RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract
This work focuses on “Rural Development and Food Security Programmes in Nigeria; Issues and Challenges. The study becomes imperative based on the prevailing problem of underdevelopment and food insecurity throughout the country. The paper therefore attempts to find out why there is an unending food security programmes have been introduced. Also attempted is identifying those factors that have continued to challenge the implementation of various rural agricultural development and food security programmes in Nigeria and making some recommendations.

INTRODUCTION
The current emphasis on rural development by the federal, state and local governments of the country is perfectly in order. This is because; rural communities are the most important sector of the Nigerian, economy.

Agriculture and rural developments are crucial for the structural transformation and economic development of Nigeria. The rural population represents an average of over 60 percent of the total population of Nigeria and about 90 percent of the rural labour force engaged directly or indirectly in agricultural and rural development would contribute to greater efficiency, increased household income, improved standards of living and poverty reduction. So the countryside has not been deliberately neglected by the previous administration of this country in their development planning efforts and programmes.

Since 1974, agricultural development has remained the principal component of the country’s rural development has remained the principal component of the country’s rural development package. This is because of the role of agriculture in the economic growth and development of many economics especially the developing ones.

Though agriculture contributes 42 percent of the GDP, provides employment and a means of livelihood for more than 60% of the productivity engaged population, it receives less
than 10 percent of the annual budgetary allocations. This has led to the crisis of food production and food insecurity in Nigeria making the country to depend so much on imported food.

Compounding the problem is the seemingly irresolvable incoherence in government policy formulation and implementation strategies. And so, achieving food security in its totality continued to be a challenge to developing countries like Nigeria.

Since independence, every administration made efforts to achieve food security in the country. In the 1960s, Nigeria depended on agriculture to provide infrastructure and run services until the collapse of the first republic and the military takeover of government in 1966. At that time, a lot of seedlings were taken to other countries.

In the 1970s, the government introduced the National Food Operation Programmes and the Nigeria agricultural and cooperative bank was established to fund agriculture and assist farmers. This was followed by Operation Feed the nation in 1976. The programme was fashioned to revolutionize agricultural sector of Nigerian economy which was derailing from its normal contribution to the economy. To make the programme effective, farmers most especially in the rural areas were taught farming practices and agriculture was made compulsory in secondary schools. In addition, eleven River basin Development Authorities (RBDA) were established to facilitate irrigation agriculture as an attempt to expand farmland. Also, farm settlements were established for cash and food crops to reduce food importation.

Government’s effort between 1981 and 1985 yielded good fruit as the contribution of agriculture to GDP rose from 21.1% to 35.4%. This was the result of the Green Revolution Programme of Alhaji Shehu Shagri’s administration which complements the R.B.D.A programme.

The Military Government of General Ibrahim Babangida in 1986 came with the rural infrastructural development programme and established the directorate of food, roads and rural infrastructure (DFRRI). The programme was to open up the rural areas for effective agricultural activities and boost food production.

The new democratic government then, which was headed by President Olusegun Obasanjo had so many policies and programmes designed to address the problem of food insecurity in the country. All these have positive impact on agricultural production and consequent improvement in the country’s GDP.

In 2008, Nigeria released its National Programme for Food Security (NPFS), lying out dozens of constraints to food security in Nigeria and adopting a value chain approach to address these constraints. The vision of the NPFS, is to ensure sustainable access, availability and affordability of quality food to all Nigerians and to be a significant net provider of food to the global community.

National programme for food security evolved as an aftermath of the November 1996 world food summit and request for assistance by the federal government of Nigeria under the FAO special programme for food security. After the initial participatory review and subsequent evaluation, NSPFS was extended to the 36 states including Ebonyi State.

The overall objective of NSPFS is to attain food security in the broadest sense and eliminate hunger and rural poverty in Nigeria. It is believed that the success of the programme will go a long way to improve rural life and so, needed the support of all and sundry.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Rural development and food security have been an impending and tedious problem that affects many countries all over the world. Various policies and programmes have been taken in Nigeria to alleviate the problems of the rural dwellers. However, such policies and programmes have been found to end up with the regime that introduced them. Also, various agricultural policies and programmes, which differed in nomenclature and perhaps, organizational structure and advisory procedures, have been carried out in Nigeria, yet, the country is still striving to feed her citizens. Increasing the capacity of the poor households to purchase food, in addition to what they might be able to grow, is widely viewed as key to enhancing household food security.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Diffusion model of rural development” has been adopted as it fits into the theoretical framework of this study. The model was propounded in 1962 by a United States rural sociologist, professor, Everett Rogers.

The diffusion model of rural development is an attempt to explain the existence of substantial productivity difference among farmers in the same economic and geographical regions. According to the model, such differences arise because of differences in farmers’ adoption of innovations such as new varieties of seeds, mechanical and chemical inputs, Essang (1975). Within the same environment, some farmers would embrace modern techniques such as mechanical equipment, improved seeds, and chemical inputs and thus, guaranteeing food security, while others will remain opposed to the adoption of these modern techniques and as a result, continues to have poor harvest thereby causing food insecurity.

According to the diffusion model, to correct the structural impediments to improve agricultural productivity, the farmers need to embrace modern techniques of farming to guarantee food security. The diffusion of innovations to farmers required reorientation and rehabilitation, which is possible through communication and other support services. The needs and advantages of the modern techniques have to be explained to farmers in Nigeria for them to understand and apply the same and thus, reduce incidences of poverty and food insecurity.

This model has been graciously applied by many developing nations and had led to the popularization of agricultural extension services, demonstration farms or experimental farms also known as local innovation. Through these media, the rural farmers who are yet unaware of the modern innovations are brought face to face with the concepts, their application as well as their gains.

The diffusion models has also gained considerable acceptance in Nigeria where it is emphasized as a solution to the problem of low productivity of the average rural farmers can lead to national food insecurity.

The relevance of the theory to this study lies in the fact that it has made us to understand that farmers especially rural farmers in Nigeria also have differences in productivity even when they are given the same incentives including: loans, fertilizers, rice, maize etc as a result of their
different abilities to adapt to modern farming techniques and innovations. Most of them are too conservative and therefore, resist change no matter the gains.

This may not be unconnected to why Nigeria is battling with food insecurity. So, the theory will enable us devise a more practical approach to teaching the local farmers in the language they would understand thereby guaranteeing food security.

Concept of Development

Answering the question, what is development is indeed a daunting exercise. Though the desirability of development is not in doubt, the part to development is one that attracts a lot of quarrels and disagreement among scholars, statesmen and multi-lateral aid agencies.

Perhaps, what fueled the conflict on the real meaning of development was the fact that despite many years of implementing policies fashioned by western "development" agencies and scholars, the third world nations are still neck deep in poverty and are in some cases getting poorer. Obi, and Chukwuemeka, (2006). Okpata, (2004), said that 'development' is conceptually and practically delicate to handle, yet it is the cornerstone of every economic growth especially in the thesis of sustainable development.

The guideline to the fourth national development plan, 1980-1985 has attempted to define what 'true development' should imply, it says 'true development means the development of man. As a societal phenomenon, it is all encompassing and demands the involvement of all sections of the society simultaneously. Indeed, the concept of development has many definitions. Rodney in Okpata (2004), defined it as: "A many sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increase skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well being".

Development involves progress, movement and advance towards something better: it is an improvement on the material and non-material aspects of life. It involves action, reaction and notion. It is observed that development goes beyond economic and social indicators, which include the improvement of human resources and positive change in their behaviour.

Development is thus the process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values (Ake, 2001).

Furthermore, Obasi quoted in Okpata, (2004: 170), aggregated the social science usage of the term 'development' to mean:

A set of progressive transformation of the economic, social and political structure of a society from relatively less complex, less efficient and less desirable forms, to more complex, more efficient and more desirable forms. For us, development includes increase in the citizens' access to:

- Food, water and shelter
- Information and means of communication
- Health care delivery
- Good education and
- Justice.
When all these are available, there will be increase in the individual's dignity, happiness and patriotic values and quality of life. This is why Torado cited in Ndukwu, (2005) sees development as "a re-organization and re-orientation of the entire economic and social system". This involves, in addition, improvement in income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and beliefs: The main contention of Todaro is that development is both a physical process and a state of mind. The other aspect is that the thinking of the people must change.

Seer quoted in Ndukwe, (2005) argues that development should answer such question as "what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all these three have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt, this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all these three have, it would be strange to call the result development even if per capital income is doubled". Seer's definitions are important because, it is centered on the improvement in the living condition of the individual. He goes further to observe that development involves not only economic growth but also condition in which people in a country have adequate food and jobs, reduced income inequality and a good measure of self-reliance. The focus of development should be on the problems of food insecurity, poverty, unemployment and inequality.

That is why Rogers (1992) sees development as a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system to enhance the living conditions of the people. But, to Oduaran (1994), development implies some form of change usually from a prior bad or poor condition to a better one.

Since people are the center of development, both as beneficiaries and catalysts, Ukwu (1986) has said that development as a process must be concerned with improvement as well as the transformation of social, mental, economic, institutional and environmental conditions of rural dwellers through mobilization and rational utilization of their human and material and institutional resources as to enhance their capabilities to cope with the daily tasks and demands of modern times.

Everything put together, development means improvement of the individual, his environment. It is therefore, pertinent to note that development is about people. It is about the quality of life of people, their capacity to improve the conditions of their existence, to reach, control and utilize their resources for greater productivity and enjoyment. It is about the autonomy and self respect of individual as a free member of his country. It is to be brought about by people.

Conceptual Clarification of Two Basic Concepts: "Rural Development and Food Security"
The two basic concepts here require some clarifications. Let us take both concepts one after the other for more understanding.

Rural Development
Rural development has been described in different ways by different authors depending on the discipline or line of thought of the person concerned. This is because the subject of rural development is multi-disciplinary and the definition of each author depends on the area where the author focuses attention. The central theme in all the definitions is "improvement of the living conditions of the rural people".
Aslam quoted in Ndukwe (2005), defines rural development as a "process aimed at developing the rural poor, their economy and institutions from a state of stagnation or low productivity equilibrium into dynamic process leading to higher level of living a better quality life". But, to Schumacher, (1983) rural development is conceived as: Developing the skills of the masses to make them self reliant through induction which supply appropriate and relevant knowledge on the methods of self help".

Available literatures on rural development, revealed that population is the main characteristics that differentiate rural from the urban areas especially in developing countries. This may be what has prompted Omoruyi (2001) to define rural areas "as a geographical location or area inhabited by a population of less than 5,000 people majority of whom are farmers and whose economy is predominantly agrarian in nature". Ndukwe (2005), identified a number of features which are associated with rural lives to include:

- Smallness in size
- Intimate relationships
- Agriculture is the main occupation
- Homogeneity of population
- Social mobility and
- High social solidarity.

The main features of the rural areas are depression, degradation and deprivation. Many rural villages are immersed in poverty so palpable that the people are the embodiment of it. In most rural areas in Nigeria and basic infrastructure, where they exist at all, are too inadequate for any meaningful development. Physical infrastructure like motorable roads are often lacking. The villagers and their livestock in many rural areas depend on shallow wells or guinea worm infested ponds for their water supply.

The rural poor are heterogeneous groups, which include small scale farmers, the landless, nomads, pastoralists and fishermen. But, they share common disabilities: limited assets, poverty, malnutrition, environmental vulnerability and lack of access to public services, poor medical facilities, persistence of local endemic diseases sometimes without cure which reduces the quality of labour force, premature death, dependent and deprived women folk, unproductive subsistence agriculture etc. The typical rural poor go to poor schools without teaching and learning facilities and they live in atrocious houses.

Be that as it may, there seems to be lack of precise conception or definition of rural development and this partly explains the different approaches to the rural development in many countries of the world. In the eyes of the World Bank, rural development is simply an economic issue raising the low levels of rural income through agricultural modernization (World Bank, 1975).

Generally, the rural communities are poor and economically underdeveloped. Agriculture is the primary occupation and a major source of livelihood. According to Uwaka (1976) large segment of the population (Over 2/3) lives in the rural areas as peasant farmers. The system of farming is predominantly traditional using the hoe and cutlass. The farmers practice shifting cultivation, thus, planting on small pieces of land for two or three years and moving to sites some distance away.
Olisa and Obiukwu (1992:207), highlighted the important features of the Nigerian rural areas thus:

Its inhabitants are mainly farmers who maintain small holdings and practice seasonal farming; their production is mainly on subsistence level and food crops are predominant over populated crops. Productivity and standard of living are low. They are certified victims of preventable diseases, which derived from malnutrition. Inside the rural dwelling place, man, woman, and children are herded together under conditions which defy all rules of hygiene, a condition of life so poor that it prevents the realization of man's total potentials.

Williams (1978) rightly sees rural development as the creation and fair sharing of social and economic benefits resulting from agriculture and economic growth. Many authors see rural development as a general term used to refer to the generation of new employment, more equitable access to arable land, equitable distribution of national wealth, health improvement of all and sundry, improving housing and nutrition, maintenance of law and order, generation of spirit of cooperation and self help etc.

Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the people in rural areas. The main concern in the rural development is supposed to be the modernization of rural society through a tension from traditional economy for equitable and balanced development of the nation. Rural activities can be taken by governments or an international agency, which may be private or public. It is different from development activities executed by through community efforts which are erroneously referred to as community development. Where government is properly playing its expected role, community development should constitutes a process of planned change for which one approach or the other is adopted for improvement and/or transformation of the lost of rural populace.

Furthermore, there have been serious controversies among Policy makers on the appropriate concepts of real development. The United Nations development Programme (UNDP. 1977) defined rural development as "a process of socio-economic change, involving the transformation of agrarian society in order to reach a common sector of development goals, based on the capacities and the needs of the people. Federal Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development WRRD, 1999:15) defined rural development as:

The strategy and the process whereby significant improvement are brought and sustained in the economic, socio-cultural and political life of the rural population for the benefit of both the rural dwellers themselves and the entire Nigerian nation state.

The major objective of rural development encompasses improved productivity, increased employment and thus high income for target group as well as improved qualities in basic needs of life which include food, shelter, job opportunity, health services, education and improved attitudes like political behaviour and so.

Mabogunje (1980:30) defined rural development in the following terms: Rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living standards of the lower income people living in the rural areas of a self-sustaining basis through transforming the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities. It implies a broad based re-organization and mobilization of the rural masses and resources, so as to enhance the capacity of the rural populace to cope affectivity with the daily tasks of their lives and with the changes consequent upon this.
To others, it is simply a matter of Weiface, Okafor (1981). Rural development means more than all these. It is both a geographical and operational concept. Rural development includes:

- To increase employment
- To maximize the personal incomes of the rural folk.
- To uplift the general health of the rural folk.
- To provide technical tools and knowledge to the rural dwellers.
- To maximize the productivity of the average rural person and his family.
- To inculcate civil awareness commitment, involvement and loyalty in the citizen.

Olisa and Obiukwu, (1992:42). Rural development requires citizens' Participation, increase in their productive capacity and attitudinal change leading to their desire and ability to manipulate their environment so as to shun their sense of dependence on their environment.

According to Bello Immam (1986), the objective of rural development should not only be increased agricultural production, but also, the provision of socio economic infrastructures that will make life worth living in these areas. It is the view of Immam that rural development should be able to provide employment opportunity so that the underemployed labor resources of the area can be productively utilized.

Lele and Adu, Nyako (1991) aptly observed "notwithstanding the recent decline in urban living standard experienced in most African countries, poverty in Africa is predominantly a rural phenomenon", the same group of people suffer high mortality rate, premature death, very dependent and unproductive economically deprived andenvironmental pollution hence, their vulnerability to endemic epidemics.

Obiukwu (1992) observed that rural population constitutes peasant farmers, poor and illiterate groups. Fanz Fanon referred to the group as "the wretch of the earth", whose endless striving for survival has not been helped by low incomes, inadequate infrastructure, lack of industry and innovation in farm practices.

A good understanding of the subject matter of rural development stems from having a good grasp of the characteristics of rural development. Abah (2000) opined that a common feature of all underdeveloped countries is widespread of poverty. In fact, Prof. Sam Aluko (1985) sums up their characteristics by saying "all they are good for is to line up, receive and dance for local government chairman, state governors and commissioners, if and when they visit their areas ... "

The subject matter of rural development has over the years preoccupied the minds of academics, policy makers and indeed various governments. Hence, Ochioha (2000) observed, "national interest and security constitute the pivot and the philosophical foundation for integrated rural development. For Abbah (2000), rural development is a process of planned change for which one approach or the other is adopted for the lots of the rural populace.

Rural development is therefore, the process during which the people in the small community, first through discussion, define their goals and objectives and plan and act together to satisfy them; it is the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve economic, social, political and cultural conditions of communities in order to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and enable them contribute fully to national progress.

Indeed, it is a process of ensuring that the poorer section of the population has some share in the fruit of economic activities.

**Basic Components of Rural Development**

Olisa and Obiukwu (1992) opined that rural development entails basic features which include:
(1) National interest and security, expressed as a collective aspirations of people concerning the best possible condition to live as a nation.
(2) Improvement of quality of human resources through education, health care etc.
(3) Improvement of quality of life of the masses through improved nutrition, housing, good environment, income earning capacity etc.
(4) Promotion of development consciousness and a sense of belonging with beneficial participation among the rural dwellers who constitute the target group for rural development.
(5) Enhancement of broad based re-organization and mobilization of rural masses to effectively cope with the task of lives and changes.
(6) Improving of the living standard of the low income population living in the rural areas on self sustaining basis through the transformation of the socio-spatial structures and productive activities.
(7) Bringing about active collaboration between governments, non-governmental agencies, the private sectors and the rural communities themselves for real development in the rural areas.

Dunham cited in Abbah (2002) in agreement with the above assumption conceptualized rural development as involving four levels of functioning and organizing. They are:
a. A planned programme of action through nationally formulated policies.
b. Self-help through community mobilization participations.
c. Technical assistance through a large pool of federally recruited professionals and
d. Integration of various specialist through a systematic approach to rural development.

Rural Development Strategies or Programmes Implemented in Nigeria
In Nigeria, many rural development programme have been evolved. Even though, such programmes have concentrated on agriculture, the execution appeared haphazard because their objectives were not attained. But majority of them centered on increased food production and water resources development. Although, some of these programmes were not yet on, at many other times, many of them were moribund. Some of such programmes include:
1) Farm settlement and plantation programme- FSP (1960).
2) Operation Feed the Nation - OFN (1976).
3) Agricultural Development Project - ADP (1976)
4) Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme - ACGS (1977)
5) River Basin Development Programme-RBDA (1978)
6) Rural Banking System-RBS (1978)
7) Green Revolution - GR (1980)
10) Community Banking Programme-CBP (1990)

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Among all the above enumerated programmes implemented in Nigeria, only Agricultural Development Programme ADP and National Special Programme for Food Security, NSPFS are still ongoing. As a result of successes recorded in these two programmes, the World Bank, federal and state governments are still investing much to ensure the full realization of the objectives of improving the socio-economic well being of the rural dwellers across the country. Because of their successes, their appraisals are quite premature. Even though some of these programmes are initiated by different regimes, their objectives are almost the same.

**National Special Programme for Food Security**

In a country where majority of the households experience food insecurity, there is the urgent need to evolve programmes of rural development, food security and education. National special programme for food security, NSPFS, implies assumed access to food supply at household, sub national and national levels. The national programme for food security was launched in August 2001, principally to curb the high incidence of food scarcity in the country. The programme is located in every senatorial district of Nigeria. The federal government and the food and agricultural organization (FAO) of the United Nations handle the programme, which involves food crop production, irrigation, livestock, food processing etc.

Emphases on food security at family, household, and community, sub-national and national levels are highly needed in Nigeria. In other words, food availability and peoples access to food supply is the goal. At the national level, food security implies assured food availability to meet current minimum requirement per capital during a reference period, and also to meet any unexpected shortfall over a limited period about 3-4 months. "The determining variables are production inputs, exports and stock exchanges. Food production is determined by land availability, crop yield, environment as well as funds". Egbuchua and Bosah (2003).

Individual and household require the availability and adequacy of food intake to enable them contribute meaningfully to national development. Food security therefore, is the state achieved when food systems operate such that "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life", Food security diminished when food systems are stressed. The components of foods system with their main elements are as follows:

1. **Food availability**-production, distribution, exchange.
2. **Food access**- affordability, allocation, preferences.
3. **Food utilization**- nutritional value, social value, food safety.

A food secured household is one that has enough food available to save a necessary minimum intake by all the members of the household.

The world food council (WFC, 1989: 55) defined the minimum to relate to body size, weight, sex and nature of work and for women pregnancy or location status. According to it: Availability for a household is guided by such variables as net food production, land, labour, capital, knowledge, technology and social production, relations, food prices, food supply in the market, cash flow, income, wages, and profit from enterprise.... Any adverse shift in anyone or more of these variables will adversely affect food security of a household.
Transitory and chronic food insecurity could result if the adverse shifts are temporarily whereby the household coping strategies fail (transition food insecurity) but if such shifts emanate from structural problems and linger for a period, chronic food insecurity results (Reuttenger and Rellekaan, 1986).

Food insecurity, whether transitory or chronic is a big threat, particularly the chronic type. Given the spate of unemployment, poverty, hyperinflation and hunger in Nigeria today, the pertinent question is: how long would it take Nigerian government to attain food security? The programme is presently faced with many problems including mobilization, funding, provision of farm inputs such as fertilizers, improved seeds, machines, pesticides etc. These have to be made available at the right time and in reasonable amount. Furthermore, macro credit framework, which is functional and affordable, should be established by government to assist small scale farmers to invest in food production activities.

**Challenges to Food Security in Nigeria**

Mwaniki (2003), enumerated the following as the major challenges to food security:

1) **An underdeveloped agricultural sector:** The major challenge to food security in Nigeria is its underdeveloped agricultural sector that is characterized by over reliance on primary agriculture, low fertility soils, environmental degradation, significant food crops loss both pre- and post harvest and inadequate food storage and preservation that result in significant commodity price fluctuation.

2) **Barriers to market access:** Access to market is the second huddle that smallholders have to overcome. The problem is many fold; poor infrastructure and barriers in penetrating the market caused by their limited resource base, lack of information, lack of or inadequate support institutions and poor policies in place among other factors.

3) **Effects of globalization:** Globalization is a concept that allows countries to benefit from capital flows, technology transfer, cheaper imports and target export markets in the long term. The effect of globalization on any country depends on the country's level of economic development, structure in place during the implementation stage and flexibility of its economy. With globalization, comes liberalization of markets. The food security threats caused by liberalization are due to dumping of heavily subsidized produce in developing countries.

4) **Disease and infection:** Disease and infection continue to plague Nigeria. Diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS not only reduce the man-hours available to agriculture and household food acquisition, but also increase the burden of household in acquiring food.

5) **Handicapping policies:** Poor policies have greatly affected the food security in Nigeria. The problem arises when the focus on policies, structures and institutions is put above that of the people themselves.

Unfortunately, these natural gifts are not properly exploited and harnessed to achieve the optimal benefits therein. Most farmers in the project area are within the productive age group of 55-60, a situation that shows that in no distance future, agriculture will go into extinction. There is the dominance of married male farmers in the three project areas surveyed.

The low level of educated farmers makes it difficult for them to adopt and apply the new farming technique/methods. This has made the nation to be a victim of food in security. Government and individual efforts at ensuring rapid rural development and food security even though
commendable have been far from being a huge success. Successive administrations have devised different measures of ensuring food security but, with little or no success. And so, there is no doubt that all the available resources for agricultural production have not been adequately harnessed. The large hectares of irrigable land are there calling for tilling, most especially during this period of climate change and threat by the vagaries of weather. The expectation is that, with a full commitment of all the three tiers of government to agriculture, through the proposed framework for irrigation projects and subsided fertilizers, the projects will bring out the best from both the small scale and large scale schemes all over the country, the scheme will be more functional, efficient, generate employment, enhance farmers income and reduce poverty and at the end of the day, make food security sustainable and rural development attainable.

Government at all levels should collaborate with experts to encourage food security. In addition, power sector should be improved to facilitate food processing. The president Goodluck Jonathan launch of power sector roadmap should be greeted with utmost sense of seriousness, patriotism and a true national spirit. Since food security is a national security, it should not be treated with levity.

RECOMMENDATIONS
To achieve food security in a more practical way, the following specific recommendations should also be implemented to the later.

1) **Farm demonstration center:** Farm demonstration centers should be established in each of the local government headquarters, where all the new farming techniques will be imparted to the farmers. This will help increase food production and hence, food security in the state.

2) **Establishment of micro credit scheme:** A micro credit scheme should be established in each of the local government areas where small holder farmers can obtain loans not exceeding N50,000 yearly to complement their own savings in the efforts towards improving agricultural production thus, food security.

3) **Extension service delivery:** More extension agent should be trained and posted to rural areas to educate and enlighten local farmers with a few to teaching them in the language they will understand on the innovations in agriculture especially in the area of pest and disease control, when and how to apply them. This will help in preserving most of food crops from being destroyed by pests and other related diseases that attack both plants and animals.

4) **Veterinary services:** Trained veterinary personnel should be posted to the rural areas to help to prevent disease of livestock to ensure availability of protein at household level and also improve health and nutrition.

5) **Input delivery:** Farm inputs and other improved crop varieties should be made available to farmers on time and at cheaper rate too to boost food production and reduce food insecurity in the state.

6) Food security programmes should be given more time to mature since it improves the lives of the rural dwellers.

7) **Infrastructural facilities:** Infrastructural facilities should be provided in the rural areas to discourage urban migration.
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