TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH FARM SETTLEMENTS, YOUTH AND WOMEN ENGAGEMENT

BY

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Introduction

• Food system encompasses all the elements and activities involved in:
  • Food production, processing, distribution, preparation, consumption and wastage;
  • Actors/stakeholders and
  • Output of these activities include social, economic and environmental outcomes

• The system provide a framework to advance access to safe and nutritious food for all

• Food system is considerable part of national economy and contribute significantly to many developmental issues

• It is recognized that none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be achieved without improving the food systems
Figure 1: Food Systems Framework (Adopted from Fanzo et al., 2020)

- **External drivers**
  - Climate change
  - Globalization and trade
  - Income growth and distribution
  - Urbanization
  - Population growth and migration
  - Politics and leadership
  - Social-cultural context

- **Food supply chains**
  - Food production systems and input supply
  - Storage and distribution
  - Processing and packaging
  - Retail and marketing

- **Food environments**
  - Food availability — type and diversity of foods on offer
  - Food affordability — food prices, relative to other foods or to an income/expenditure standard
  - Product properties — quality and appeal, safety, and convenience
  - Vendor properties — type and characteristics of retail outlet
  - Food messaging — promotion, advertising and information about food

- **Individual factors**
  - Economic — income and purchasing power
  - Cognitive — information and knowledge
  - Aspirational — desires, values and preferences
  - Situational — home and work environment, mobility, location, time resources

- **Consumer behaviour**
  - Consumer behaviour — food acquisition, preparation, meal practices and storage

- **Diets**
  - Nutrition and health outcomes

- **Other impacts**
  - Social, economic, environmental
Introduction ....../2

• Nigeria’s population of about 215 million presently is projected to 450 million by 2050

• Efforts must be doubled towards food security and increased agricultural production

• Farm settlement is a government initiative for promoting rural development by providing small holder farmers resources and land for commercial farm operations

• Effort to transform traditional agriculture into a highly productive sector of the economy

• It helps to teach people to produce crops for profit through the application of modern agricultural methods.

• Farm settlement can help sustain the economic wellbeing by reducing unemployment rate, food shortage, insecurity and other social vices
Why Youths and Women Engagement

• Empowerment of women is fundamental to economic development

• Women small holder farmers constitute 70-80 percent of the agricultural labour force in Nigeria

• But only 12% of women in Nigeria solely own or jointly own farm land compared to men at 38%

• Nigeria is one of the 7 countries in the world with the largest populations of youths

• Youths aged between 18 and 23 years accounts for about 10% of the population

• Youth equipped with essential skills can feed themselves, assist others, invest in their future and aid the nation economically.

• Youth Unemployment Rate in Nigeria increased from 40.8% in the second quarter to 53.4% in the fourth quarter of 2020
History of Farm Settlements in Nigeria

- Farm settlement were established in the regions to increase the food production and increase average farm income.
- It was Government organized and supervised cooperative farms in which the labour force or settlers were involved
- Farmers had secured title on holdings of their own which they operated and from which they could draw an income.
- The farm settlement schemes had schools, mill stations, training laboratory, health care centres, police station, market and offices incorporated.
- These developments was to encourage the farmers in production of food crops and retrench the notion of importation of domestic staples in the region.
- The farmers (settlers) were encouraged to stay at the farm settlement for production of domestic crops.
- Assessment of the farm estates indicates majority of them have been encroached, redundant and under-utilized and
- Farm settlers have been disengaged, turning their contributions to the food security not to be realised.
Objectives of Farm Settlement Scheme

• To provide employment and income for school leavers and arrest the wave of rural migration to the urban areas to bring about rural progress
• Increase agricultural productivity, and demonstrate modern techniques of farming
• To solve the land tenure problem, a major constraint to agricultural development especially for youths and women farmers.
• To make farming efficient, lucrative, and attractive to the youth
• To demonstrate that by careful planning, farms can be established and operated by young, educated farmers and provide a comfortable standard of living comparable to other employment.
Objectives of Farm Settlement Scheme ....../2

• To act "as models for others to copy" and serve as "another extension method with a view to accelerating agricultural development

• To enhance a steady rise in income and the general standard of living of the people especially farming households

• Achieving food sufficiency, consumption of nutritious and healthy foods as well as encourage educated young people make a profitable career in farming.

• To link agricultural Institutes to farm settlement to enhance technology transfer

• Government builds the farm settlement as a plan for modernizing traditional agriculture.
Challenges of Farm Settlements in Nigeria

- Land acquisition, lack of interest of the young school leavers targeted by the programme and expensive structure of the settlements
- Some settlers too young and inexperienced in farming leading to high percentage of drop-outs among the settlers
- Shortage of fund and politicking with the programme,
- Lack of understanding of the meaning and implication of the scheme
- Most settlers left the settlement due to crop failures, size of their debts and the authoritarian behaviour of the supervising government staff
- Cost of establishing a viable farm settlement then was too high
- Income level was quite low with high cost of input used by farmers due to small size of land allocation.
- Administrative bottlenecks in the selection of participants for the scheme.
Challenges of Farm Settlements in Nigeria ……../2

• Inadequate capital as successful applicants were compelled to undergo 3-month training at their own expense.
• Interference from management authority, Bureaucracy, interference and interruption by government officials
• Educational level of the farmers, farming experience, extension contacts and security of land
• Inadequate capital, poor road networks and limitations to the number of things in which the farm settlements can be put into use.
• Poor management, inadequacy in training the farmers on the use of mechanized tools
• Lack of continuity due to different government that took the mantle of governance
• Poor accountability on the sale of farm products
Considerations for Farm Settlement Scheme

- Schemes should be designed with the flexibility to anticipate that some settlers will leave.
- Most programs have erred toward too much administration such as centralized models of settlement in contrast to greater local and community participation and responsibility.
- Every element in resettlement programs must not be provided to the settlers before they arrive.
- There is need to determine the sequence of activities and the minimum level of public sector investment needed to generate a sufficient private, public and community investment response.
- The elements of a minimum public sector package include: safe water, road, relatively good land, extension, and subsistence allowances.
- Settlements will be more successful if farm sizes are adjusted to agricultural experience, the labor force and the capital available to the settler.
- Land rights must be clearly defined as ownerships or long-term leases, and settlers should be allowed to rent out their land to other settlers.
Considerations for Farm Settlement Scheme ..../2

- Some grant finance is required to provide poor settlers with the equity necessary and repay the remaining credit grants for initial subsistence with technical assistance.
- Paternalistic constraints on crop choice, technology, marketing or labor market participation are either not enforceable or have adverse impacts.
- There is need to examine the Socio Political and Economic Structure of the selected area.
- Research institutes should be responsible of providing developmental training, extension services, and effective agricultural research.
- Establishment of good storage facilities since large proportion of the perishable farm produce are wasted as a result of post-harvest spoilage.
- Establish special departments that will be responsible for the implementation of the policy, adequate funding and judicious utilization of such funds must be ensured.
Guidelines For Establishment Of Farm Settlement Scheme

• To ensure the survival and continuity those that will participate need to be properly sensitized.
• Provision of good infrastructure in all the farm settlement areas
• Training and retraining of would-be participants and those who are participating in the scheme
• Any potential settler should be aged between 21 and 40 years.
• All settlers to be recruited should have at least the West African School Certificate (WASC) or its equivalent.
• All successful applicants be compelled to undergo 3-month training at the Government-owned training institution
• Each settler in the farm settlement is to be allocated land adequate enough depending on the enterprise (a minimum of 1 hectare).
Guidelines for Establishment of Farm Settlement Scheme ..../2

• Each settler is expected to spend 10 years on the settlement after which he/she will be entitled to re-apply for another 10 years’ tenure
• Government to assist all settlers in the area of counselling, production, access to credit facilities as well as investment
• The settlement shall be cooperative in nature with all settlers as members
• Land use reform so that lands can be made available to farmers and small scale producers to use
• Farmer will be expected to obey all regulations under supervision and abide by all rules and regulations that shall be laid down.
• If work is found unsatisfactory and break the rules and regulations laid down, farmer will be dismissed immediately and place given to someone else.
Recommended Farm Settlement Model

• To revolutionize agriculture as well as promote job creation, improve productivity and enhance food security.
• To encourage commercial agriculture along with agricultural inputs like fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides, and re-distributed to farmers.
• The farmers each get sizeable land e.g 1,000 hectares of land for a tenor of 10 years renewable lease for farming purpose only and not for any other use or resold.
• State government to provide the initial equipment for land clearing and guaranteed initial credit facilities for the farmers.
Recommended Farm Settlement Model ...../2

• A public-private partnership arrangement is proposed between the government, community, financial institutions and farmers on the settlement

• Government to compensate the local community and further provide them with incentives, in addition to relocating them to some other lands to farm.

• The farmers on the settlements are to produce raw materials for agro-allied industries, and export.

• The financing of the farms is to be supported by banks and financial institutions by way of acquiring percent equity while the state government owns some percentage equity

• A typical example of this model is The Shonga Farms Holding Nigeria Limited
  • Through its subsidiaries engages in mixed, dairy, and poultry farming
  • It produces commercial crops such as maize, rice, cassava, ginger, soya bean, milk and poultry meat.
Measures of Farm Settlement Performance

• Effects of farm settlement organization on the attitudes and morale of the farmers and the resulting consequences on organizational effectiveness.
• Management practices impose or specify certain activities and interactions for people involved, opportunity to participate in decisions about their own welfare and working conditions.
• Food crop production which is 1 of the 2 main sources of farm settlement revenue.
• Resource use, relationship of sociopsychological variables to both resource use and profitability.
• Internal rate of return on investment to measure the efficiency of crop production.
Measures of Farm Settlement Performance ……/2

• Amendment of the National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) Act, 2004,
• To give room for the establishment of more farm settlements across the 36 states of the country and Federal Capital Territory (FCT)
• Creating opportunities in the agricultural sector that would improve economic diversification and create jobs for the teeming unemployed youths and women
• Promote agro-entrepreneurship among young people and women.
• Supply of agricultural inputs and government policy on procurement of produce from the farms
  • Agric credit guarantee scheme /insurance scheme
Way forward

• Farm settlement can play significant role in accelerating food system development in Nigeria to provide sustainable nutrition.

• Reintroduction of farm settlements need to be adopted in all states and FCT to cultivate crop types based on agro-ecological variation.

• Farm settlements should be made attractive and secure for youths and women willing to invest and engaged in farming.

• Government at national and sub-national levels to encourage regional industrialization through allocation of resources and introduction of new farm implements local farmers.

• Provision of a good atmosphere conducive for cultivation of food crops in each of the geopolitical zones.
Call to Action

• Pathway to Transformation of the food systems – Priority for 2022
• Adequate political will
• State Executives and Development planners to approve & support implementation
• State Development planners to Provide leadership
• Implement the scheme in all 36 states and FCT
• International community support
• Mobilize & release resources
• Monitor progress
Conclusion

• Pathway towards significant transformations of the Nigeria food system requires:
  • Smart partnership and strong political will
  • Right policies, governance and business models

• This is necessary to achieve a food system that is inclusive, efficient, resilient, and sustainable to deliver quality diet and livelihood to the citizen especially youth and women