



**FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
MINNA**

**AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION FOR FOOD SECURITY:
IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

By

PROF. OLADIMEJI BOLAJI ADENIJI

*B.A. (Ife), M.Sc., PhD, (Zaria), PG.Dip.
Professor of Agricultural Extension*

INAUGURAL LECTURE SERIES 43

2ND JUNE, 2016



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Preamble

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Registrar, Bursar, University Librarian, the Deans of Schools, Directors, Professors, HODs and Unit heads, erudite academics, members of the university community, invited guests, great FUT Minna students, gentlemen of the press, distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

I thank the good Lord for the opportunity given to me to go this far in life and for enabling me to stand before this distinguished gathering of men and women to deliver the 43 Inaugural lecture of this great citadel of learning, that I am presenting this Inaugural lecture is a testimony of the Lord's faithfulness. Today I am what I am by the grace of God (I Cor 5:10). To him, be all the glory.

Mr. Chairman Sir, distinguished audience I am here today to present the 43 Inaugural lecture of this University. This is the 8th Inaugural from the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, the second from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Technology, the **first** from the Agricultural Extension option of the programme.

Mr. Chairman the title of my lecture is **Agricultural extension for food security: implication for sustainable development goals**. The choice of this topic was guided by the need to raise more awareness about agricultural advisory services to end users - farmers and how we can make agricultural production sustainable, based on the resources available to our farmers to attain food security, and the role of extension policy and the import of ICT in achieving sustainable development goals which is the current agenda for all countries of the world including Nigeria. Empirical evidences show that our agriculture is dominated by small scale farmers; hence our research and extension services should focus on technologies that would raise their income and make farming sustainable.

The rest of this address will now first define the major tasks of agricultural extension and then briefly review the extension service and its constraints to date. Then it will examine the issues that are shaping or likely to shape agricultural extension. It will conclude with a suggestion of what an “effective extension delivery system for food security/sustainable agriculture” should be, its features, processes and how to promote it to ensure food security, improved rural livelihoods and sustainability.

Introduction

Overview of Nigerian Agriculture

Prior to Nigeria's independence in 1960, the dominant role of agriculture served the purpose of exporting primary cash crop produce (cotton, cocoa, palm oil, rubber, etc) to United Kingdom to support the development of the British industrial sector. At this period there was little effort on the processing of agricultural commodities to add value to the primary product from agriculture though there were sufficient commodities for domestic needs. Also Nigeria agriculture was able to grow at a sufficient rate to provide adequate economic support to the nation, contributing to about 44 percent of the country GDP and 90 percent of non oil export / (FMARD 2012).

Agriculture is the mainstay of Nigeria economy, it is known to employ more than 70 percent of the country labour force and provide economic sustenance to about 80 percent of the population (NBS, 2014), unfortunately the agricultural sector is finding it difficult to play the crucial role of not only ensuring self sufficiency in food needs of Nigeria but also serves as a major source of foreign exchange earnings. Among the roles conventionally ascribed to the agricultural sector in a growing economy are those of

- * providing adequate food for an increasing population
- * supplying adequate raw material to a growing industrial sector

- * constituting the major source of employment
- * constituting a major source of foreign exchange earnings and
- * providing a market for the products of the industrial sector.

According to FMARD (2012) the agricultural sector is faced with mirage of problems which militate against optimizing its potential. Some of the constraints include low productivity, poor marketing and distribution infrastructures, and inadequate access to credit, weak extension services and inadequate database among others. An attempt to ameliorate the constraints by the Federal Government was the adoption of the Agricultural Policy for Nigeria in 1988 (FMARD, 2000).

Indications of problems in the Nigeria agriculture, however started to emerge as from the first decade of the country's independence (1960-1969) these indications were clearly evident from increasing food supply short falls, rising food prices and declining foreign exchange earnings from agricultural exports. However not much rational concern was shown because the problem was thought to be temporary effects of a series of crises which eventually culminated in the civil war (1967-1970)

The second decade of Nigeria's independence (1970-1979) witnessed a rapid deterioration in the country's agricultural situation. Not only were there widening food supply-demand gaps and rising food import bills, there were also rapid decline in government revenue from agriculture, in foreign exchange earnings from agricultural exports and in the labour force required in agriculture. The situation was further compounded by the effect of civil war severe draught in some part of the country, government fiscal and monetary policies and above all, an oil boom which created serious distortions in the economy and accelerated the rate of migration of labour from agriculture.

In an effort to tackle these serious problems, government initiated a number of agricultural policies, programme and projects largely within the framework of three successive rational development plans from 1970 to 1974, from 1975 to 1980 and from 1980-1985. Experience from these policies, programmes and projects have however convinced the government and all those concerned with agricultural development efforts in Nigeria that there is no alternative to well designed and articulate agricultural policies as instruments for promoting agricultural growth and development.

Origin of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Systems

The dissemination and use of improved agricultural technology and management practices can be traced back thousands of years in different parts of the world, including China, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and even in the Americas. However, The origins of public- or government-funded extension and advisory systems can be traced back to Ireland and the United Kingdom during the middle of the nineteenth century. During the potato famine in Ireland (1845–1851), agricultural advisors helped Irish potato farmers diversify into different food crops. Various European and North American governments observed this development, and “traveling instructors” started using the term by the second half of the nineteenth century by many countries.

The term *extension* itself was first used to describe adult education programmes organized by Oxford and Cambridge universities in England in 1867; these educational programmes helped extend the work of universities beyond the campus and into the neighboring communities. This term was later formally adopted in the United States in conjunction with the land grant universities that were originally established as teaching institutions during the 1860s. Research activities were added in 1887, and extension activities were started in the 1890s and then formally added in 1914 as part of each university's official mandate.

