â The concept of the river basin as a developmental unit fits into the national effort to increase food production, provide water for multipurpose use and assist to accelerate integrated rural development.

The RBRDAs has

- (i)** assisted in bringing more land under cultivation,
- (ii)** increased the farm size of participating farmers,
- (iii)** made use of agricultural machinery, e.g., tractors, combined harvesters, planters, etc. possible at minimal cost to the small farmers,
- (iv)** increased the total output per farmer with increased net revenue returns,
- (v)** led to the construction of over 4,000 km of all season feeder roads to project sites and the provision of portable water to the local people.

â **Back to the Land Programme**

â This was established in 1984 by the military regime.

â It was an appeal to Nigerians to go back to agriculture.

â The programme resulted in relatively abundant, cheap and affordable locally produced food items available in the markets.

â **The Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs)**

â The ADPs were set up to take over the agricultural extension role of the nation. The objective of this is

â to provide agricultural extension services to farmers.

â to increase food production and farmers' income.

â to provide employment for rural dwellers and generally improve their standard of living.

â to provide inputs on fertilizers and improved seeds to the farmers.

â **The Farm Settlement Schemes:** Farm Settlement Schemes were first established by government of the Western Region of Nigeria in 1959.

Following are the specific objectives of the schemes:

(i) To demonstrate that farms can be operated by young educated farmers with reasonable assistance in the form of advice and loans from the government or other sources which will provide a comfortable standard of living.

(ii) To demonstrate carefully planned farming systems designed to attract young educated persons to take up farming as a lucrative means of livelihood.

(iii) To reduce rural-urban migration.

(iv) To use farm settlers in bringing commercialization to the rural areas and thus improve the standard of living of rural dwellers.

â The settlers are assisted by the government through the provision of land with nominal lease.

â They are also well supervised by a qualified agriculturist.

â Credit is provided for establishing and maintaining their holdings.

â Improved planting materials and livestock are also provided.

â They also have free access to tractor hiring, storage, processing and marketing facilities for their farm produce.

â Housing, water supplies and access roads are also provided.

â Criticism against the schemes.

(a) The settlers are chosen too young, often as school leavers who do not make good farmers. More than two-thirds of them withdraw within a short time.

(b) Because of the distance in the location of such village settlements, the

settlers often felt isolated from the communities.

(c) The financial regulations and control of the operations often resulted in delays and frustrations.

(d) Most of the settlers do not develop appropriate attitude towards farming and so do not adopt farming as a way of life.

(e) The schemes are not economically sound because the returns do not justify the huge investment involved.

1. Provision of basic amenities:

Government provides basic amenities such as electricity for powering agricultural machinery, health-care service, schools and pipe-borne water in the rural areas. This has greatly reduced the movement of youth from the rural to urban areas.

2. Provision of storage and processing facilities: Government in its efforts to reduce or prevent food wastage in Nigeria provides storage and processing facilities in some parts of the country.

Farmers can now hire and use storage facilities such as silos, cribs and barns for the storage of their product.

3. Provision of effective transportation network: The government through DFRRI and other agencies has helped to construct new roads and rehabilitate the existing roads in the rural areas to ease the movement of food to urban centres. Foods are now available even in the areas far away from where they are produced and they are in good condition.

4. Provision of pest and disease control services: Drugs, vaccines and other chemicals are provided by the government at a subsidized rate for the control of pests and diseases. A great success has been recorded in these areas.

5. Pest and disease surveillance and quarantine service: Government employed pathologists and veterinary doctors to assist in pest and disease surveillance. Quarantines were set up at the borders, seaports and airports to check imported material so as to prevent the importation of new plants and animal pests and diseases into the country.

6. Provision of extension services: The government has helped to employ qualified and experienced extension workers to teach and disseminate recent agricultural innovations to the rural people. This has helped to change the attitude of most farmers towards farming, and has improved their standard of living.

7. Provision of agricultural education: Nigerian government has helped to provide adult education and literacy campaign to enable farmers to read and write. The introduction of Adult Literacy and Non-formal education is a good example. This promotes easy acceptance of new techniques and innovations in agriculture. The government also encouraged

teaching of agriculture at all levels of education in Nigeria to be able to produce literate farmers.

8. Establishment of research institutes: The government has set up numerous research institutes to conduct research on the improvement of local varieties of crops, breeds of animals and better ways of cultivating crops and rearing animals. This has helped to increase production and provide lasting solution to problems of agricultural development in Nigeria.

Agricultural research institutes established by the government are as follows:

- (i)** National Cereal Research Institute (NCRI), Badeggi, Niger State.
- (ii)** Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN), Ibadan, Oyo State.
- (iii)** Nigeria Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR), Benin, Edo State.
- (iv)** National Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research (NITR), Kaduna, Kaduna State.
- (v)** National Horticultural Research Institute (NIHORT), Ibadan, Oyo State.
- (vi)** Rubber Research Institute of Nigeria (RRIN), Benin, Edo State.
- (vii)** National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike Umuahia, Abia State.
- (viii)** National Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMAR), Lagos, Lagos State.
- (ix)** National Institute for Fisheries and Fresh Water Research (NIFFR), Kainji, Niger State.
- (x)** Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), Ibadan, Oyo State.
- (xi)** National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI), Vom, Jos, Plateau State.
- (xii)** Leather Research Institute of Nigeria (LRIN), Zaria, Kaduna State.
- (xiii)** Nigerian Stored Products Research Institute (NSPRI), Ilorin, Kwara State.
- (xiv)** Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T), Ibadan, Oyo State.
- (xv)** Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), Zaria, Kaduna State.
- (xvi)** Lake Chad Research Institute (LCRI), Maiduguri, Borno State.
- (xvii)** Federal Institute of Industrial Research (FUR), Lagos, Lagos State.

4.4 Meaning of NGOs

These are organisations established by private, local, regional and international agencies or corporate bodies concerned with the development of agriculture in Nigeria. They are not owned, funded or controlled by the government. They are non-profit organizations and are usually exempted from paying corporate taxes.

4.5 Importance of NGOs

1. They help to sponsor research institutes to enhance the productivity of the farmers.
2. They provide agricultural inputs and chemicals such as herbicides and pesticides for the control of pests.
3. They carry out research to improve and develop new varieties of crops and breeds of animals.
4. NGOs provide basic infrastructural facilities such as water, electricity, good roads, schools, health care services in the rural areas.
5. Extension projects are founded and funded by NGOs.

4.6 Roles of NGOs in Agricultural Development

Examples of NGOs with respect to agriculture and their objectives or programmes are described below.

4.6.1 Africa Rice Centre (ARC, formerly WARDA)

This is an international inter-governmental regional organization that aims at promoting and increasing the production of rice in the West African

Sub-region.

Objectives of ARC

1. To promote the cultivation of rice within the West Africa sub-region
2. To develop rice species with high yield
3. To provide financial and technical assistance for rice producers
4. To encourage, coordinate and undertake basic and applied research programmes in their field of operation
5. To disseminate information on the new techniques to farmers
6. To develop rice species with high quality
7. To produce rice that can adapt to the West Africa sub-region
8. To develop rice which can resist diseases and pests
9. To develop rice which can meet the nutritional needs of the West African people

4.6.2 International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

This is an international research institute located in Ibadan with the aim of developing improved permanent food-producing techniques that will bring about high yields and also maintain soil fertility.

Objectives of IITA

1. To promote the cultivation of food crops in African countries
2. To help develop the best system of food production for a long-term sustained yield rotation
3. To develop food crops that can resist pests and diseases of West African origin
4. To identify the best crop combinations in order to achieve maximum economic returns
5. To help develop food crops which are of high quality
6. To produce food crops that can adapt to the climatic conditions of tropical countries
7. To encourage local farmers to grow food crops developed/improved by the institute (IITA)
8. To help solve the problems of soil fertility in the tropical countries.

4.6.3 International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA)

The centre deals with the development of improved breeds of domestic animals in the tropical Africa.

Objectives of ILCA

1. To breed animals that can adapt and produce well under the climate of Africa
2. To promote the rearing of animals using modern techniques within Africa
3. To breed animals with high production capabilities, e.g., high milk, egg and meat production
4. To breed animals that will mature early and attain marketable size within a shortest possible time
5. To develop animals that can produce high quality products

4.6.4 International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)

The institute was established to see to the development and management techniques to ensure maximum yields of crops raised in semi-arid regions.

Objectives of ICRISAT

1. To promote or improve certain crops which can adapt to the dry regions of Africa
2. To encourage the breeding of crop varieties which can adapt to the prevailing harsh conditions of semi-arid regions
3. To promote the cultivation of selected crops in semi-arid regions
4. To develop irrigation system for cultivation of crops in the dry regions of Africa
5. To produce crops in abundance which can serve the local and foreign consumptions

4.6.5 Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations

FAO was established with the aim of improved food production and food security for the entire world population.

Objectives of FAO

1. To make improved plant and animal materials available to farmers to increase food output
2. To provide all-season roads, portable water, health facilities and good infrastructure in the rural areas
3. To help finance agricultural projects in their regions of operation
4. To promote and encourage better post-harvest techniques to minimize post-harvest losses

4.6.6 International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Objectives of IFAD

1. To provide financial assistance to the farmers through lending or soft loans
2. To assist in research, training and preparation of agricultural projects
3. To assist in the development of basic infrastructural facilities in the rural areas to increase productivity

4.6.7 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Objectives of UNDP

1. To fund agricultural projects to boost food production in West Africa as well as in member states of the United Nations
2. To carry out research to develop agriculture and enhance food security

Activity 1: Organise a visit and lead students to the nearest ADP or the nearest research institute, find out their programmes and activities and record your observations on the activities of the institute.

Revision Questions

Essay Questions

1. (a) Name six government and four NGOs that are involved in the improvement of agricultural production in West Africa.
(b) State five ways in which NGOs contribute to agricultural productivity in West Africa (WASSCE 2000).
2. (a) Mention five agricultural research institutes in Nigeria (WASSCE 1996).
(b) List ten agricultural programmes established by the government to

develop agriculture in Nigeria.

3. Enumerate five roles of government in agricultural production.

4. (a) What are NGOs?

(b) Name five NGOs and discuss briefly the objective of their establishment.

5. State four objectives each of (i) Farm Settlement Scheme (ii) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and (iii) Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (WASSCE 2002).

Objective Questions

1. In order to ensure that crop and animal diseases are not transferred across international boundaries, government must do the following:

(a) Have a programme on agricultural education

(b) Build storage facilities

(c) Make provision of labour

(d) Make provision of subsidies

2. Which of the following statements about farm settlement schemes is false?

(a) To encourage young people to take up farming.

(b) To provide employment for young school leavers.

(c) To develop rural infrastructure.

(d) For research and publicity.

3. Which of the following is not a government agricultural programme?

(a) Operation Feed the Nation.

(b) Agricultural Development Projects.

(c) Farm Settlement Schemes.

(d) West Africa Development Agency.

4. Which of the following constitutes a direct monetary cash assistance from government to farmers?

(a) Extension service

(b) Loans

(c) Supply of inputs

(d) Agricultural development programmes

5. One of the following is not the role of government in agricultural production.

(a) Provision of loans and credit

(b) Building of storage facilities

(c) Provision of labour

(d) Provision of subsidies

6. The provision of farm inputs to farmers by the government can be best described as

(a) loan.

(b) capital.

(c) credit.

(d) subsidy.

7. Government agricultural policies include the following except

- (a) increasing the production of food crops and animals.
- (b) increasing the efficiency of production of export crops.
- (c) supplying raw materials for use in local industries.
- (d) increasing the number of peasant farmers.

8. National Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research has its headquarters at

- (a) Kaduna
- (b) Kano
- (c) Port-Harcourt
- (d) Lagos

9. Which of the following agricultural programmes covers risk and uncertainties in agricultural business?

- (a) Agricultural Development project.
- (b) Agricultural Insurance Scheme.
- (c) River Basin Development Authority.
- (d) Farm Settlement Scheme.

10. The following Organizations are owned by the government except

- (a) National Institute for Horticultural Research (NIHORT).
- (b) Lake Chad Research Institute (LCRI).
- (c) International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).
- (d) National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI).

Answers to Objective Questions

1. (c) 2. (d) 3. (d) 4. (b) 5. (c) 6. (d) 7. (d) 8. (a) 9. (b) 10. (c)