

Rural Women's Participation in Agriculture:
Implications for Poverty Reduction and Development in Nigeria

By

Josephine Obinyan

A Thesis Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Masters of Arts in
International Development Studies

May, 2013, Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Abstract

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Agriculture is identified as the viable route out of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. Rural women are major players in this highest GDP contributing sector in Nigeria although they remain poor. Disincentives have entrenched subsistence agriculture chiefly among rural women and the threat of agriculture abandonment exists. This research reviews rural women's involvement in agriculture and its impact on poverty reduction using case study approach. The research employed the sustainable rural livelihood approach to interrogate policies and structures as demonstrated in initiatives and rural agricultural practices using primary (key informant interviews and focus group discussions) and secondary data collection and analysis. The findings revealed that women dominate rural agricultural sector though at subsistence level but can contribute to rural poverty reduction incidence and to development in general if their human capital is enabled to intersect favourably with other harnessed assets for livelihood options required for their continuous stay in the sector.

May 29, 2013

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Acronyms

AD	Alternate Development
ATA	Agricultural Transformation Agenda
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
COM	Community
CPR	Common Property Right
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
FMARD	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GES	Growth Enhancement Support
GoN	Government of Nigeria
GTZ	German Society for Technical Cooperation
HDI	Human Development Index
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food and Policy Research Institute
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MPI	Multiple Poverty Index
NC	North Central
NE	North East
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NNLC	Northern Nigerian Land Committee
NW	North West
OAU	Organization for African Unity
OFN	Operation Feed the Nation
OPEC	Organization for Oil Producing and Exporting Countries
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
PROSAB	Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Development in Bornu State
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PWC	Post-Washington Consensus
SCPZ	Staple Crop Processing Zones
SE	South East
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
SRLA	Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach
SS	South South
SW	South West
TA	Transformation Agenda

UNADI	United Nations Asian Development Institute
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children' Fund
WAD	Women and Development
WIA	Women in Agriculture
WID	Women in Development

Chapter One

The Research and Thesis Problematic

1.0 Introduction

Through the periods prior to and after the 1960s, world realities have shaped the discourse of development making for an identification of the global North and South designated by the level of wealth or poverty (Adedeji, 1993). Identified for natural resource and agriculture potentials, the South and sub-Saharan Africa in particular became a leading extracting point for the industrialization of the North. In relation to this, an argument presented is that the historic legacy of colonialism has had a major impact on the development of the global South or developing countries (Okigbo, 1993).

There are different angles from which to view development. One position reflects the totality of a people's wealth as measured by the gross domestic product (Stiglitz, 1998) also explained as the totality of the rich, and the marginalized and poor, within the concept of a "conglomerative perspective" and "deprivational" perspective, and a proposal to combine both concepts for a better understanding of the development problematic (Sudhi and Sen, 1997, pp. 1-6). The World Bank on the other hand advances a development discourse focused on poverty alleviation and reduction –the reduction of both relative and absolute poverty as defined in terms of an income poverty line based on a universal standard (currently \$2.50 a day, or \$1.25 a day)-regarding extreme or absolute

poverty (Ravallion and Chen, 2012). Thus, whether from the macro (conglomerate) perspective, or from a micro (deprivational) viewpoint, development deals with poverty which translates to the availability of or the access to opportunities to basic human needs. The inference here is that poverty or its absence determines and thus defines the development status of an individual, group or country. Succinctly put, development is equated to the alleviation or reduction of poverty. Consequently, in different circles of the international development community, there is a consensus on the need for an inclusive form of development based on the reduction of poverty (Veltmeyer and Tetreault, 2013).

Among the identified principles for a viable strategy to accomplish poverty reduction are income distribution, expanded opportunities to generate income and the empowerment of the poor, allowing them to actively ‘participate’ in the development process if not ‘own’ their own development (World Bank, 2007). Poverty has been theorised variously to include both urban and rural forms and dimensions. However, for many theorists and development practitioners in the field the most urgent problem and task is to understand better and tackle poverty in the rural areas (Ajani, 2008). Thus, the need for rural development strategies and policies to curb the scourge of poverty becomes necessary. In this regard, diverse ideas have been advanced but perhaps none with as much theoretical force than, the best way to tackle and reduce the incidence of rural poverty and improve the wellbeing of the poor, is through the development of their capabilities (Chamber, 1997), which can be achieved through enhanced participation of the poor in development initiatives taken both within and outside the rural communities where most of the poor live and work (Cernea, 1991).

To this end, rural development researchers and practitioners have identified diverse pathways out of rural poverty and different strategies that could be adopted by the poor regarding these pathways (Kay, 2009). The World Bank, together with many development theorists, have long argued that the best or most viable solution to the problem of rural poverty is for the poor to take the development pathways of migration and labour to take advantage of the greater opportunities for self-development, incorporation into the labour market and inclusion in government programs and services (healthcare, education, etc.) that enhance the prospects of integration into the labour market and other institutions of the modern economy (World Bank, 2008). However, by mid-1990s, both the economists at the Bank (De Janvry and Sadoulet, 2000) and others, with a focus on the ‘new rurality’- conditions generated by the process of neoliberal globalization and policies of structural adjustment to the requirements of the ‘new world order’ (Kay, 2009)- began to argue and search for a strategy that would allow the rural poor to stay in their communities rather than abandon both these communities and traditional agriculture, which was deemed to be a major structural source of rural poverty, namely the low productivity of peasant rural labour and agricultural activity.

The public policies and actions by the poor themselves that would make up this new approach and strategy for rural development (alleviation and reduction of rural poverty) have not been consolidated and fully put into practice, but there has emerged a growing consensus—a post-Washington Consensus on the need to bring the state back into the development process (Rodrick, 2006) and for a more inclusive form of development (Bresser-Pereira, 2007; Sunkel, & Infante, 2009; World Bank, 2007): a

‘new development paradigm’ and a new poverty-targeted social policy, or what Bresser-Prerira (2007) has termed the ‘new developmentalism’. There are two apparent pillars of this new approach towards poverty reduction and inclusive development. One is on the part of the ‘state’ (i.e. government) to include the poor in their social and development program and to extend them into the rural areas and communities. Most relevant here is a more inclusive approach to healthcare and educational opportunities, and ‘social safety nets to the poor’ (Saad-Filho, 2010), which almost automatically lifts the rural poor beyond the line of extreme poverty as well as ensuring social conditions of development such as health and education. The second pillar of the ‘new developmentalism’ is a strategy pursued by rural households to diversify their source of income to include agriculture, labour (work off-farm), migrant remittances, government cash transfers, and rural development projects mediated with ‘social participation’ (the agency of nongovernmental organisations).

This new strategy and approach is predicated on a new understanding of the relationship between agriculture and development. That agriculture provides diminishing returns on labour and invested capital, and reduced opportunities for rural development. However, while this understanding in the past led to a relative neglect of agriculture, and a policy of encouraging the rural poor to migrate to the cities and urban centre to better take advantage of their ‘opportunities’ a number of authors now argue that agriculture can indeed play an important role in the development process, particularly in bridging ‘inequality gap’. To expand on Fisher’s (1939) and Kuznet’s (1957) position on relationship between agriculture and rural development, they postulate that there is a

correlation between a country's development and the decline or progress of its agricultural sector is accepted but with a nuanced argument that agriculture contributes in no small measure to bridging the inequality gap as well as providing access and means for the basic needs of the poor to be met (Sudhi and Sen, 1997).

Resource allocation as it reflects "cause" and "effect" relationship has also long been employed as development yardstick (Stiglitz, 1998). The later years of 1970s demonstrates this with the discovery of oil and mineral deposits in some regions of the South especially sub-Saharan Africa, and reduced exportation of cash crops. In addition, the 1980s witnessed again a shift to macroeconomic concerns, adjustment, fiscal and monetary policies (World Bank, 2007). The global economic recession and in particular, the indebtedness of most developing countries, increased inequality and poverty which rekindled continued search for a way out of poverty and a path to development for the majority of the South.

1.1 Background

Internationally, agriculture has once again been identified as a pathway out of poverty to development for sub-Saharan Africa amongst other options of migration and Labour (FAO, 2011). The 1980s application of structural adjustment programs as a development strategy in many countries of the South, introduced a spiral poverty decline beyond the acceptable threshold of 1.25\$ (World Bank, 2011). Thus calls for extensive diagnosis of the development challenges in this part of the world. According to development experts, the answer to poverty reduction and by inference, development of the South, lies in an

inclusive model of development (Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1975; UNDP, 1990). Also, development analysts argue that agriculture holds the key to development in sub-Saharan Africa and therefore an alternative route to poverty reduction (Ake, 1978; Cheru, 1989 and World Bank, 1980).

Agriculture and development can be viewed from two main angles of food security and poverty reduction (NEPAD, 2003). While food security results from a thriving capitalization of agriculture to which rural agriculture is far removed, small holder farming directly impacts on rural poverty. For the purpose of this thesis, the focus will be on poverty reduction at the rural level, so deliberate effort will be made to stir this thesis away from the debates and discourse of food security.

Agriculture development trajectory has been influenced by development shifts vis: modernisation through to capitalism in all its forms. Even as it contributes to gross domestic product of the economy is argued and not to be impacting positively on development of the rural poor in sub-Saharan Africa (Boserup, 2007). Although arguments exist for the pertinence of distinguishing participating in agriculture labour as opposed to farm management which ensures economic gains (Katze, 2003; Deere, 2005 and Lastarria-Cornhiel, 2006).

It is generally agreed that though the choice of crops to be produced remains important, the participation of rural women farmers is the most important considering their dominance at the level of agricultural production. This view is supported by an explanation that the effect of migration has increased women's involvement in agriculture.

1.2 Region and country synopsis of agriculture

A regional effort is being made through the African Union on the platform of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to revive the agriculture sector. Applying the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)¹ as a tool, the African Union mandates all member countries signatory to Maputo declaration to earmark 10% of its annual national budget to agriculture. In a response and as a demonstration of commitment, Nigeria has its Vision 20:2020² addresses agriculture. It is posited that previous development patterns which have resulted in outmigration have impacted on the participation of women in agriculture by closing the space for economic gains (Radel, Schmook et al; 2012).

Notwithstanding, an increased rural-urban migration, about 49% of 162.3 million Nigerians still reside in rural areas (PRB, 2011). About 70% of this rural population are involved in agriculture which contributes 40% to country's GDP signalling the sector as a crucial and potential contributor to national development (GoN, 2011). Rural women constitute between 73 and 76% of smallholder farmers and are responsible for about 70% of Nigeria's food production (NGO Coalition, 2008). They have however not benefited from the land tenure laws; nor are they significantly involved in agricultural initiatives beyond subsistence level (FAO, 2011). The new interest and efforts to access agriculture for poverty reduction and development would need therefore to take cognisance of lessons from the past and bring all actors especially the rural women on board. While

¹ CAADP Multi Donor Trust Fund. April 17-19, 2012. An African Union initiative to enhance development in the region

² Nigeria's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

international, regional and national attempts to revamp the agricultural sector continue, rural women's participation above subsistence and for economic gains remains a challenge (Ovwigbo, 2009).

1.3 Conceptual framework

People first and asset next, a fruitful interaction of human and other capitals is a recent flavour of development practitioners. A pro-poor strategy that addresses inequality, poverty and sustainability of development must of a necessity look inward, encourage self-development by taking stock of and employing both the “tangible” and “intangible” assets (Chambers and Conway, 1991). The interaction of these assets results in activities which could be horizontal, vertical, multiple happening sequentially or simultaneously. This might also be on-farm or off-farm for agriculture dependent communities (Adato and Meinzen-Dick, 2002). Ensuring livelihoods is thus critical for wellbeing and some hold the view that a human capital based on knowledge and education are key to the success of this (Ellis, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). Furthermore, a livelihood is considered as a process therefore it does require a dynamic approach especially in rural agrarian communities.

The dimensions of poverty is complex due to its numerous causative factors, an approach to its reduction should be multi-faceted with active involvement of the principal sufferers and actors (beneficiaries) exercising their capabilities using available assets and within enabling policies and institutional environment. Ellis' (2000) view the major

angles of approaching the topic to include socioeconomic perspective which incorporates many opportunities for livelihoods (opportunities). To undertake this therefore, diverse sources of income is requisite to sustainably mitigate poverty dynamism and the sustainable livelihood approach allows for identification and distilling of the appropriate option that could militate against livelihood shocks (Ellis, 1999). In furtherance of this research, a platform is required to investigate the livelihoods of the poor (rural women) and how to sustain this. Therefore, the sustainable rural livelihood approach will serve as Conceptual Framework.

Various development institutions and scholars have proposed frameworks taking into consideration the above. While some are critiqued for demonstrating a less sequential approach which downplays the relationship between elements that make up the framework, others pride in the provision of changes notwithstanding. Notable is the argument about the lack of clarity of the word ‘capital’ in the SRLA framework. The word ‘capital’ often does not take into consideration the power relations evolving from the human and social capitals given that these might impact differently on access and or utility of the “livelihood-building blocks” (Kai Wegerich, Jeroen Warner, 2010). This subsequently varies or influences people’s reaction to vulnerability, generating the ability or inability to create or harness options in face of livelihood shocks. This however can be overcome if the SRLA as a tool of development is understood for its imperfection and need for context specific application. The common features of the SRLA remain: people, assets, policies, institutions and the wheel coordinating these is the interaction which produces activities that translate into livelihoods diversification.

The discourse on sustainable rural livelihood stretched its mainstream definition to accommodate and highlight the importance and need for an interaction of ‘access’ - through systemic structure and social network- with assets for sustained activities that will interrogate and reduce poverty hence resonating in the three pillar concepts of “capability, equity and sustainability” as proposed by (Chambers and Conway, 1991: 5). In further review of the approach, it is argued that livelihood is an on-going process and closely linked to income as it is a derivation or resulting effect of exercising livelihood activities (Ellis; 2000). Thus, the sustainable rural livelihood approach will be the pedestal upon which this research will interrogate the participation of rural women in agriculture because it provides an analysis basis to examine the form and style of participation and its resulting effect in addressing poverty reduction. In addition, the approach will help point to alternatives or escape route from rural poverty and the best option for the Nigeria. For the purpose of this research the two diagrams following this paragraph is a schematic representation of the SRLA framework.

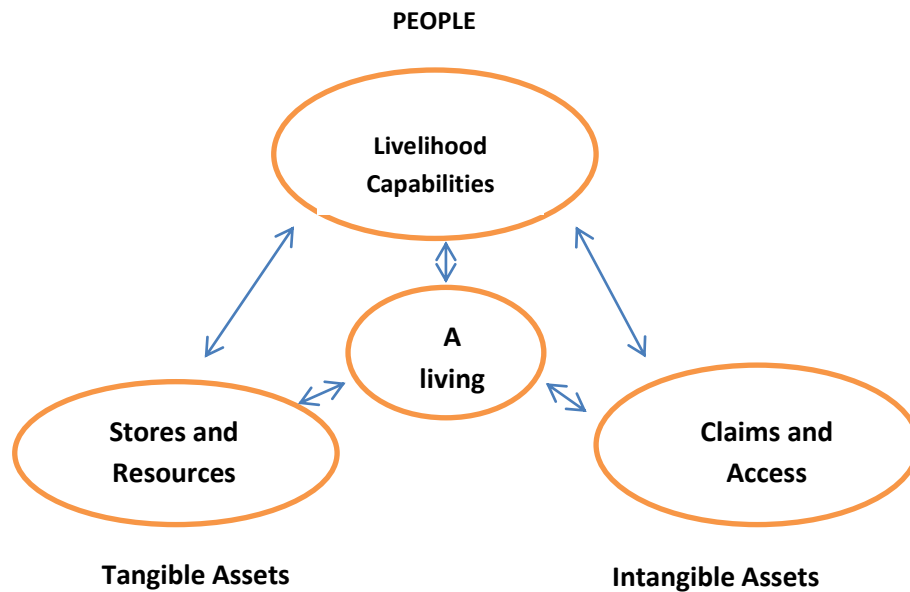


Figure 1a: People Centred Livelihood Approach: Note: Reproduced from *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concept for the 21st Century* by Robert Chambers and Gordon R. Conway (1991).

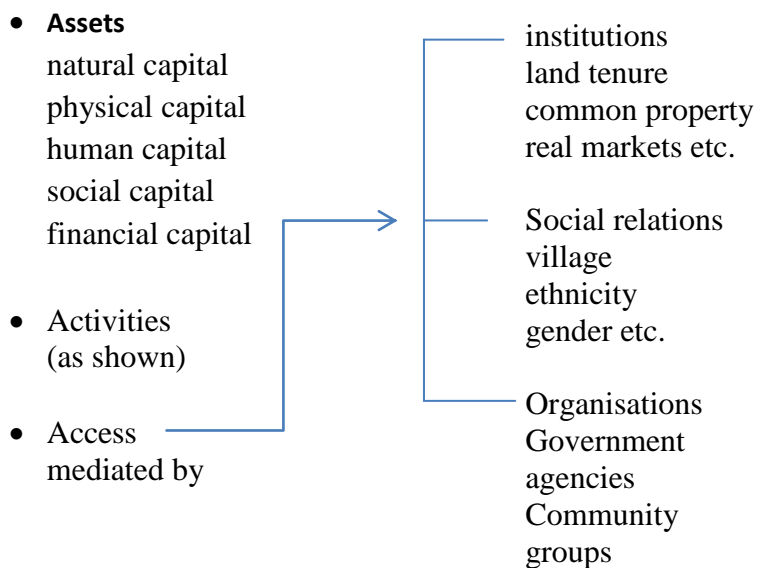


Figure 1b: Rural Livelihoods Flow: Note: Reproduced from *Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in Developing Countries* by Ellis, Frank (2000: 1).

1.4 Posing the problem and the thesis statement

With the acceptance of a neoliberal agenda of ‘structural reforms’ in Nigeria’s macroeconomic policy (liberalization, deregulation, globalization), and given a context in which poverty is tilted towards the rural sector where agriculture is still the dominant productive or economic activity engaging predominantly women, yet rural women’s participation in agriculture has not evolved in a significant way beyond subsistence, hence the chances are slim that poverty reduction will be achieved. To explore this problem of minimal utilization of available human capital in the predominant agriculture sector and to seek a solution in prescriptions for policy and action, this thesis will start off by interrogating how rural women can harness their agricultural involvement and potentials to move out of poverty. A review of current agricultural strategies will be carried out aimed at identifying the gaps which impede participation beyond subsistence level. This will enable a prescription of a useful model and strategy for advancing rural women’s effective³ participation in agriculture to enhance development in Nigeria.

This thesis argues that rural women have the potential to contribute to poverty reduction and development without abandoning their agricultural occupation when a strategy is put in place that provides for full participation at an economic benefiting level. Rural women in Nigeria play a predominant role in agriculture in the midst of a relative exclusion from programs designed to enhance human capital and expand economic opportunities. Rural women farmers also contribute to wellbeing of their

³ Participation that transcends the threshold of poverty while contributing to development as described in Carpano, F. (2011: 1-6). Women and Land in Mozambique.

households. The persistency of rural poverty can therefore not be addressed if rural women continue to generate low or no income from agriculture. The situation confronting Nigerian rural poor women in particular, raises a number of critical questions: (i) in an effort to improve their social condition, is it necessary for women to abandon low productivity agriculture and embark on the traditional well-worn migration and labour pathways staked out and paved with the support of the development community and international cooperation (World Bank, 1980) Or (ii) is it possible for rural women in Nigeria who make up a large part of the small-holding agricultural producers to lift themselves out of poverty and embark on a development path without abandoning their agricultural occupation?

This option puts women in a vantage position of being protagonists and an active agency for self-development. It also allows them to take action and initiate development projects rather than participate in the development process as recipients. This would also allow rural women contribute to the full extent of their potentials, thereby increasing the human capital base required for development at the local level of the country. Although a dominant view holds that the structural limitations of small-holding agriculture combined with the impact of powerful forces of social change preclude the second option (Shenton, 1986; Oculi, 1987). The possibility, however, exist of an emerging alternative approach which suggests that rural women have an alternative to abandoning agriculture through livelihoods, community- and asset-based local development (Chambers and Conway, 1992). This alternate route to poverty reduction and development via agriculture, suggested to and promoted by sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria in particular,

will be starting on a 'faux-pas' with the current implementation mechanisms and policies that feeds inequality structure especially within rural farmers.

This thesis thus focuses on smallholder farming in arguing that the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Approach (SLA), with government support (social inclusion) and international cooperation, can provide an effective model for bringing about rural development with rural women farmers' full participation in the process at an economic generating level. It also argues for empowering women to act for themselves, their households and their communities, constituting these women as a possible catalyst of community-based development through rural women's involvement in agriculture beyond the subsistence level.

Although the SRLA provides a useful framework of ideas for this research, it does not however proffer solutions for power related issues which become visible and relevant when 'assets' interact. This thesis is therefore cognisance of the shortcomings of the SRLA in that it is not sufficient to interrogate strategic structural constraints impacting on rural poverty reduction such as national policies, market and trade dynamics which are externally driven in addition to socio-cultural norms that impact on access to assets at local level. Nevertheless, these remain beyond the scope of the thesis which prefers to dwell on women's contribution to rural development through agriculture for poverty reduction in Nigeria.

1.5 Structure of the thesis argument

The thesis argument will be constructed as follows. Chapter 1 will provide the necessary scaffolding to construct the theory used to inform the sustainable livelihoods model of

rural development. The chapter will establish the working ideas used to guide the research for the thesis, as well as the methodology used to gather the supporting evidence. Chapter two will follow with a review of the relevant literature to establish the current state of knowledge—ideas and empirical findings in the area of ‘alternative development’ (the ‘new development paradigm’). The chapter will focus on the significance of the sustainable rural livelihoods approach (SRLA) to local based development.

The working ideas used to guide the research for the thesis will be derived from this approach. On the basis of these ideas, it will be argued that: (i) an asset-based approach to development⁴ is more effective than the traditional needs- or deficit-based approach (identifying the community’s deficits and needs); (ii) increasing the participation of women in agriculture is consequently a critical factor of rural development and the most effective strategy for overcoming the condition of the rural poverty; (iii) women-led community based development is hinged on a strategy of diversifying sources of household income, combining agriculture⁵ and off-farm labour of household members with entrepreneurship and productive employment-generating development opportunities.

Chapter three introduces the contextual background required to further understand the problem and situate the thesis. To this end a brief review of Nigeria’s development history will be the starting point to establish, the state of national development and the situation in which the rural poor and women find themselves. The

⁴ Mapping the totality of resources available to the community, and then constructing a strategy to mobilise them in synergy for development purpose.

⁵ Food production for consumption and sale on the market.

Chapter will also review the various international, regional, national and local development strategies and initiatives pursued over the years. In addition, the evolution of agriculture as a sector in the country will be reviewed with a deliberate effort to draw out its impact on rural women's involvement and benefit. Chapter four then examines the development outcomes of these initiatives as it relates to real life situation of communities in rural settings. An effort has been made to assess (i) the role of agriculture and food production in rural development and poverty reduction in particular, and (ii) the thesis argument regarding the importance of incorporating women in the development process through small-scale agriculture. For this purpose, primary data from southern and northern communities of the country were collected and analysed. Finally, chapter five summarises the results of the research and draws up some general conclusions in support of the thesis. Effort will equally be made to proffer some recommendations or policy prescriptions.

1.6 Research Methodology

The thesis proceeds to review the dynamics of rural women's participation in the agriculture sector. The data required to adequately explore this focus will include: the literature on international, regional and country specific development initiatives among which are the Nigerian poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), national agricultural policy; guidelines including for extension services; rural women and men's participation in agriculture and existing interactions in the relationship. Equally to be considered are State and Donor joint implemented agriculture initiatives aimed at rural development and economic empowerment of rural women farmers. These secondary data will be

supported by primary data extracted from Focus Group Discussions and Interviews of key informants.

To enable a participatory approach that will enrich the conclusion drawn from this study and also to provide in-depth information that provides explanation for socio-economic and political situation impeding the effective participation of rural women in agriculture, this study will employ the qualitative research method based on the need for a multidimensional focus on the problems of participatory rural agriculture. However, reference will be made to secondary data contained in literature reviewed. The choice of qualitative method is informed by the prescription that it permits multidimensional focus required to triangulate research information for validation purpose. In addition, it provides an interpretative angle to the study of this issue in an original setting as (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Holland and Campbell, 2005).

Agricultural initiatives in Nigeria will be reviewed for useful secondary data which will then be triangulated with primary data for informative analysis. Initiatives and programs will be selected based on visible concerted efforts of State, international development agencies, NGOs and smallholder farmers to link policy and practice as well as simulate linkages and opportunities at both the micro and macro level for implementation of rural development. This should also aim for a direct impact on agriculture productivity and address specific concern for rural women's participation in the sector beyond subsistence.

The choice to review policy, project and other related archival documents is informed by the need to deconstruct texts and extract meaningful understanding of the specific contextual framework (Clendenin and Connelly 1998) of the problematic of

rural women's participation in agriculture at an economic level in Nigeria. In addition, two different types of interviews will be conducted: key informant and Focus Group Discussion (FGD), which will be stimulated by semi-structured questions.

Also, the focus group discussion (FGD) tool will be employed because it encourages identification of existing differences in collective response (Pratt and Loizos, 1992). In addition, the tool provides for establishing recurring themes in the information collected. This is summed up by Fontana and Frey as exploratory techniques to establish common grounds (Fontana and Frey, 1998). Where possible, a gendered interview style will be considered to provide women focus group discussants a sense of equality with the researcher thus, encouraging free flow of useful information perceived as "gender filtered knowledge" by (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998: 64).

Similarly, the key informant interviews will include officers and consultants from national agriculture ministry, research and extension services, donor projects and, non-governmental organization representatives. This is strategic in that it allows for a cross section of opinions borne out of experience in the subject matter. The focus group discussion will be conducted based on case studies of two communities in the north and south of Nigeria to provide a balanced context of rural agriculture in the agro ecological as it impacts on rural women in the sector. Interview notes will be transcribed immediately after each session according to established useful analytical themes.

To analyse findings from this research a framework that allows the research to interrogate impediments to rural women's economic participation in agriculture will be employed. This is argued to address pre-conditions, process and outcomes thus permits

identification of themes, patterns and ideas and their application (Mikkelsen, 2005).

1.7 Conclusion

The growth of the once prosperous agricultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa has been stunted; efforts at revamping it are on-going at various levels and in different countries including Nigeria. However, these might be starting off on a wrong note with marginal participation of rural women in income generating agriculture. This research therefore seeks to investigate the impediments to rural women's participation in agriculture at an economic generating level. This research is important in the light of Nigeria's need to diversify its economy, reduce poverty and develop rural communities. It also aligns with Africa's quest for alternative development strategies, the new vision for Africa's agriculture as engrained in the four CAADP pillars. In addition, the relevance of the topic of research aligns with fulfilment of the NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals.

Through the application of a qualitative research method using the analysis of development projects and case study of two rural agriculture communities, the research will seek to achieve a construct of social realities, focus on interactive process and event that will provide for better analysis required to understand the impediments to rural women's participation in agriculture at an economic level. It is envisaged that this study will be useful to first of all stimulate better articulated advocacy from the grassroots as well as inform effective policy formulation and consequently project implementation across states in Nigeria.

Chapter Two

Rural Development and Women's Participation: A Review of the Literature

2.0 Introduction

Many factors have influenced and shaped human progress and poverty reduction attempts among which are economic quest, market competition, and a need for self-determination. The consideration for human capacity in the list of other resources required for achieving better and improved life has thus been the focus of recent and on-going exploration in international development as well as other social field of study (Thomas-Slayter, 2003). Likewise, the economic offset of the 1980s resulted in the neglect of rural economy (agriculture) on which relies the majority of the population in the global South particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Abdulai, 1993).

Various theories propounded to explain or guide development have met with failure or near success at various periods of global history.⁶ Proposed solutions have been streamlined to approach development from either a 'fix the structure' or 'ignite an agency' perspective (Veltmeyer, 2009). Thus earlier development attempts have been skewed with benefits accruing more to one end of the global spectrum-the North- as opposed to the South and the resulting impact at the micro level is revealed in inequality and poverty for a majority in the global South (Bardhan, 2003) and in the rural areas (Sudhi and Sen, 1998). Poverty therefore becomes the driving force and reason behind

⁶ Modernisation, protectionism, fiscal and structural adjustment and deregulation

development attempts. In other words poverty reduction stimulates and enhances development. As a result, attempts through the 1950s to the 1960s took the form of productive transformation (Anriquez and Stamoulis, 2007) through promotion of participation in labour market with an emphasis on human capital development (Kabeer, 2003). This period also witnessed neglect for small-scale agriculture and in some cases a total neglect of the primary or traditional sector in favour of natural resource extraction (Cheru, 2002; Odularo, 2007). The continuous struggle with poverty reduction makes for multiplicity of development efforts. The dichotomy called South and North have over the years coloured the tapestry of development study revealing a global South required and struggling to retrofit its development to the template dictated from outside of its reality, and compelled by prevailing global capitalist pressure and thus poverty, inequality and underdevelopment persist (Chambers, 1997).

Development as suggested is only possible with an absence of parallel economies⁷. Coined differently, development can be achieved within a framework of liberalisation when the term is considered ‘means’ and not an ‘end’ creating an ease of distinguishing between the ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ of under-development (Stiglitz, 1998: 1-3). To further clarify this assertion, advocacy for the introduction of socio-cultural elements into the development agenda to put the wellbeing of the beneficiary in perspective is made (UNDP, 1990; Ahoojapatel, 2007). The question therefore is- does the current development approach require a nuance in application that better takes context and realities into focus? Past development efforts show a leaning towards a macro-economic development and the South still lacking concrete results in social

⁷ labour intensive as well as mechanized production system.

welfare, equity and democracy. Agriculture, one of the three suggested escape routes out of poverty receives a renewed consideration as a comparative advantage for sub-Saharan African region with a major contribution to rural livelihood (Chambers, 1987, FAO, 2011; Ebosele and Adekoya, 2012).

Local content and context are increasingly dominating the development discourse in response to the evolving capitalist structure. While participation in development is canvassed for and pursued vigorously, it is argued that its significance to structured and economic system should not be overlooked because it permanently shapes the fate of global development (Blake, 2000). In a counter argument, Brahman posits that a ‘patron-client’ relationship between developed and developing countries is fostered by the existing development structure (Brahman, 1996: 12). In summary therefore, development is poverty reduction in a regulated economic growth environment where dependency gives way to result oriented participation of the poor and marginalised and where traditional means of livelihoods is supported to thrive in the global capital setting.

This chapter traces the evolution and range of development theories related to the research problematic and highlights the paradigm shift from mainstream development approaches and concepts at the same time highlights the impact of this shift on livelihoods of the rural poor population and particular focus will be given to participation as a development concept to bridge inequality gap, reduce poverty and achieve development in the South but most importantly the sub-Saharan African region that currently ranks lowest in the human development index (UNDP, 2011).

The starting point will therefore be to review development trajectory vis-à-vis poverty reduction. The second part will further investigate the theories, concepts and

approaches with a view to see how they intersect with rural development with particular emphasis on agriculture. Finally, the views and debates around participation as a term and an important component of another development will be explored for purpose of situating the argument of the thesis. Effort will also be made to situate women within this all important concept and pillar of the human development theory in an effort to provide an operational framework to understand the environment and problem of rural women's involvement in agriculture, which is the kernel of this thesis.

2.1 Development theory

Development has evolved overtime and theorized differently with emphasis on progressive change in economic and material wellbeing of the individual, group of individuals and or society. Development as a concept and theory surfaced in the 1940s after world war 11 and has since then been shaped by events. Strategic and significant to development approaches are the global events of production crisis of 1970s, tightening of fiscal policies and structural adjustments of 1980s (Hutchful, 2002) whereas the paradigm shift gave impetus to rethink development approach and make it people oriented (UNDP, 1990). The later has undergone different phases with a view to making it as participatory a model as possible to enhance poverty reduction as contained in the millennium development goals (MDGs).

A similarity in the trend to the development concept evolution has been that economic value is a determining factor (Stiglitz, 1998). While the paths might be dissimilar, the goal has been to increase the gross domestic product of a country or

increase the purchasing power parity of its citizens with this relative predetermined value conferring the title of developed or underdeveloped on a country.

2.2 The modernisation path towards development

Views held by a few in western countries and propelled by economics is that development is a stage process whose gradient starts from the primitive to the modern era with the underdeveloped countries comprising the former group and the Western countries occupying the later position. In this theory as it is with others in a way, industrialization equated to modernisation is important. Invariably, for a society or country to be considered developed, it has to be industrialized (Tipps, 1973; Lin and Chang, 2009). A preconception and bias of western civilization superiority stemming from colonization is argued to be embedded in the modernization theory. This ideology, as explained by Martinuessen, considers colonies as traditional and primitive and therefore in need of the western industrial recipe. This theory pursues a transformation into 'modernity' of supposedly 'traditional' socio-cultural norms that does not promote economic growth (Martinuessen; 1997). A presentation of Simon Kuznets' (1953) argument demonstrates that in addition to a widening inequality gap with a great burden on the South, the modernization approach did not in the least ensured attainment of development (Parpart and Veltmeyer, as cited in Veltmeyer, 2011).

An economic viewpoint expressed by Stiglitz, prescribe that development should be viewed from 'cause' rather than 'effect' which is often measured by an increase in GDP (Stiglitz, 1998). Predominantly in the 1960s, development was seen from resource

allocation viewpoint. The State or Market was at different times thought to be best determinant of effective resource allocation hence the move from regulation to deregulation. The above stimulated a reflection on past development strategies and accordingly, call for a development approach that is strategic in its ability to progressively change society in a way that transcends increase in gross domestic product per capita but include improvement in living standards which translates to reduced poverty in its absolute term (UNDP 1990).

Explained from a ‘critical variable’ and ‘dichotomous’ point of view, which is principally western, generalised and economic goal oriented, an argument holds that modernisation is fed by the colonial relationship between the South and the North, and thus equates economic growth through industrialisation hence the conclusion that development assumes a phased process to economic growth from a point termed primitive to an industrialized one (Tipps; 1973).

Criticism of this approach holds that modernisation as it pertains to rural economy, needs to transcend technological upgrade⁸ to an all-inclusive review and intervention in the socio-political and the institutional framework in the rural society in order for it to meaningfully make contribution to development. Another counter argument to the modernization theory posits that for development of a society, self-interest and accumulation would have no place. This view explains the centrality of aspirations and self-reliance in achieving basic human needs. The argument goes further

⁸ irrigation, improved seeds and seedlings and other inputs.

to state the need to have technological advancement in tandem with local realities⁹ and therefore locally driven and appreciated (Somavia, 1977).

Succinctly put, modernisation established a glaring categorisation more upfront than ever. The theory is therefore considered class based in its approach (Tipps, 1973). Are traces of this theory still guiding current development or is the trickle effect reflected in the current pace of development in the global South especially Sub-Saharan Africa? The rest of this chapter will aim to respond to these questions. In the 1960s, therefore, development was seen from resource allocation viewpoint. The State or Market was at different times thought to be best determinant of effective resource allocation (Martinuessen, 1997). This theory is important in this work because agriculture sector development proposed by the World Bank and other development actors has been criticised for not departing from the modernisation approach (Veltmeyer, 2009; Patel, 2008).

2.3 Regulatory state, neoliberal policy, and a new world order

Accentuated by a need for economic growth and confronted with production crises in the early 1970s, former development approaches that widened the inequality gap and worsened the poverty problematic is argued were discarded (Parpart and Veltmeyer, 2011). The change from market regulation and state intervention to a liberal market with its attending fiscal adjustment did not resolve but further propagated development

⁹ Labour and Capacity.

challenges in the South particularly in sub-Saharan whose countries were later classified as heavily indebted countries.

The road to free market capitalism

In an effort to highlight Adam Smith's explanation of the emergence and pervasiveness of capitalism as equated to 'freedom of exchange' insight is provided into the contributions promoted and canvassed for within the liberalized development framework as a precursor to social change. Capitalism is opined to have emanated from a preexisting feudal economic structure in Europe. This reveals that capitalist ideas of a barrier less international trade and comparative advantage as propounded by David Ricardo have shaped the current global capital system (Stilwell, 2006).

The distinct era that marked development history is the global production crisis. This was followed by state-led development intervention in the 1970s vividly represented by Latin American protectionist development approach (Parpart and Veltmeyer, 2011). This approach did not however yield dividends as anticipated. Countries plunged further into debt, a dual sector economy was entrenched, and there was fiscal stress resulting from the technical and financial requirements to operate a protectionist market.

In the wake of the system wide production crisis and its attending fiscal upheavals, ignited by a state controlled development approach, the Washington Consensus of the early 1980 was launched aimed at fiscal adjustment through liberalization of economy, deregulation and currency devaluation in some cases. This instrumental component however ensured a continued culture of labour exploitation,

capital accumulation inimical to development at the rural level and accentuating the divide between countries of the North and those of the South expressed in current unequal development that pervades the global scene (Stilwell, 2006).

The viewpoints presented above suggest that macroeconomic framework is vital to structural transformation and a requisite process for economic growth. The emerging schools have been broadly categorized in two to accommodate the structural and the expanding capitalist schools. These approaches although critiqued for their narrow focus on internal and external factors of growth respectively have nevertheless lingered and continue to influence development thinking and approach. Caution however is subtly called for in recognition of the plurality of the growth and transformation potentials existent in the various societies (Hunt, 1989 as cited in Martinuessen, 1997). Thus, in response to rural development, two positions are identified. Whereas one takes a capitalist orientated approach stressing the necessity of stages of development, the other proposes a detour from capitalism in order for developing countries to avoid the capital stage (Martinuessen, 1997). While the former underplays the idea of context and comparative advantage as presented by Todaro and Smith (2003) earlier discussed in this work, the former might be considered out of tune with the global reality. While these theories were tested they have not thrived as the search for better development approaches continues.

A Shift to macroeconomic concerns in the developing countries with fiscal and monetary policy adjustment made the 1980s an austere period for developing countries. In furtherance of this assertion, it is argued that lending to developing countries entrenched their indebtedness and consequently placed them at a disadvantaged position

in the development structure equation. In addition, the author claimed that development approaches embarked upon prior to 1990s viewed development issues from a technical point requiring that development should be viewed from ‘cause’ rather than ‘effect’ factors which is GDP increase as postulated by some economic viewpoints (Stiglitz, 1998).

Furthermore, the failure of Washington Consensus as embodied in the structural adjustment approach necessitated a reflection on way forward in form of a new development strategy capsuled in the comprehensive development framework discussed in a World Bank forum (Wolfenshon, 2000). As a follow up, it is proposed that development should be viewed from the strategic point of its societal transformative ability and the role which transcends increase in GDP per capita to include improvement in living standards with proof of improved health, literacy and hence reduced poverty in its absolute terms (Stiglitz, 1998). A development strategy should therefore recognize and maximally exploit comparative advantage in its classic¹⁰ and contemporary¹¹ forms to benefit economically from the liberal system (Lin and Chang, 2009).

Another thriving proposition in support of a nuance to the classical term explores deeper the role capability plays in technical knowhow. This opinion transcends physical comparative advantage to technical capacity maximization with the Asian Tigers as model (Lin and Chang, 2009). This results in an advocacy for the interaction between institutional frameworks, prevailing systemic limitations and theories of development in addition and particularly as they challenge outcome (Chenery, 1961).

¹⁰ Resource disposition

¹¹ enabling environment facilitated by the State

Consequently, the Human development theory considers humaneness of development (UNDP, 1990) through the interrogation of cause and effect relationship in poverty analysis (Stiglitz, 1998) or elements of multivariate and multilevel unit of analysis, which is a predominant idea with the postmodernist approach. Although there are various postulations of development, there seems to be consensus that development's purpose is closely linked to meeting human needs and providing the means to accomplish this. However, a position holds that an attempt at technology transfer beneficial to only a segment of the society will consequently create a dual economy that is deficient to enhance development of the general population (Stiglitz, 1998).

The alternative route: Another Development

Following criticisms of mainstream development, the need evolved to rethink the development agenda in order to make it responsive and non-exclusionary (Brohman, 1996) and various contributions and ideas shaped this alternative route to development otherwise known as Another Development (AD). In contrast with previous development plans that had indicative framework, AD is argued to possess transformative and inclusionary elements, transformation and satisfaction of basic needs, human rights, local content, inclusion in decision making, with a demonstrable linkage between development theory and social realities (Hammarskjold, 1975). Following the above diagnostics development should be relevant to the needs of the people being developed who in turn should be able to relate to it (Edward, 1989).

Various postulates and contributions thus exist as to the necessity for an alternate route to development. Prominent among them is the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation's influence that operates within a framework of participation and poverty reduction (Dag

Hammarskjöld, 1975). Contrary to the position of the ‘Washington Consensus’ that puts economic growth at the center of development, AD advocates people centered development that provides a springboard to articulate development issues from a holistic and multidimensional angle (Hettne, 1989). This alternative approach considers both the macro and micro levels to influence development policy and practice that engenders participation (Bebbington and Bebbington 2001) while at the same time addressing poverty in real terms (Brohman, 1996).

Various influences are traced to AD theory which considers development from local, national and regional peculiarities and to achieve a socio-economic dimension a combination of theory, method, agency, structure and explanations is required. Traces of Another Development is reported to have predated 1975 (Hettne, 1983) and works of Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which stressed human capabilities (Freire, 1970) contributed partially to this shift in development thinking. The approach also received boosting with Chamber’s (1983) work on community development ‘Rural Development: Putting the Last First’ and Moser (1989) paper on women empowerment and development from a strategic point of view titled *Gender Planning in the Third World*. In another vein, marginalisation was advocated as an important ingredient for consideration in an alternative approach (Edward, 1989).

Consenting to the postulation by Townsend (1989), Schuuman opines that the element of empowerment is significantly pertinent for a successful development strategy stressing in other words social democracy above, socialism as promoted by the dependency theory (Schuuman, 1993). A caveat is added to forestall search for ‘quick fix’ answers that the author termed as “way forward” or “bold way” (Schuuman, 1993:

34). Meanwhile, the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation under the leadership of Sven Hamrell in 1975 proposed three pillars to govern alternative development approach. Namely, basic needs self-reliance and environmental sustainability. To meet basic needs requires deriving strength from within the benefiting society thus critical to the proposition for another development is increased investment in agriculture and fisheries development (Hammarskjold, 1975) against this backdrop is the identification of agriculture as significant and crucial to development in the global South (Deveze, 2011).

The above notwithstanding, reservations exist as to the viability of this development approach considered ad-hoc in nature therefore not a feasible theory to address in real terms the structural challenges of development vital to ensuring participation and empowerment citing as evidence, the bilateral nature of the bulk of international development assistance which translates to a concentrated State involvement detrimental to rural development and self-reliance. It is further argued that participation as theorized by Another Development can be challenging to reflect in practice. In addition, the elites and ruling class are not willing to embrace another development because they currently enjoy the prevailing modernization approach to development which gives them the freedom to entrench themselves in power (Brohman, 1996). This presupposes therefore that power struggle and lopsided influence on productive resource orchestrates the exclusion of the' marginalized and poor by societies' elite class (Veltmeyer, 2010).

2.4 Responses to the paradigm shift

Notwithstanding the criticisms, it is agreed that the principle of inclusivity and interrelation of development elements as proposed by another development make for consistency, coherence and completeness of visions, roadmaps and long-term development strategies designed to focus on private and public sectors, community, family and the individual (Stiglitz, 1998). As fallout of the paradigm shift, the United Nations Development Program strategized its operation to reflect this paradigm shift as embodied in its Human Development Report (UNDP, 1990). The World Bank on the other hand retooled their development approach with the design of a Comprehensive Development Framework to guide development strategy in member countries and aimed towards poverty reduction (World Bank, 1995).

Human development theory

The contributions of Amartya Sen and Mahbuub ul Haq gave impetus to this theory that took prominence from the 1990s with an anchor on capability and freedom of choice which culminated in the development of a poverty and development measurement known as the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI currently serves as a universal reference for measuring development globally (FitzGerald, Heyer and Thorp, 2011). The Human Development Index (HDI, 1995-2011), although not a perfect measure of poverty is encompassing and holistic to the extent that it includes spheres other than basic need and economic growth to determine poverty level. For purpose of this research, reference will be made to the HDI. The theory therefore goes beyond the threshold of measuring development from an economic standpoint to inclusion of the overall welfare

of people who in Stiglitz's view are the main subjects of development (Stiglitz, 1998). In doing so the UNDP advocates for people oriented and centered development anchored on choices and freedom (UNDP, 1990:1; Veltmeyer, 2011).

Critiques of this approach explain that notwithstanding its intention, the human development theory possess the traces of macro-economic framework as a significant determinant for development or underdevelopment especially in the countries of the South (Hunt, 1989 as cited in Martinuessen; 1997). An attempt can be made to conclude here that as novel and promising as the human development theory presents itself, there are hidden challenges that impacts on its practice (Deneulin, 2011).

Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF)

In 1999, the World Bank made an effort to support countries in bringing the various elements of their development strategies into a coherent whole that would enhance combined result (Wolfenshon, 2000). This strategic plan- as envisaged by the World Bank- is known as the comprehensive development framework (CDF). It serves to guide country development plans and be supported by loan from the Bank. Applied to this framework is a mix of macro-economic and micro social elements aimed at achieving structural and social development with humans as the focus. This comprehensive design aimed at harnessing available assets while promoting a tripartite relationship of government, CSO and private sector and also supported by external efforts. The CDF equally prescribed an inclusive involvement in policy formulation (Blake, 2000).

Although the CDF claims to have a bottom-up approach to development, it has been faulted for its strategy that engages large scale initiatives that are often more

rewarding at the macro level than it is for the majority of the rural poor. The principle of participation and self-determination in development thought to be embedded in CDF becomes suspect as country development strategies are externally driven with a top down implementation pattern as expressed by the Washington Consensus and prior models hence slow rural or grassroots development is achieved (Blake, 2000). Accordingly, genuineness of the CDF's intention is contested with the argument that it is rhetoric and a mere rebranding of former development models (Conwell and Brook, 2005).

The criticisms notwithstanding, the CDF provided a framework that encouraged participation and great consideration of the beneficiaries of development than was ever the case in World Bank's intervention in the history of development. Moreso, since the World Bank's influence in development cannot be undermined within the present globalized interdependent realities, especially of the global south, working within and around its alternative shift might present a better option for effective development. Besides, it is noted that this alternative approach to development is a work in progress (GTZ, 2009) thus providing opportunities for modification.

Consequently, AD theorists and practitioners focus on development first and foremost as a poverty reduction tool then as a macroeconomic tool serving as endogenous strategy that addresses the basic needs of the poor. By implication, AD provides a platform to consider the discourse of development from a holistic viewpoint, making theory of development a multidisciplinary field which is a new thing when compared against other schools of thought (Hettne, 1989).

Poverty is viewed as synonymous to rurality as it relates to absence or scarcity of access to basic needs and purchasing power parity (Anriquez and Stemoulis, 2007). The

interaction between globalisation and rural sector's exposure to it has impacted on inequality and fostered poverty and underdevelopment. Different postulations exist among which is that the free market agenda embedded in globalisation has been detrimental to the agriculture sector which is critical to rural economy. Secondly, globalization is absorbed as a direct cause but considered as key ingredient in the framework that produces inequality which generates poverty. In this regard, poverty as a cause is linked to policies and inequity in the distribution of positive outcomes of globalization (Webster, 2004).

Influenced again by Amartya Sen's (1999) work on 'Freedom and Capability', Nussbaum (2011) argued for a gender dimension to the debate and advocacy for legal instrument to forestall potential development loss that could be occasioned by inequality and unrealised capability.

For an analysis of the above as it impacts on women identifies three approaches poverty line approach, capability approach or the participatory poverty assessment approach (Kabeer, 2003). This view holds that because poverty is experienced differently, an analysis that provides for consideration of interrelated elements be adopted. Therefore, instead of benchmarking poor from non-poor as reflected in the human development index, the capability analysis takes into consideration not just the inability through income as a means to escape poverty but most importantly looks at personal and social constraints hindering optimum functioning of capability development (Amartya Sen, as cited in Kabeer, 2003). This is particularly relevant when considering the persistent rural poverty gap against the resources to generate income.

2.5 Agriculture and development

Given the ever increasing human population and need for development, agriculture, a once neglected sector in the global South is receiving both local and international reconsideration as an important element requisite for not just food security but for poverty reduction and development (FAO, 2011). In the World Bank's view, this sector has been burdened with challenges that range from technological and technical support, human capital, and its sustainability and responsive to future generations (World Bank, 2008). An increasing advocacy for investment in this sector considered as the comparative advantage of sub-Saharan Africa region for ensured socioeconomic development is therefore seen. The World Bank, however, is critiqued for not matching words with action given that in spite of its realization of the significant role of agriculture, it has deliberately promoted macroeconomic policies that have weakened the very base that is rural agriculture (Patel, 2008).

Agriculture has the potential to nourish as well as employ a majority of rural population in sub-Saharan Africa (Deveze, 2011), although the sub-Saharan region as a whole accounts for less than 17% in world agricultural export thus limiting its progress out of poverty since the 1990s (Butler and Mazur, 2007). Notwithstanding doubts on the viability of agriculture's contribution to development in the sub-Saharan African region mainly due to postulated challenges of small-holder farming system, suggestions are that most rural households in sub-Saharan Africa ensure food supply through their agriculture practices (NEPAD, 2003; FAO, 2011). This makes the issue of poverty reduction and development through agriculture all the more important for this region (Christainensen

and, Demery, 2007). Thus making agriculture rural driven with a focus on the interaction of small holder farming and agricultural policy for sustainability of the sector still remains an imperative (World Bank, 2008).

In spite of the above, it is noted that, Africa's development priorities have not been need driven but influenced externally with a resulting impact on infrastructure and required agricultural inputs for the development of the sector (Butler and Mazur, 2007). Rural women with a majority in the farming sector contend more with these challenges because they are ill equipped to operate in the changing agriculture sector and demographic conditions because of their low education, skill and poorer access to inputs (NEPAD, 2003; Ogunlela and Mukhtar, 2009). It is further advocated that rural agriculture be enhanced to address its disconnect in practice with rural realities especially in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2008). Furthermore, and to lend credence to the significance of rural agriculture to development, Christainensen and Demery advocate a larger productive output in agriculture through access to input and income generation as a pathway to reduce inequality and poverty (Christainensen and Demery, 2007).

2.6 Rural Development (RD)

As is the case with other concepts underpinning prevailing development trends, the rural development theory in the early days of 1960 aimed at enhancing industrialization for capital development purpose whereas in the 1970s the focus of the theory was to provide the poor rural populace with social services. Thus, human capital is argued to be central to rural development's goal of bridging inequality gap and reducing poverty. In the

1980s, the inward driven development aspect was added to the concept. This outlook is conveniently summed up in the definition of rural development paraphrased as “development that impacts positively on the wellbeing and lives of a rural population or group” (Anriquez and Stamoulis, 2007).

To trace the history of rural development, a review of Asian scholars and the United Nations Asian Development Institute in Bangkok (UNADI) work which drew inspiration from *Another Development* in an effort to find alternative way for agricultural practice. The study on an alternative strategy for rural development in Asia led to findings, which generated into a theoretical publication *Towards a Theory of Rural Development* produced by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation in 1977 (van der Ploeg, et al, 2000). Accordingly, rural development was theorized to depart from the modernization position and the practice of agriculture- the focal sector of rural economy- was recommended for decentralization to enhance a trickle-down effect of development (Hammarskjold, 1977.2). This followed an understanding that a significant number of the world's population subsists and a majority of these are in the developing countries. In addition, rural economy is argued to play a vital contributory role in achieving national development (Todaro and Smith, 2003).

As a result of existing 'biases'¹², early rural development approach is opined to perpetuate exclusionary tendencies evident in an absence of multi-level analysis required for development impacts (Chambers, 1983). The argument thus establishes the need to take cognizance of inputs from the affected before attempting to assist them, therefore calling for a rejection of the stereotype and misconception about the rural poor and their

¹² Structural and class

capability with a view to reposition them at the center of development efforts (Chambers, 1983). The prevailing lack of a multidimensional consideration is further highlighted as inimical to rural development especially with the involvement of the rural poor female farmer population and rural agricultural extension workers (Macedo, 2000). To this effect, a call is made to review elements and process of agriculture as linkages to rural economy making for individual, household, and farm levels analysis (van der Ploeg, et al, 2000).

This development approach acknowledged the centrality of agriculture to rural development especially in greater percentage of the global South with particular effort to address participation and structure gaps as required for the effective development of the sector (van der Ploeg, et al, 2000; Hammar-skjold Foundation, 1977). Consequently, an argument is made for an integrated rural development approach which pushes the rural economy beyond subsistence to economic productivity (Todaro and Smith, 2003).

Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach (SRLA)

The structural adjustment program introduced in the late 1980s to countries in the South influenced and introduced a more unbalanced element to existing development structure causing rural poor communities to benefit less from their resources and so plunge deeper into poverty. This trend continued with market and external forces influencing significantly the nature of poverty especially at rural levels (Scot, 2002; Webster, 2004,). Sustainable livelihood as a rural development term made its debut in the early 1990s. It has since progressed to and responds to the complex nature of rural development requisite framework for multivariate poverty analysis as influenced by Frank Ellis work

on *Rural Livelihood and Diversity in Developing Countries*. The pillars of this framework are identified as the existing rural assets and expansion of these through deliberate policy intervention for poverty reduction (Akram-Lodhi, as cited in Veltmeyer, 2011). Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach thus provides the avenue to achieve sustainable livelihood through access to a range of options (Chambers and Conway, 1992). To achieve this, a participatory and empowering strategy is proposed that will involve all stakeholders (Mbaiwa, 2004). To consolidate this point of view, an argument holds that this approach plays a platform role for inclusive sustainable development at rural level (Daskon and Binns, 2009).

The current global environment challenges also add to the advocacy of SRLA as it makes for the continuous relevance of agriculture. This approach is advocated to assist in mapping out available assets¹³ required by the rural poor to reduce their poverty with ‘access’ to these equally classified as an asset in itself. Equally highlighted as embedded in the SRLA is structural linkage of community, government and external interventions for the realization of economic development is equally highlighted (Butler and Mazur, 2007).

Although the SRLA approach operates based on the conviction that poverty can only be reduced through people's livelihoods and their adaptation ability to prevailing socio-economic environment at any given time, it is important however that this be done using a participatory and multi-sector analytic tools to enhance its situational adaptation to causal and changing relationship of influencing elements. The SRLA is also critiqued

¹³ Access to human, physical, natural and financial resources

for weakness in explaining differentiation of access to assets therefore not very useful in interrogating the poverty issue hence it does not suffice as a theory to resolve the weak interaction between the rural poor and existing structures that influence their poverty and development (Veltmeyer, 2007a, as cited in Veltmeyer, 2011).

The above notwithstanding an enabling environment to facilitate access to asset is therefore required as a mix to the strengths of the SRLA. It is therefore necessary for the purpose of this chapter to explore the benefit of social policies. Applying this framework as a platform of analysis, this thesis will explore the cause and effect relationship between inequality, policy and agricultural economic productivity of rural women.

Social policy

The place of policy is indisputably relevant in the exercise of the so much talked about capability and freedom propounded by Amartya Sen. However, we have to bear in mind that power relations influence the choice of policy (Deneulin, 2011). This subtly reveals an element of power struggle for dominance in development policy process therefore requiring a need for a cushioning effect to enhance the exercise of capability. Thus, the call for a correlation between welfare policy of State, and the provision of functional education, health and social safety nets.

In an attempt to respond to development issues that require consideration for the 'end user's social capital as a concept became grounded in theory in late 1980s and 1990s in the works of Ivan Light, Alejandro Portes and Roger Waldinger on the ethnic entrepreneurship studies and the comparative study of state and society relationship at the macro level (Woolcock, 1998). This particularly refers to addressing selective

privileged issues in access to means of development that leads to inequality and poverty (Kothari, 2002).

From on-going discourse of social policy, and its enhancement of development; State's deliberate intervention for social welfare purpose impacts on productive systems. This is argued to have been postulated within the context of a neoliberal system which undermines social policy in developing countries (Mkandawire, 2011). Others opine that the concept associates benefits and implications to the given group therefore social capital could work for positive good of a community or be employed negatively (Woolcock and Narayan, 1999). The three approaches proposed to explain the concept of social capital include: communitarian, network, and institutional. The communitarian approach seeks to understand groups as homogenous entity. Suggestions are that this is applied to analyse poverty whereas sub- analysis is required for subgroups within a seemingly homogenous one. Therefore, the kernel is its application by the poor through social ties to engineer self-response skills to risk and vulnerability (Woolcock and Narayan, 1999).

The approach is argued to be influenced by Granovetter embeddedness thesis of 1973 and the General thesis reflects economic development at micro and macro levels through three emerging thoughts anchored on social and economic motivated relationships, Institutional frameworks impacting on individual economic advancement opportunities and finally cost of embeddeness (Woolcock, 1998). Also the institutional approach focuses on strength of community networks and civil society as by-product of political, legal and institutional environment (Woolcock and Narayan, 1999). Though these arguments are tenable they could be flawed in that social change, the desired goal

of social capital is complex hence not easily predetermined by public policies and there is yet no consensus on its measurement (Fukuyama, 2000).

Given the need to make development humane and accessible, development strategy should include a social component (UNDP, 1990; Mkandawire, 2011). The major weakness of this approach is presented in its bureaucratic tendency that could encourage inequalities and other anti-development tendencies. Social capital therefore requires varied approach (Fukuyama, 2000). A view also holds that there is a misapplication of the term resulting from its homogenous application to heterogeneous social relationships (Kothari and Minogue, 2002). However, for a way out of under development at micro and macro levels, a balance is suggested between civic and State social capital on the one hand and economic growth on the other (Woolcock and Narayan, 1999). This thesis will explore the possibility of this mix within the approach of sustainable rural livelihoods to enhance rural women's participation beyond subsistence and threshold of poverty to economic productivity in agriculture, which impacts on poverty reduction and development.

2.7 Participation

Stemming from earlier discussion in this chapter, the driver and most important ingredient of Another Development approach can be identified as participation. Also intricate to this is the recognition of capacity and freedom to exercise choice and contribute to shaping ones development. In the light of this 'participation' as employed has not yielded result especially in rural development evidenced in the fact that rural

population still bear the greatest burden of poverty in the midst of abundance of wealth generating resources required for development.

Various models of participation are employed but it is argued that models applied by most development agencies are devoid of the required substance for change and development and therefore empty in their reformist claims (Nwanzea and Strathdee, 2010). Furthermore, a position holds that participation remains a farce when it is devoid of a bottom-up structured approach with the intention to empower rural communities for self and sustained development. To this end, participatory development which assures the 'bottom-up' orientation to development is advocated to yield intended poverty reduction and development results (Chambers, 1997; Burke, 1993; UNDP, 1993). This section of the thesis sets out to trace the history of participation in development as well as explore the various debates around this important concept. Attempt will also be made to review some existing definitions from a programmatic and project level perspective. A conclusion will then be drawn to guide albeit support the thesis argument.

The greater part of 1980s witnessed a demand for State's withdrawal from public service delivery and the decade of 1990 introduced self-regulatory mechanism to hold developing States accountable through the agency of 'non-state actors' using participation (Van de Walle, 2003). By design, the concept as a tool within the good governance agenda aims at decreasing political and social inequality gaps responsible for poverty. According to a World Bank report, the 'good governance agenda' will encourage and strengthen participation at local levels (World Bank, 1992).

Models of participation

A few models of participation have been and still are practiced in the development sphere. These models align with varied viewpoints. An argument holds that good governance existed in pre-colonial Africa as reflected in the predominant voluntarism attitude of various associations and movements, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (Tandon, 1996). Participation is also argued to have appeared in mainstream academics, in part, at the publication time of Alternative Development Report by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation in 1975 and subsequently influenced by the World Bank through the good governance agenda (World Bank, 1982). The focus of the latter is argued to be limited as citizens' obligation to projects is the aim to the detriment of popular participation in social capital building for development (Cooke & Kothari, 2011). In addition to the critiques' concern, the World Bank's call for participation in its Comprehensive Development Framework is claimed to serve a neoliberal purpose through "the stakeholder process" which does not provide a negotiating platform for the general populace hence lacking incorporation (Ake, 1996).

Participation as currently and mostly practiced responds to the marginalization that has occurred through exclusion or adverse incorporation in the decade of capitalist development. Hence at the macro level it is an effort to shift from a traditional development concept to a practice in the South (Cowen and Sheton as, cited in Cooke and Kothari, 2011). However, this has certainly not been the case as the inequality gap continues to widen with sub-Saharan Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate put at 4.8 percentage in 2010 (UNDP, 2011). Participation in this regard therefore

serves a “provisioning” rather than “facilitating” tool (Musembi and Musyoki, 2004). In addition, scholars argue that participation as articulated in the ‘good governance agenda’ is an imperialist plan to control global productive capacity and accumulate wealth even at the micro level of developing States (Hewitt de Alcentara, 1998).

Perceptions of the participation concept

The participation concept has evolved with added value and refinement although at the same time it has become a ‘catch word’ (Cornwall and Brock, 2005). For this thesis some of these explanations of the term participation will be reviewed to determine the most appropriate to analyse rural women’s involvement in agriculture.

The history of development presents the concept of participation in the light of participation in labour, and as a process to ensure development of the rural poor and poverty reduction. This historical segmentation notwithstanding, there is one encompassing definition that explains the concept. Various themes exist revealing the different perspectives among which are “form” (UNDP, 1993), degree of and equitable access to common property right (Chopra et al, 1990), inclusion achieved through decentralization, accountability and transparency otherwise known as the good governance agenda (World Bank, 1992) and (OECD, 1995). Other defining elements are empowerment and transformation (Chambers, 1983 and 1997). On a contrary note also, participation is critiqued as serving only as “buzz word” (Cornwall and Brock, 2005) and not necessarily achieving the acclaimed ‘bottom-up’ goal of development.

In addition, participation is explained as a tool box with distinct related elements that find their expression in the framework of rural development (Cornwall, 2011).

Cooke and Kothari further endeavour to clarify the concept by relating it to the specificity of rural development with the issues of formalization and functionality of participation argued as defining elements (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). These two efforts though confirming the diverse applications of the term and the need to give it impetus for effectiveness, have merely reviewed participation within a limited scope.

Hickey and Mohan (2004) in their review of the concept referred to the exercise of popular 'agency' in relation to development with a consideration for the capacity of people as 'active claim agents'. These are more encompassing definitions which explore a dimension of participation that re-affirm a subconscious need that goes beyond mere economic gains as reflected in the Human Development Report (World Bank, 1992; UNDP, 1995). However, the two attempts do not infer desired outcome of the action of collective agency.

In another vein, participation has been politicised hence a call to acknowledge its power dynamics in conceptualisation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). For this purpose the 'nominal', 'instrumental', 'representative' and 'transformative' classifications are proposed by (White, 1996) as lenses through which participation can be reviewed. The transformative is the preferred because it creates room for complete involvement of target beneficiary. This view is equally thought to have influenced the rethinking of participation in the global development arena which has brought about different approaches to attain beneficiary inclusion (Kothari and Minogue, 2002).

Another view of the concept explores participation from a social, political and or economic perspective. This argument holds that in the current neoliberal environment, development is only likely to be achieved where there is a people friendly market,

enabled by regulation and deliberate and targeted social policies that will provide a buffer for the marginalized and poor to exploit capabilities and contribute to self and general development especially at the micro level (UNDP, 1993). For the purpose of this thesis, focus will be on economic participation as it relates to rural agriculture. Above and beyond self-respect and dignity, economic participation addresses the impediments created by the market system particularly to marginalization and exclusion from equitable involvement in economic activities resulting from deficiencies such as limited access to asset, credit, skills and education. Also smallholder farmers and rural women have been identified to make up the critical group that lack access to inputs for development (UNDP, 1993).

Other prominent authors propose an explanation of the concept from the participatory process perspective in common and private property rights. They argue that participation is a process with an aim to bring about equity and welfare while it is also the instrumental strategy (means) to achieve this purpose. Participation is thus viewed from the level and/or degree of involvement of people in the preservation of their owned common wealth. Therefore, promoting people's participation is catalytic to boosting rural economies which depend heavily on common and private property two interdependent elements of rural development. In the authors view therefore, participation is necessary because development depends on equality of access to and interaction of common property rights and private property rights especially at the grassroots for income purpose. This view thus advocates for equitable distribution of CPR and more importantly, policies that ensure equity of access to CPR. To achieve this equitable redistribution, it is further proposed that non-state and non-market actors be

involved in addition to the role of State and the regulated market system (Chopra, Kadekodi and Murty, 1990).

Cooke and Kothari (2001), however, expose the deficiency of most participation models in that they are only concerned about using the ‘catchphrase’ as an institutional technical design requirement more than empowering the poor. Concurring to this claim, other authors posit that participation has been and is still being used as deceptive tool to obstruct empowerment and “social change” through a deliberate effort of “structural reform” avoidance. Consequently and in search of an empowering model of participation that is not ‘institutionally influenced’, suggestions are that context and purpose of participation should be cardinal to determining suitability and type of participatory approach. In effect, the authors hold the view that structure (social or otherwise) determines the intent and enabling environment or field of play for all ‘stakeholders’ to participate for development (Nwanzea and Strathdee,, 2010). An argument also holds that for a true participatory process to occur role reversal of the poor and mainstream external or elite drivers is eminent which in turn triggers conflict arising from power struggle to maintain or dismantle the current status quo approach of “top-down” in development (Chambers, 1997).

Judging by development history, the paradigm shift and considering all models put forward presumably to enhance equity, reduce poverty and promote development of the South especially the rural poor and women, two main streams of development are evident: ‘participation in development’ and ‘participatory development’. Whereas the former reflects a tool and instrument highly probable to lack in development results, the latter reflects a process serving both as an instrument and purpose, which the UNDP

refers to as “means and end”(UNDP, 1993). From the above exploration of participation as a concept, it can be concluded that participatory development is possibly the inclusive, empowering process which employs structure, institutional approaches through policy instruments to enhance self-development and socioeconomic well-being of the poor.

Although Hickey and Mohan (2004) critiqued the participation concept for lack of definition clarity and therefore weak as basis for adequately analysing development impact, the empowering (participatory) model of this concept still stand out as relevant to rural development than any other (Wanzia and Srathdea, 2010). Consequently and for purpose of this thesis, participatory development will be the reference model in investigating the impediments to rural women’s involvement in agriculture beyond the subsistence level.

For the purpose of this thesis, participation will be reviewed from the economic form and process perspective, which allows for better analysis of equity of access to productive resources and also inclusiveness as it impacts on maximal utility of capability for self-reliance, development and economic growth of the rural poor and this will be considered alongside the transformative participation for purpose of thesis data analysis.

2.8 Women’s participation in development

Women’s participation in development has been shaped over the years by dominant views cutting across the different decades of the 1960s and 1970s; 1980s and later the 1990s. In the 1960s through 1970s, economic growth at the macro level was the aim. Participation in development thus meant providing health, education and removing

labour barriers for increased involvement in the labour force. At this point, access to the labour market was paramount determining level and measurement of the access.

Development cannot be achieved at the desired and required pace when inequality prevails particularly to the disadvantage of women. This explains the need for a United Nations declaration of decade for women in 1976-1985. Economic contribution of women was first launched at the international level in 1980. The authors argue that the translation of this declaration signatory to a convention in this regard is yet to translate in real terms to incomes for women especially rural smallholder farmers (Patel et al., 1995, pp. 59-60). Consequently, the important focus point for discussion for the United Nations Commission on the Role of Women in 1989 included equal opportunity and treatment that were both considered drivers of inequality.

Subsequently, a UN general assembly international resolution in 1985 attempted to advise on acceleration of women's participation in the socioeconomic sphere. This suggests therefore that in the period of 1980 to 1990, participation was driven by labour requirement for industrialization within a capitalist framework. It is argued that government policies (enabling environment) have not addressed incomplete empowering participation of women in development resulting from the conflicting demands made on them by their socio-economic systems. As prescribed by the United Nations Development Program, a balance is requested for human development purpose, where market is designed to serve people (UNDP, 1993). Different attempts at applying this prescription resulted in the women in development and gender and development

approaches. The subsequent part of this chapter will review these approaches to see their relevance to rural women in agriculture.

Women in Development (WID)

While more than one explanation exists for the development concept called Women in Development (WID), some views hold that a central idea behind this is the market economy as WID seeks to bring women into the market and thus the supposed empowerment of women to participate in development stems from the belief that the answer to women's development lies in the market. Kabeer articulates these views with an identification of modernisation and growth theories of development as its pillars (Kabeer, 2003).

As a women development strategy, WID thrived as the participation approach in the 1970s and it operated only from the viewpoint of women's capacity for productive development role. The focus was on basic needs as participation was instrumental.¹⁴ Thus, the participatory role of women in development was neglected, especially in the developing countries. Consequently, the WID strategy is argued to have been deficient and only a repackaging of an older version 'women and development' (WAD) that premised development at micro level to the dictate of the macro level (Rathgeb, 1990, p. 493).

Gender and Development (GAD)

In the wake of the 1980s, it is opined that women were confronted with stiffer barriers to access inputs for productive inputs for economic wellbeing. At this time exploitation of

¹⁴ Definition of participation in *Depoliticising Development: The uses and abuses of participation* (1996) by Sarah White

women labor by multinationals even in an environment where micro credit schemes were in place (Rathgeber, 1990). From an agriculture perspective, the outmigration of women from rural communities in search of paid labor is argued to have a resulting concern with this approach. This phenomenon is termed 'Feminization of Agriculture' (Ahojapatel, 2007; Deere, 2005; and Lastarria-Cornhiel, 2006 as cited in CAADP, 2011: 3).

It is posited that gender and development (GAD) was employed as the approach to enlist women's participation as 'change agents' although consideration was equally given to the contribution of men. GAD thus explores the socio-political and societal construction in relations to their impact on gender roles, responsibilities and expectations (Rathgeber, 1990: 495). An argument also holds that unlike WID, GAD views as interconnected, the issue of welfare, poverty reduction and equity and subsequently promotes a multifaceted approach to ensuring coordinated intervention matched with a greater responsibility for creating an enabling environment put squarely on the State. While this approach might be considered holistic, it is equally critiqued for its non-promotion of the free market as a solution to addressing the existing inequality in development participation (Young, 1997).

As depicted in the agricultural sector, change occurred with the mechanization of agriculture and land became a scarce commodity thus isolating rural women who were formerly used to shift cultivation and thrived in their food production and thus participation in the economic activity of their rural communities (Bryceson, 1995). Also given the position presented by another author, small holder farming structure was equally greatly impacted by external factors for making food crops production more the responsibility of women while the men concentrated on cash crops that feed foreign

industrial needs (Smith, 1989). Furthermore it is argued that biased land tenure through colonial rule was enacted by the retooling of customary laws and the codification process embedded in the British indirect rule system (Smith, 1989).

Following the Post-Washington Consensus (PWC) of the 1990s that sought to bring state back as a development catalyst, It is suggested that the strategy employed to enlist the participation of women in development was focused on empowerment of the rural poor and women for self-development and agriculture for sub-Saharan Africa continue to be the suggested way out of poverty (World Bank, 2008; FAO, 2011).

Consequently, central to the strategies employed from modernization through to the PWC era, there is the need to enhance the capacity of women for self- development through an enabling environment of increased access to productive inputs and diversified source of household income facilitated by State policies. In advocacy of the GAD approach to participatory development in the rural community, it is suggested that the approach by its nature sooths best for empowerment because it promotes “development with beneficiaries and not development for beneficiaries” (Humble, 1999).

2.12 Conclusion

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation Report (1975) in its prescription for Another Development, unequivocally canvassed a need for structural transformation. Also, suggested is the need for macro-economic framework as requisite for structural transformation (Martinuessen, 1997). Therefore, inequality fed by weak structures can be said to generate poverty and impedes socio-economic progress.

From the above academic review of literature, there is ample evidence that poverty cannot be redressed unless there is change in system that generates it. Given the neoliberal environment, the system cannot self-regulate hence the need for State to make development inclusive through an equitable redistribution of economic gains and creation of access to sustained generation of economic gains via functional social policies. While pro-poor growth might be pursued by relevant international development actors, there is still the need, in the principle of sustained development and maximal exploitation of capability, to make this a participatory process with targeted initiatives to bridge the inequality gap and empower the rural poor a majority of whom are women engaged in agriculture. To achieve this, all apparatus of governance in addition to decentralization of governance and market regulation must be put in place to achieve direct, full and empowering participation especially for rural smallholder women farmers.

This thesis will therefore interrogate the existing social structure and policies as they impact the participation of rural women in agriculture, creating opportunity for economic and not subsistence gain in order to lift this sub group out of poverty at the same time enhancing their contribution to national development. The thesis will also explore the impediments to rural women's economic gains from participating in agriculture. The participatory models will be employed to investigate outcomes of project interventions as they impact on rural poverty reduction and national development.

Chapter Three

Rural Development and Women's Participation in Nigeria: The Country Context

3.0 Introduction

Development analysis reveals that global and national events of the decades of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s impacted sub-Saharan Africa differently and helped shape its development model. The ensuing trickledown effect, as is the case of Nigeria, left an indelible footprint on rural development significantly so on women who play a major role in driving rural agrarian economy as alluded to by (Watts, 1987; Oculli, 1987; O'Laughlin, 1995). Aligning agriculture to suit external industry demand is also posited to have stifled the value added productive capacity of the agricultural sector (Ake, 1981). Through the decades, and cutting across the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the trend has been that agricultural sector is the principal driver of rural economy and now occupies the front row of possible routes to move sub-Saharan Africa forward to achieve poverty reduction (NEPAD, 2003).

3.1 Background and socioeconomic outlook

Recognized as the most populated country in Africa with a forecast population growth rate of about 2% to 3 % over the next few years, Nigeria is estimated to have a population of about 162 million of which over 40% live in the rural areas and a majority of them involved in agriculture (World Bank, 2011; GoN, 2011). Nigeria is reported to occupy a landmass of about 92.4 million hectares inclusive of its water body of which about 90% (84 million hectares) is considered viable for agriculture (Akinyele, 2009; FGN, 2011).



Figure 2: Map of Nigeria. Note: Reproduced from web <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria>

Nigeria is bordered to the north by Niger republic and the republic of Chad. On her east border is the republic of Cameroon and the republic of Benin is her neighbour to the west. The country is characterized by a federal system of government. Nigeria operates a three tier government with 774 local government areas spread across its 36 states with a federal capital territory serving as a central administrative point (Akinyele, 2009).

Nigeria’s economy has a heavy dependence on oil. Although oil contributes only about 14% to the GDP, it fetches most of the country’s foreign earnings. Agriculture, on

the other hand, represents about 40% of GDP with no significant foreign exchange earnings (GoN, 2011). On the human development index scale, the country is classified low, as it ranks 156 out of 187 (UNDP HDI, 2011). This indication of a poor and less developed country puts Nigeria in a battling position to reduce poverty. Accordingly, Nigeria has identified agriculture as its comparative advantage and currently seeking to develop the sector (NEEDs 2003; Vision 20:2020).

3.2 Transitions in the agriculture sector

Record shows that the country was dependent on agriculture prior to its membership of the Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC) in the early 1970s (Ake, 1981; Cheru, 2002). In the discourse of poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, focus and increased investment in agriculture for development is canvassed (World Bank, 2008; AU, 2010 and FAO, 2011).

As argued in the Article *Nigeria's Agricultural Policy: Seeking Coherence Within Strategic Frameworks*, Nigeria is not left out of the impact of the decade of industrialization, liberalization as well as global capitalism of the 1990s. Despite the emphasis on poverty reduction, inequality deepened generating more poverty (Grandval and Douillet, 2011). Igbozurike opines that although the establishment of cocoa boards and farmer cooperatives were interventions attempted to introduce participatory process in the agriculture sector, these patterns produced a stratified impact on key actors and on the farming structure in the country's agriculture sector and further creating inequality of access and therefore poverty and under development especially in rural communities.

Rightly put, inequality in the farming structure is a reflection of rural agriculture's exposure and integration into the global economy (Igbozurike, 1976).

In addition to the structural adjustment program of the 1980s, the already complex governance situation in the country introduced a different dimension to the Nigerian development experience which arguably impacted on all of the country's development facet agriculture inclusive. In order to effectively stimulate the agricultural sector's contribution to development, reforms were launched to target infrastructure and agricultural inputs. However, women's specific constraints to agricultural productivity and profitability seem yet to be explicitly tackled.

3.3 Poverty in Nigeria

In spite of the 1990s good governance agenda that promoted decentralization and collective agency through participation (World Bank, 1992), poverty reduction is yet to be significantly achieved regardless of either the application of absolute or household measurement (Omonona, 2010; UNDP, 2011) in policies. The Nigerian Bureau of Statistics in its 2009/2010 survey reveals that there are about 62.60% poverty rate in the Country with urban and rural representing 51.20% and 69% respectively. A study conducted on rural poverty in Nigeria puts the figure at 70% rural household poverty rate compared to 58% for urban areas with only a 6% decrease in rural poverty recorded in 2004 (Omonona, 2010). The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) reveals that the Country's multiple poverty index (MPI) is at 0.310 in 2008 with an incidence of 54.1%; an average of 57.3% preponderance (intensity) among the poor and

17.8% vulnerability rate. The survey concludes that 33.9% of Nigeria's population falls within the severe poverty line. A breakdown of Nigeria's MPI according to the six geopolitical zones is shown in the table below (OPHI, 2011).

Table 1: Multidimensional Poverty across Nigeria's six Geopolitical Zones

Region	% of Population	MPI	% Incidence of Poverty	% Average Intensity Across the poor	% of Population Vulnerable to Poverty	% Population in Severe Poverty
NC	14.6	0.319	59.6	53.4	19.1	33.8
NE	13.5	0.561	86.3	64.9	8.2	67.2
NW	25.8	0.497	79.5	62.5	10.9	60.0
SE	11.6	0.127	28.0	45.2	24.3	9.3
SS	14.8	0.154	34.3	45.0	23.8	11.6
SW	19.7	0.120	25.8	46.5	23.8	9.4

Note: Reproduced from Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative Country Briefing 2011, p 5.

Where NC = North Central and NE= North East; NW= North West; SE = South East; SS = South East; SS = South South and SW = South West.

Contrary to Hutchful's (2002) assertion that urban poverty is higher than rural, a study in 2004 suggests the contrary. The study asserts that there is higher incidence of poverty - as it relates to low household welfare - in rural areas than urban.

Table 2: Urban and Rural Poverty Distribution

1996 Poverty Level		2004 Poverty Level	
Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
58%	70%	43%	64%

Note: Adapted from Quantitative Analysis of Rural Poverty in Nigeria by Omonona, B (2010).

From the above table, although a 15% and 6% reduction respectively in poverty level is indicated, it is argued that the reduction progression is slower in rural areas. This analysis is an indication that an improvement in poverty reduction and development is still far from sight with poverty predominance in northern region and rural areas compared to the south and urban areas in Nigeria between 1996 and 2004 (Omonona, 2010).

Various attempts at reducing poverty have been experimented with little impact on rural poverty. The five major policy interventions as presented by Lawal and Oluwatoyin reveal the first development plan appearing between 1962 and 1968 and heavily dependent on external funding. This was followed by another between 1970 and 1974 and also in 1975-1980. The notable feature of these periods is the introduction of agriculture as a sector and emphasis on rural development through the instrumentality of agriculture (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011). In 2003, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) was launched in response to the demand

for highly indebted countries to develop a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) requisite for foreign aid assistance.

The vision 20:2020 presents a roadmap known as the Transformation Agenda (TA) with which the current government plans to achieve development and poverty reduction through key sectors such as agriculture, education and health among others. As an offshoot of the TA, an agriculture policy now operational in Nigeria and known as the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) aims to ensure food and income security. The policy looks to achieving this through five identified crop value chain; rice, cassava, sorghum, cocoa and cotton. The objectives of the policy include developing the subsistent agriculture subsector to a viable market oriented system with a potential to alleviate poverty. The achievement of these goals according to the policy will be attained through a lending and growth enhancement support (GES) initiatives (FGN, 2011). The above notwithstanding, poverty is still significantly visible.

Nigeria's development has thus followed the global trend of participation in labour for industrialization.¹⁵ Between 1900 and 1970 with largely colonial or independent government control, effort at rural development has been geared towards coordination at the micro level. The 1980s experience of structural adjustment program shaped development differently with liberalization of the economy. In this period, a class of elites and landowners introduced deeper level of inequality which impacted differently on rural women (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011). As suggested by Rodney, the

¹⁵ characterized by the pre-colonial (exportation of slaves and importation of luxury goods); colonial eras (rural –urban migration to build infrastructure required to evacuate cash crops from the rural areas);

introduction and integration of the African continent into the global liberal economy is a causative factor for its existing inequality and poverty (Rodney, 1973).

Following the failure of liberalization, the decade of the 1990s demonstrated a renewed interest and need to bring government back into the development process as well as involvement of more stakeholders as demonstrated in the emergence of farmer cooperatives. There is the need therefore to review the structure of rural agriculture in Nigeria to provide an understanding of the thesis problem. This chapter will explore Nigeria's agricultural sector's reality in relation to rural women's role in agriculture and its enormous potential for poverty reduction and development.

3.4 Overview of Nigeria's agriculture sector

In Watts's view, the existing global capitalist impact on Nigeria can be traced to the indirect rule operational in the country prior to 1960. He further links it to the present class structure which plagues the agriculture sector as revealed in the Northern Nigeria Lands Committee (NNLC)'s meeting of 1908 and also the system of commodity production accumulation at the expense of small holder farmers (Watts, 1987). Patel however isolates liberalization and patriarchy as responsible factors for the poor development of the agriculture sector as it relates particularly to women (Patel, 2008).

According to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, 40% of Africa's hard earnings feed the manufacturing sector. Consequently, the African Union canvasses for a reversal of this trend through agriculture led development which the body envisions will reduce Africa's importation of agricultural produce as well as generate economic growth to step up poverty reduction ((NEPAD, 2003). Two

development policies of Nigeria, the national economic empowerment development strategy as well as Vision 20: 2020, in their proposals for a diversified economy, conclude that the sector has enormous potentials to lift Nigeria out of poverty (NEEDS, 2003 and Vision 20:2020).

Nigeria is divided into three agricultural areas according to soil types and agricultural produce. The southern part is characterized with tree crops, roots and tubers and the North West and North East with grains and cereals and possibility of a combination of these in the North Central (Igbozurike, 1976). Nigeria's agriculture sector is classified into three distinct period types (The first being cash crops oriented agriculture. For this, export crops (cocoa, cotton and groundnuts) dominated food crops where profit from sale of the latter only sufficed subsistence of farmers making poverty reduction far from being achieved (Shenton, 1986).

Agriculture before and after the oil boom

In Asian countries, a developed agriculture sector is posited to have decreased inequality and stimulated economic growth. It is further argued that this success results from functional policies that placed the region in a better stead to take advantage of the global capitalist system (Adato and Meinzen-Dick, 2002). Nigeria's experience is not yet the case even with its agriculture endowment and great human resource (Cheru, 2002).

A shift in development pattern is posited to have led to investment in urban infrastructure. Although agriculture took a capital orientation in this era with the establishment of plantations and large farms, it was for the purpose of employing the income to fund industrial projects. The period of the 1970s as argued by some reveals an agricultural sector thriving at subsistence level due principally to poor investment

strategy in infrastructure. In addition, it is argued that this era revealed a modernization influence on agriculture and also witnessed a gradual neglect of rural development (Oluwasanmi, 1966 cited in Igbozurike, 1976).

Following the above, agricultural development in Nigeria is predicated on the growth of external industrial sector. To support this viewpoint, Igbozurike agrees with Allan Mcphee's (1926) linkage of Nigeria's moribund cotton industry to the rise of the Lancashire textile industry in England. He further argues that as Western industrialization progressed, agriculture in the South regressed demonstrating a decline in external requirement for agricultural produce. This encouraged an abandonment of rural agriculture for paid labour in urban centres. A second postulation is that the drive for industrialization -referred to as 'capitalist expansion'- also created a situation of dependence on technology transfer to enable access to the agriculture field of play (Igbozurike, 1976: 40). In summary, this period can be associated with labour exploitation at the detriment of rural agriculture growth and development.

Agriculture development analysts opined that this situation introduced urban rural structures with further sub levels such as the subdivision of farmers according to their access to inputs and interaction with commercial plan of the West as well as enhanced liberalization of the sector. In furtherance of this argument therefore, the land tenure systems at the time in Lagos promoted private ownership (Igbozurike, 1976). A contrary postulate is that the State's appropriation of smallholder farmers' surplus produce is responsible for challenges in the sector as well as rural development (Oculi, 1987). Although this might not have impacted on communal ownership of land in the

rural areas, it might have influenced elite capture of land providing limited access, especially to women.

Oculi in his overview of the situation identified three phases of Nigerian's agriculture sector viz. 1900-1957; 1957-1966 and 1967 -1970. The first phase stretching between 1900-1957 was characterized by (1) State intervention; (2) increased cash crop production and export inclined agriculture (3) mobilization of small holder farmers to feed the nation; (4) introduction of new farm implements to plough and irrigate in addition to new seeds and seedlings. It was noted that in this period, up scaling of small farmers holding was completely ignored even by agriculture research institute; (5) rural small holder farmers were not protected from the global capitalist system as competition and imported goods became inevitable; (marketing boards and colonial trading companies "expropriated" surplus while food supply continued to be ensured by the smallholder farmers . The above is argued to have weakened rural agriculture sector, increased rural-urban migration and by implication weakened rural economy (Oculi, 1987).

The period 1957-1966 led to a new leadership for the agriculture marketing boards by Nigerian political administrative class resulting in the emergence of middle men from the traditional ruling class. The establishment of government plantations and agriculture resettlement schemes made insignificant contributions of 1% to the overall cocoa production. Equally, the introduction of agriculture extension services is revealed to have focused less on rural smallholder agriculturists. In addition, the upscale and increase in government spending to the detriment of farmers is reported to have characterized the agriculture system. Available record indicates that the prices paid to

farmers reduced by about 27% contrary to the new scale for federal government unskilled workers, which almost tripled in percentage (Oculi, 1987: 168).

From the pre-colonial era on Nigeria has been characterized by class structured society and a centralized government. Rural agriculture was consequently organized around household with the male in charge of farm processes and outputs. However, in a few instances it is organized at village level with cooperation among village farmers. The notion of landlord tenants and commoners thus prevailed and an entrenched class system continued with the colonial rule Proclamation 3 of 1902. Hence, an institutionalized systemic order that considers less the poor and women in agricultural policies and initiatives. The significant input for rural agriculture subsequently became scarce as taxation on farmers' wage earnings dwindled and more small-holder agriculture had no savings that would have shored up their income status emerged (Shenton, 1986).

Agriculture and Nigeria's oil boom

Following the oil boom, Ugwu and Kanu isolate notable interventions in the agriculture sector to include tax, wage and monetary policies. In addition, was the encouragement of the private sector's involvement as banks were mandated to give loan facilities to the sector. Rural banking was encouraged. Agriculture inputs distribution channels were centralized and commodity boards created for cash crops (Ugwu and Kanu, 2012). This period equally witnessed the enactment of the Land Use Act of 1978. In summary, policies and strategies focused more on enhancing macro level agricultural output although State involvement in the sector was evident.

Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) and Agriculture

It is posited that with the SAP in 1987, Nigeria's agriculture sector was liberalized with a reversal of prior initiatives. The ensuing impact was a dwindling sector amidst an established need to diversify the now oil-based economy through agriculture. However, the subsequent years saw the reintroduction of State's role in the sector's development. The aim as further argued was to promote economic growth and align with globalization (Ugwu and Kanu, 2012). By deduction, Nigerian agriculture structure was already shaped by external factors¹⁶ before 1960 with resulting inequality of access for required agricultural inputs and assets. This therefore strengthened the base for landowners/proletarians leading to rural outmigration and a reduction in small farmer holding. Furthermore this weakened the rural economy which as earlier established derives from agriculture. Oculi in his analysis summed it in the quotes below:

“Since the onset of colonialism, Nigerian agriculture politics have exploited the peasantry, undermined the autonomy of a successful system and transferred agrarian wealth from the direct producers to the urban-based administrative class and their allies in the private sector”(Oculi, 1987: 182).

So instead of state regulated function, farmers were confronted with ‘recycled middlemen’ from the former pool that necessitated intervention of the earlier Norwell Commission (Shenton, 1986: 111). This demonstrates a fused relationship and interference of politics which could be important to understand the Nigerian agricultural sector although it is not the focus of this thesis.

¹⁶ industrialization in Europe and European influenced discriminatory land tenure policy (Payer, 1979)

With reference to the literature reviewed above, it is evident that the British indirect rule inspired by the political structure in addition to the impact of the structural adjustment program in Nigeria entrenched a top- down approach to development with little or no room for women to benefit from most sectors especially agriculture where rural women dominate (Fabiya et al, 2007). Secondly, this system influenced and reproduced policies and structure that have not adequately addressed strategic needs of women involved in the agriculture sector.

Nigerian agriculture within a regional context

Views and prescriptions for African's development are suggestive of its linkage to a developed agricultural sector. While one view holds that weak domestic policies are responsible for the current state of affairs in the sector (World Bank, 1980), another holds that debt burden and international trade terms are limiting factors for African agricultures poor development (OAU, 1979). It therefore suggests that a common ground for these two lines of thought is systemic errors that influence the participatory development process.

As a departure from the negative impact of the structural adjustment program in Africa- which further exposed the continent's agriculture to external determinants, while not resolving the perceived structural challenges- the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD) envisioned an African development propelled by agriculture with particular focus on small scale agriculture and by implication a focus on rural women farmers, poverty reduction and accelerated economic growth of the Continent (NEPAD, 2003). Thus, through its CAADP initiative, policy and institutional challenges identified are expected to influence country specific strategy and interventions. Principal

among the challenges identified are: absence of rural entrepreneurial capacity; poor saving culture resulting from poor reinvestment, lack of support services; inadequate gender sensitive interventions and security of access. For the purpose of this chapter, a reflection on a few of the above identified challenges in agriculture will be undertaken as it relates to rural women in agriculture.

Current interventions suggest an influence of World Bank prescription as it reflect in the country's PRSP which as argued by Cheru is skewed towards macro-economic output (Cheru, 2002) to the neglect of rural development. Consequently, analysts have prescribed for rural agriculture development to include though not limited to: technical know-how, government's regulation of the market to give access to inputs, support services and value for product produced (Mathu, 1989 as cited in Cheru, 2002).

Nigerian rural women and agriculture

Boserup's analysis from sub-Saharan Africa's historical perspective on the household division of labour suggests that from pre-colonial times the felling of trees, hunting and warfare were the exclusive preserve of men while food production was women's domain. However, as recorded, the colonial administration altered the arrangement due mainly to its craving for cash crops and its European culture of male farmers. Therefore, although women remained in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa as evident in Nigeria, their participation in the sector became limited to a subsistence level. The author also revealed that female farming is now more predominant in the region with a reduced need to have men fell trees resulting from less tree cover in farm areas due most probably to environmental degradation (Boserup, 1970). With a decreased demand for cash crops in the 1980s, women became dominant players in agriculture, intensely involved in food

crops value chain in the rural areas. In support of this claim, it is opined that Nigerian women as is the case with their African counterparts, play a significant role in production as well as processing in the agriculture value chain (Fabiya et al, 2007; Ogunlela and Mukhta, 2009) although the processing activity can be classified as more labour intensive according to a report by the Australian Development Cooperation (Booth and Protais, 2000). A Study conducted by Omonona further suggests that rural household wellbeing¹⁷ improvement which he equated to development achieved more through women’s involvement in agriculture related activities (Omonona, 2010).

Table 3: Nigerian women economically benefiting from the agriculture sector

Population	1981(m)	1991(m)	2001(m)	2011(m)
Total	77604	99,986	126,705	162,471
Rural	54,931	64,001	71,908	80,389
Female	38,583	49,653	62,744	80,199
Involved in Agriculture	40,883	41,959	40,981	39,195
Total Economically active in agriculture	12,840	12,683	12,862	12,277
Female economically active in agriculture	4,464	4,344	4,377	4,883

Note: Adapted from FAO Statistics

¹⁷ This includes health, education, access to income opportunities, sanitation and basic infrastructure (Omonona, 2010).

Table 4: Women and Men's Average Work Hour Input in Four Countries

Type	Burkina Faso		Kenya		Nigeria		Zambia	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Agriculture	7.0	8.3	4.3	6.2	7.0	9.0	6.4	7.6
Non-Agriculture	1.7	6.0	3.8	6.1	1.5	5.0	0.8	4.6
Variance in Agric. favour of female	1.3		1.9		2		1.2	

Note: Adapted from The economic role of women in agriculture and rural development: promoting income generating activities by Austrian Development Cooperation 2000

Where M = male and F = Female

Table 3 gives an idea of the percentage of women involved and economically benefiting from agriculture as a livelihood source. While table 4 reveals average work hours of women as against men in the sector and comparatively measured against work hour input for three other sub-Saharan African countries. The above tables clearly show the involvement of women in agriculture. Cultural differences notwithstanding, the Muslim dominated northern Nigeria is reported to be experiencing incremental change as revealed in 11% women involvement recorded in the 1970s to 22% of women involvement in the 1990s (ADC, 2000). On this premise, a development analyst has suggested that persisting rural poverty and underdevelopment is not unconnected to a deficient participatory process which ignores or gives little consideration to rural women who are predominantly smallholder farmers. To this end, a two pronged approach to addressing this is suggested to include the affected on the one hand, and the State and development partners on the other (Agbola, 1996).

Agbola noted with reference to the Federal Office of Statistics,¹⁸ that women comprise 51% of the rural population (Agbola, 1996). Women's participation in agriculture is argued to be visible across the value chain from production, processing to marketing further categorized to span from actual production to value addition and sales (Owolabi, Abubakar and Amodu, 2011).

In Nigeria, as asserted by Ekwe, although women are not culturally regarded as heads of households, they do act as pseudo heads in their responsibility and the capacity to provide for most household needs which is done through agriculture in the rural communities. Following this therefore, advocacy continues to be made for the significance of their participation in agriculture to raise the standard of living of their households and so contribute to rural poverty reduction and development in the country. To achieve the following, a prescription follows for a need to address (1) drudgery¹⁹; (2) inadequate or non-existence postharvest system; (3) weak infrastructure; (4) poor network for marketing produce (Ekwe, 1996). Another analyst adds education to the list as a vital tool to adapt to new technologies and knowledge necessary to transcend agriculture subsistence (Agbola, 1996). In this wise, socioeconomic inequality is identified as being responsible for the limited gains rural women make from agriculture activities, which in turn limits development of the sector and rural communities Nigeria.

Ekpe in his analysis of poverty alleviation efforts in Nigeria opines that the unregulated capitalist structure of past interventions could have accounted for failures of past interventions (Ekpe, 2011). As various national strategic policies and agencies were

¹⁸ Renamed the National Bureau of Statistics

¹⁹ From weeding, tilling and harvesting of (cotton, groundnuts, cowpea etc. in the North, Legumes, root tuber and vegetables in the South)

established to address poverty and development in Nigeria, women were equally and separately targeted to involve them in national development through the formation of women organizations and subsequently a women affairs ministry. Prominent amongst these platforms for women are the National Council of Women Societies established in 1959; Better life for Rural Women in 1987 and the National Women's Commission established in 1990. Agriculture specific interventions included in 1970s, rural related agriculture initiatives such as Operations Feed the Nation (OFN) and the Agriculture Development Project (ADPs). In the 1980s, the Green Revolution and the Directorate for Rural Agriculture were put in place. Although some of these initiatives targeted the rural women in the agriculture sector, they have been argued to have lacked a participatory process and therefore resulted in poor harnessing of local resources culminating in unsustainability of the initiatives. Furthermore, an integrated approach is advocated (Obetta and Okide, 2011). While the Better Life for Rural Women was wide spread in rural areas, it is argued to have been elitist in its operation thus failing to achieve poverty reduction or improve the wellbeing of rural communities (Agbola, 1996). Although all these were acclaimed to include women at all levels of their process, the outcomes judged by present level of involvement and gains thereof of rural women in agriculture prove otherwise and supports the assertion by Moser that:

“Anti-poverty income-generating projects may provide employment for women, and thereby meet practical gender needs to augment their income. But unless employment leads to greater autonomy, it does not meet strategic gender needs” (Moser, 1989, p 1813).

Inputs and skills for rural agriculture

Access to agricultural inputs and skills is widely believed to be major constraints to smallholders' participation in agriculture. Women are the more confronted with this as they form a greater majority of rural farmers in Nigeria (International Farm Management Congress, 2009). According to a survey, about 53% of Nigerians lack access to formal financial support due to the credit access requirements as well as the rural–urban spread of credit institutions that is often exclusionary of the rural poor and women (Badiru, 2010). Where informal credit facility exists within social networks of different rural communities, the interest rate could be often higher than what obtains in formal institution (Badiru, 2010; Borode, 2011). Analysts of the sector therefore recommend continuous use of these informal networks as a better option to reach rural population and women whose faith could prevent them from accessing formal interest based credit facilities (Booth and Protais, 2000; Borode, 2011).

Furthermore, others prescribe encouraging agro-technical inputs which are necessary for improved yield across the farming zones. In addition, the peculiarities of the agro-ecological zones are advocated for consideration while launching or intensifying use of fertilizer, herbicide, irrigation system and soil management to mention a few (Nkonya et al, 2010).

The Women in Agriculture (WIA) initiative is a women focused intervention of the ADP established in the 1970s to bridge extension gap requirement and specifically targeted rural women farmers (Obetta and Okide; 2011). The structure of extension services and access to technology is not less skewed to the disadvantage of rural women as other agro-inputs (Oni et al, 2009). This weak or no access to extension services and

improved technology is corroborated by findings from an assessment in a northern Nigerian State (Owolabi, Abubakar and Amodu; 2011). These exclusionary points further serve as disincentives to the already marginalized rural women to participate beyond subsistence level in agriculture where their comparative advantage rest to contribute to development and poverty reduction through improved contribution to self and household wellbeing.

Nigeria's land tenure system is revealed in the land Act of 1978 which was subsequently embedded in the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2010). The tenure is comparable to what obtained in the colonial period where control was put in the hands of a few: the government at the three tiers. Cheru equally opines that poverty reduction in Africa without due consideration for agricultural policy reform that allows for access to land is ineffective (Cheru, 2002). In support of this view it is suggested that a poor land tenure system equates decreased rural women's involvement in production and marketing (Fabiya et al, 2007). If poverty as earlier explained in previous chapters impacts more on the rural population in Nigeria whose primary occupation is agriculture, then there is a need to have a more inclusive process which allows for holistic contribution to poverty reduction and development. These thus lend credence to Cheru's (2002) postulation that Africa's agricultural sector reform still reflect modernisation concept of development. In which case, rural women's participation in agriculture is viewed and designed with a goal to equip them for labour supply. Hence labour participation and not empowering participatory development (Chambers, 1983). This therefore excludes rural women from harnessing and benefiting

from agriculture inputs and communal asset (land) requisite to create wealth and sustain their livelihoods in an agrarian economy (Chopra et al., 1990).

From the above, it is clear that effective consideration of equity of access to inputs will stimulate sustained participation and enhance economic gains for rural women farmers. This in turn will better position them to engage in the development process and contribute to poverty reduction, which is the focus of Nigeria's development strategy.

3.5 Key agriculture interventions in Nigeria

Many agricultural initiatives have been launched in the country both by the government of Nigeria and development partners. A few of these have attempted to improve agriculture practices with rural farmers as focus beneficiaries. However, these have favoured more the production aspect of the value chain with some efforts at mitigating the processing and marketing level challenges in the sector. Hence they could be said to have achieved intended goals. Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Borno State (PROSAB) and FADAMA II are examples of such interventions.

Fadama II

Derived from the word "Irrigated land", Fadama II is a joint World Bank and Government of Nigeria initiative. In its first phase, Fadama targeted assistance focused on irrigation farming given high premium to infrastructure provision. The second phase however increased in scope and coverage to include 12 of the 36 states spread across five

geopolitical zones²⁰ of the country. The mandate at this point included post production of crops, livestock, agroforestry, fishing and fish farming aimed at improving the incomes of beneficiaries, majority of whom are rural households (Akinlade et al, 2011). The initiative also aimed to provide support services in agro processing enterprises, and rural marketing. This initiative was implemented between 2005 and 2010 with an overarching goal of poverty reduction through rural agriculture (Nkonya et al., 2008).

A mid-term evaluation of Fadama II carried out by the International Food Policy and Research Institute (IFPRI) revealed that there was improvement in women's income. Referencing the mid-term report of the initiative, the study suggests that only 12% as against 94% success in advisory services and productive asset respectively was achieved. In addition most assets were irrigation equipment and no credit facility component was included in the initiative (Nkonya et al., 2008). However, a contrary view holds that the result was not as favourable to women as it appears (Akinlade et al (2011). In support of this finding, women were reported to have benefited less than planned, due principally to a failure to meet the 40% and later 30% individual contribution required for asset acquisition under the project terms (Nkonya et al., 2008: 5, 16). Given previous argument that access to extension services and credit as well as land are hindrances to rural women's participation in agriculture, Fadama II is critiqued for a less holistic synergy to address the challenges of poverty reduction and development.

PROSAB

An initiative which employed a livelihood approach on the other hand, had a specific gender mainstreaming strategy which identified a 'non-cash' but viable crop (soybean)

²⁰ South east, South west, North east, North west, North central

and promoted its farming, processing, utilization and marketing. In addition, a livestock goat share scheme was introduced. The initiative implemented between 2003 and 2008 attempted to harness the physical, human, financial and social capitals of the benefiting communities to achieve sustained efforts at improving their wellbeing and consequently enhancing economic gains for both rural women and men involved in agriculture. Also good to note according to the project report is the result indicating poverty reduction to 49% from 67% at the end of the project in comparison to project inception baseline. The project components included: increased agricultural productivity of farmers; improved access of farmers to agricultural input and output markets as well as improved policy environment for land, crops and livestock management (IITA, 2009).

Collaboratively implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Borno State Government and the University of Maiduguri with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency, PROSAB's goal was to improve livelihoods through agriculture in rural communities. According to the project dissemination workshop report, it achieved multifaceted interlinked results that impacted on poverty reduction. This is demonstrated in the gain made through increased and retention of soil fertility, increased nutrition, and also increased income. There is however the fear that the project which recorded improved nutrition and income for participating 17,000 households may be unsustainable when implemented on a larger scale without budget support and enabling policies at the two lower tiers of government (IITA, 2009).

3.6 Conclusion

Following the above examination of Nigeria's context, a possible inference from available literature shows that agriculture is a catalyst to development and poverty reduction. Nevertheless, policies and strategies over the years are generally skewed towards macro-economic purpose and tend to exclude a significant subset of the population that would otherwise have made tangible contributions to development. This chapter also reveals that the majority of women in rural agriculture operate at subsistence level in spite of various past and present initiatives.

With reference to Moser's (1989) view on women's participation in development process through agriculture, there is not yet equity of access to productive assets. Also, less emphasis is put on processing and marketing as compared to production with regards to smallholders in the agriculture sector who are in the majority, women. The follow-up section of this work will seek to present findings from field interviews to validate or debunk conclusions from literature review as well as corroborate suggested escape routes. Findings will be analysed in the light of existing policies and structures as it pertains to rural women's participation in agriculture and contribution to poverty reduction and development in Nigeria.

We will also examine through primary data findings, the existing systemic and policy gaps that impact negatively on rural women's involvement in agriculture as it relates to productivity, profitability and argue for a multi-dimensional approach to enhance sustained rural women's participatory engagement in agriculture for poverty reduction and development.

Chapter Four

Research Findings and Analysis

4.0 Introduction

As revealed from previous chapters of this paper, population in rural areas is still significantly high with agriculture as the mainstay. A majority of rural adult population in Nigeria are women due mainly to outmigration. Equally established is that poverty prevail and women play a major role in rural and by implication Nigeria's agriculture sector. The literature reviewed also indicated that an underdeveloped human, physical and financial capital, are huddles in the way of women practicing agriculture beyond subsistence level to enable contribution to poverty reduction and development. It is therefore agreed that the agriculture sector plays a pivotal role in development and engages a majority of the rural population especially rural women who are found in all the subsectors but predominantly in processing and marketing of the agricultural value chain (Fabiya et al., 2007).

An FAO report also suggests that majority of food produced in sub-Saharan Africa inclusive of Nigeria, is by small-scale women farmers residing mainly in rural communities (FAO, 2011). In Borode's contribution to the debate, he opined that rural women's economic productivity is essential to scale up household well-being, poverty reduction and development. Therefore, to encourage participation in income-focused activities is sequel to development (Borode, 2011). The extent to which their

involvement impacts on development and poverty reduction remains a subject of exploration. In addition to the literature reviewed and country context study, primary data collection was carried out to ascertain the validity or better understand the conclusions revealed in the literature and its relationship to poverty reduction and development in Nigeria.

To this end a qualitative research was conducted to compliment information already gathered from secondary data sources. For this purpose, key informant interviews were conducted with policy makers, agricultural practitioners and consultants. Consent forms were forwarded well ahead of the interview date and although email consent were received and signed copies of the consent forms were hand delivered to the researcher before the interview. The one-on-one interviews lasted at least 30 minutes each. Follow up telephone interviews were carried out and due to the busy schedule of some key informants, there was need to follow up by email. Focus group discussions were also held with two rural women farmer groups. One of the focus group discussions had exclusively rural women farmers while the other had a few male observers. The focus group discussions were longer in duration-about two hours- in order to allow participants give their stories in response to stimulating questions posed by the researcher. In both farmer groups, the holding of each individual farmer ranges between 0.25 to 2 hectares. Equally, consent scripts were forwarded to the farmer groups through country host NGO and institute prior to the meeting. At the time of the discussions, content of letter was re-explained to the group members and their verbal consent received before discussions proceeded.

4.1 Key Informant Interviews

Seven key informant interviews were conducted and the participants cut across ministry of agriculture and rural development, non-governmental organization, academia, national and international agriculture research institutes and programs. All of these have also worked with rural farmers and in most cases extensively across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

4.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

The FGDs held in two rural communities in the south west and north central of the country. There are differences in Odogbo and Nuku communities respectively. The South, which will be referred to as Com 1 had better access to infrastructural facilities than Com 2 in the North. Their proximity to city centre also differs. Com 1 is about 15 kilometres away from an urban town and Com 2 is about 132 kilometres from a city and it is equally located upland making infrastructural development slow and a challenge. A distinct demographic and socio-infrastructural difference was identified between the two communities. Agricultural produce from these communities range from green leafy vegetables to groundnuts, root and tuber crops.²¹ These communities were selected on the basis of accessibility, willingness to participate, and representation of the northern and southern rural agricultural reality of Nigeria.

²¹ cassava and yam.

4.3 Challenges

The challenges encountered during the primary data gathering were not significant enough to impact negatively on the fieldwork. Primary among the challenges was time and proximity factors. Generally, sequencing between interviews and FGDs could not be done. Some interviews had to be rescheduled over four times before they were successfully held. Labour strike and busy schedules accounted for interview rescheduling. Interviews with non-government employees were easier to conduct. In the case of the FGDs, the initial community to have been visited in the south-west was changed at the last week due to the travel of the extension officer. However, the host institute was able to liaise with another non-governmental organization for discussion to be held with Com 1. At the first meeting schedule, Com 2 lost its clan head and the proposed date of scheduled meeting was declared for mourning. Thus, the discussion had to be rescheduled for a later date. Although interviews were conducted in urban towns and cities, accessing Com 2 was very stressful as the rural road was bad and there were no very good public transportation from the cities. The challenges notwithstanding, the interviews and discussions were revealing and provided a better perspective to the subject matter. Triangulation of primary with secondary information earlier obtained in the research equally provided for useful analysis. The challenges therefore did not significantly impact on result analysis.

4.4 Overview of focus communities

The communities located in South-West and North central region of Nigeria have major characteristics of rural communities although both have varied level of socio-infrastructure challenges as well as development partner presence. Their proximity from an urban centre is also a feature that distinguishes these communities.

Odogbo Community (Com 1)

The unique feature of this community includes that it is a military cantonment (large barracks) with good proximity to an urban centre. The community is multi-cultural and has different ethnic groupings. It has some infrastructural facilities though with limited capacity as confirmed by discussants. There are good internal road networks but transportation services in and out of the barracks are limited and this is designed by the military for security purpose. A majority of the low rank officers involve in crop farming to supplement salary earnings while the women predominantly farm green leafy vegetables as well as engage in grocery trading. The women equally engage in livestock rearing mainly for domestic consumption and in some cases as a savings mechanism. Although sanitation is enforced in the barracks, water supply is from wells, nearby shallow stream, rain harvested with containers by individual households. There is a crèche, two primary schools and two secondary schools, a church and a mosque in the barracks. Community groups exist and their affiliation reflect ethnicity, faith, gender and agriculture such as the five clusters of women vegetable farmers association. The

agriculture group has benefited in the past from visits from an NGO and the National Horticulture Research Institute (NIHORT).

Nuku Community (Com 2)

Nuku is a patrilineal farming village in Abaji area council about 131Km from the federal capital city, Abuja. A majority of the community members engage in food crops farming as well as livestock rearing. The crops produced include yam, maize, millet, beni seed (local grain high in protein), cow pea, cassava, guinea corn and groundnut. There are Gbasa and Gbagi ethnic groups in the community and Livestock rearing is another agriculture activity in the community. Other social economic activities in the community include trading, bricklaying, carpentry, transport services. Nuku gets its supply of water from three shallow streams namely Dumu, Gagwor and Gwariye. Alternative water supply includes rain harvest, direct purchase of water in storage containers and in the future borehole with solar pump under construction. Existing community groups in Nuku cut across gender, age and trade. Nuku has benefited from two major development partners intervention key among which are the Fadama II initiative and a water and sanitation project by a non-governmental organization. There is no functional social-infrastructure such as hospital and market while sanitation is a challenge.

4.5 Outlook on livelihoods in the communities

In Com 1, discussion was held with eight women of the 27 members of one of the 5 women farmer clusters. The turnout was poor because most members stayed back to

prepare their household for a festival ceremony. Com 2 had a mixed group with 10 women, and about eight men and five male youth observers. The women did more of the discussion initially at a less comfort level but as questions were asked, discussion was naturally stimulated and useful information was provided. Although the women discussants will not give their age, they all had children in primary and secondary schools except for one in Com 2 whose child is an infant whom she brought along to the meeting. It could be said that the age of the discussants range between 20 and 40 years old.

Household composition

There is a similar trend of about two to three extended family dependants living in households of the discussants. There was 100% confirmation from both communities that the households are headed by men. The sizes vary between 7 and 15 with the larger number found in the northern community.

Human capital

The education level attained by the focus group discussants could be rated low to none in a few cases. It could be concluded that a majority of the rural women had only primary school education which, as demonstrated by their participation in the discussion, was not functional enough to enhance a discussion in English language. There were three discussants respectively for Com 2 and Com 1 who had secondary school level education but however did not complete their schooling. In comparison with their male counterparts who all attended secondary schools. In Com 1, 7 (87.5%) of the 8 discussants completed their primary education while one had no formal education. Com

2's information reveals that ten per cent of the discussants attended a secondary school. Four (40%) out of the 10 discussants had a primary school education and 50% had no formal education. The education level attained by the focus group discussants could be rated low to none in a few cases. It could be inferred that a majority of the rural women had only primary school education, which as demonstrated by their participation in the discussion was not functional enough to enhance a communication in the national official language (English).

Physical capital

Land is a major physical asset in both communities under study. It could be communal and passed down to generations as is the case with Com 2. Otherwise, it is purchased from an individual or farmer group, which is typical of Com 1. Every male community member is reported to have access to parcel(s) of land via inheritance. Some families seemed to have bigger parcels of land than others in which case they could rent a parcel to those needing it. Land holding differs for both communities but in general the women's land held is between 0.24 and 2 hectares.

It was gathered that agriculture plays a significant role in household well-being. The community women are solely involved in horticulture and food crop (leafy vegetable, groundnut, and cassava) production and processing. They also own and rear chickens and goats (small scale livestock ownership). This they do to provide a buffer for household nutrition and economic shock. Nevertheless, women also participate in the farming of other crops when they provide labour in their husbands' farms.

Financial Capital

All the women involved in agriculture in these communities do so at subsistence level. It was gathered from the discussions that the women rarely save money gained from local sales of their produce. The bulk or whole is spent on household needs which range from education of their children and wards to clinic fees, clothing and other household miscellaneous expenses.

Social capital

From discussions with the groups in both communities visited, it was gathered that social groups exist and the community men and women are active members of these groups. These range from faith, ethnic, age, trade and gender based groupings. The discussants emphasised the important role of these groups which were claimed to provide avenue for information sharing, credit, and farm labour assistance.

4.6 Research findings

Although not visible among the discussants, it was mentioned by interviewees and discussants alike that there is a northern and southern difference in rural women's participation in agriculture. Equity of access to agriculture inputs as well as household domestic obligations was identified as major constraints to rural agriculture productivity and gains as it concerns rural women. The interviewees and discussants concur to literature summation that women play a significant role in agriculture but their participation has been limited to ensuring household food security and providing labour for cash crop farmers as detailed in (Ogunlela and Mukhtar, 2009).

The questions for the interviews and focus group discussions sort to stimulate information collection on the available assets at the rural communities in the first place, then examine the intervening initiatives and their impact on productive capacity of the rural women as it relates to their contribution to poverty reduction and their continuous stay in the sector.

Land and labour

Women remain key agents for household food security and are mostly involved in food crops production, processing and marketing. However, contrary to a generalization, women in some Muslim northern parts of the country own lands although utilise it by proxy farming or lease. While the greater majority of women in the North central and southern part of Nigeria do not own lands but could access one through their husbands and /or lease as is the case with the women in Com 2 and Com 1 respectively. The women farmers in Com 1 get initial loan of a parcel of land for a short period as a start off incentive from any member of the women farmer cluster and subsequently have to lease per 4m²²² at N5000 (\$31). In addition to their labour, Com 1 employs scarce labour for about N250 (\$1.6) per 4m². Com 2 on the other hand does not often employ paid labour but use the ‘gaaya’.²³ The two groups confirm that disinterest in agriculture and resulting outmigration of youths to cities impact negatively on cost of engaging in crop farming.

²² Four square meter measurement.

²³ joint and rotating labour provided by members of social networks present in the community.

Education

All the women participants in the focus group discussion did not attend or complete a secondary school level education, Majority stopped at primary school level. Their literacy could be described as not functional enough. All were only comfortable to carry on discussion in pidgin English.

Technology

Drudgery continues to be a challenge and limits yield of production and output at production and processing point of agriculture produce. The women discussants confirmed this as it relates to their crop farming and off season groundnut oil processing and sales. From the discussions held in the two communities and as confirmed by all the interviewees, rural farming is still done with the traditional tools of hoes and cutlasses. According to the interviews and discussions, labour supply is not as accessible as was the case previously. This the participants attributed to outmigration to urban areas and youths lack of interest in agriculture.

The household responsibilities of cooking and caring and in some cases the poor health of the women themselves also add another layer to the burden of carrying out their agricultural activities. At the two communities, there is poor access to water supply either for domestic use or for farming purpose. In the case of Com 1 vegetable farmers, wells and a shallow stream provide water needs. The water has to be drawn out manually to irrigate the farmlands in dry season. Com 2 on the other hand relies on shallow stream for domestic use and depends majorly on rain fed farming.

As confirmed by the discussants in both communities, there are peak and off seasons. In the case of the leafy vegetables women farmers, farming is all seasons. The

dry season is more labour intensive as the women noted. At this time, there is little or no rainfall and low water levels at the wells dug for irrigation and the streams would have dried up. According to estimates provided during the FGDs, an average of seven working hours a day during the planting season and nine hours at harvest time is put in to crop farming. The women found it difficult to quantify the hours they put in to household chores. It was noted that where there are older children and dependants, responsibilities are delegated. Nevertheless, the overall supervision still rest with the women and they personally see to the preparation of meals for their households.

The researcher noted that women group formation was encouraged by an NGO in Com 1 and the FADAMA II in the Case of Com 2. This has enhanced their access to useful skill training on soil management and group formation. However, the women in Com 1 made it known that there was further need to access improved seeds and seedlings and included in the FADAMA initiative. No participant mentioned any initiative of extension services support from Women in Agriculture under the Agriculture Development Program a State structure designed to provide technical and capacity support services to women farmers. The interviewees also highlighted an absence of private sector involvement in backward integration, which in their view will benefit a lot of rural women involved in agriculture.

Credit Facility

Interviewees and discussants were of the opinion that credit facility is still a far cry from what it should be. Rural women's access to formal credit facilities is limited. They can access small loans through social networks and particular mention was made of the faith

based and ethnic women groups to which they have membership. Credit facility according to Com 1 does not usually exceed N15000 (\$95) per individual per annum and attracts an interest rate of N500 (\$3.2 monthly). When asked if the women farmers pay tax, the response was 100% in the negative. However, argument was made for payment of tithe²⁴ and dues as required by other socio-religious groups they belong to.

At the different interviews and focus group discussions, the need to access formal credit facilities was confirmed as important to improve rural women's participation in the sector. This was said to be requisite for expansion of current farmland holding, purchase or lease of equipment, improved seedlings and maybe lease of sales points in designated urban markets. These inputs they confirm are necessary to reduce drudgery and increase yield and as well as enhance surplus income for savings and reinvestment purpose.

Income from Agriculture

Among the focus group discussants in Com 1, about 37% are involved in 'small scale trading' while the percentage is slightly higher in Com 2 with about 50% engaged in groundnut oil processing and sales as well as the sale of firewood for additional income. A possible explanation for the difference in income source of the two groups is that while Com 1 is involved in an all season crop, Com 2 crops are seasonal. The women made profit between N2000 and N4000 (\$13 and \$25) daily from their farms during harvest season. On outmigration and remittances, the general consensus of participants is that while there is noticeable migration of youths in particular to nearby urban centres,

²⁴ One tenth of income paid in some churches

remittances are not generally received. In some cases, the migrants come home for food suppliers to sustain them in the cities.

Most women spoken to affirmed that they control their resources derived from their farms. However, the burden of household care and nourishment makes this access to finance of no effect. While none accepted they had savings from farm proceeds as of yet, they all confirmed they were not defaulters in payment of their respective association dues. Participation at each farming year might also suggest a minimal savings culture but the women claim that they recycled or share seeds and seedlings between group members, while labour is provided by them and their unwilling youths in some cases.

From the findings of this research, it was noted that rural women farmers are involved in the agricultural value chain but more involved in staple crop production, processing and marketing; given household alimentation responsibility, available capital as well as religious code of limited public appearance for married women. Muslim northern Nigeria is characterised more by proxy female participation in agriculture particularly at the production and sales points in the agriculture value chain.

Poverty and development

In spite of time and energy put into agricultural activities, all participants confirm that rural women are yet to exercise to the maximum, their potential to contribute to improving well-being of their household and themselves through this profession. Com 1 participants in particular consider themselves poor because according to them, they do not have savings like workers in the formal sectors and cannot afford little luxuries of

life. Com 2 also believes they are poor as long as they are not able to contribute as they should to improved life of their family members and themselves especially during crop off season.

Interviewees noted an agriculture policy vacuum for a period in the country's history and stated in response to question on how and when agriculture will contribute to poverty reduction, that poverty can only be addressed when a holistic approach that incorporates all actors especially the rural women is addressed.

4.6 Emanating issues and analysis

Although Nigerian rural women are involved in agriculture, their participation has been limited due to the Nigerian agriculture operational structure that benefits more the macro than micro level (Oculi, 1987, Kanu and Ugwu, 2012;). Involvement in the agriculture sector continues to be a challenge for rural women due to a disconnect between agriculture policies and the reality of rural women (Shenton, 1987; Ogunlela and Mukhtar, 2009). The policies and structure in place appear not in support of rural women farmers for the purpose of enhancing their contribution to poverty reduction through the exercise of their profession. Consequently, the findings will be grouped in themes to enable better analysis.

Weak structure and regulatory framework

In addition to defects in its land tenure system, Nigeria's agriculture operated in a policy vacuum for a long period between 1980s and 2011 resulting in an agriculture practice disconnected from poverty reduction realities. However, the Agriculture Transformation

Agenda (ATA) which became effective in 2012 attempts to bridge this gap but not without weak linkage to rural women farming issues as revealed in the interviews conducted. ATA envisages agriculture for foreign exchange purpose in line with its economic security pillar (ATA, 2011).

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Official Gazette reflecting the Land Use Act 1978, there appears to be a common right to property but allocation and statutory rights is vested in the State. However, the ATA further confirms that as at the year 2011, only 5% of farmers can access agricultural inputs including land (ATA, 2011). This introduces a political will dimension to land access. Women are further argued to have poorer access to farmlands (Bryceson, 1995; Smith, 1989; Fabiyi et al., 2007).

Strategies and policies employed in the sector have attempted to address fiscal, subsidy and tariff as well as insurance issues although not yet significantly impacted on a majority of agricultural practitioners in the rural areas. If the productivity of rural women in the sector is to be achieved access to farmland should as a structural defect be thoroughly addressed probably by a reform on the land tenure. To lend support to this view, an analysis of the World Bank approach to agriculture development concludes that poverty reduction can only be achieved when equity of access to land is encouraged (Payer, 1978).

The focus group discussions and interviews conducted confirm access to land as a challenge to rural women farmers. Most participants in the field study confirm that land is available but the means to access it remains scarce for most people and often dependent on direct purchase, receipt as a gift item or inheritance. In addition,

agriculture experts interviewed were of the opinion that improved yield is not an effect of land size but improved technology. Therefore, following results from Com 1 and Com 2, an attempt could be made to take access to land away from the top priority on the list of impediments to rural women in agriculture practice.

The Nigerian agricultural sector's contribution of about 40% to with low foreign earnings capacity is GDP (NBS, 2011). If value addition is given a deserved focus in agriculture policies, then rural women who predominantly are at the processing and marketing points for staple crops as confirmed by literature (Fabiya et al., 2007) will benefit. In addition, a review of the major agriculture value chain commodities reveals that more crops need to be encouraged to be able to integrate all actors.

The CAADP isolates two categories of agriculture produce: value and strategic (NEPAD, 2003). From literature review, interviews and discussions held, a concentration of women is identified on value produce which are not at the moment export oriented but ensure food security. Women, nevertheless provide labour for the production of other crops. Findings from the study confirm that women are yet to significantly benefit from agriculture activities above the satisfaction of household alimentation thus making them 'insert' into or tools for development instead of 'contributors' and makers of development as implied in (Humble, 1999). Articulated lessons learned from the ATA and interviews with policy makers reveal a market oriented focus for the development of Nigeria's agriculture sector. Although government seem to be performing its regulatory role as evidenced in the ATA growth enhancement support (GES) and Nigerian incentive based risk sharing for agriculture lending initiatives. The staple crop processing zones (SCPZ) could have come to the

rescue but women might end up being more of labour suppliers than beneficiaries as farm plot managers. The SCPZ attracts private sector agribusinesses to set up processing plants in zones of high food production. This will be done with government support (through provision of infrastructure, favourable fiscal and investment policies (ATA, 2011).

On the basis of field research, only rice and cassava have been identified for this purpose. While these are food crops, they equally have a cash crop status and so have been commercialised thus crowding out gradually the small scale rural women farmers. While the cassava plants will be located in the south of the country, the rice will be across the country but a large percentage will be located in the north. From primary and secondary data, these crops are not under the control of women farmers. About 100% of Com 1 women field research participants confirmed that they volunteer labour for their husbands' cassava farm.

Except for prospect of labour employment in the processing plants, no direct sustained and economically benefiting impact will be recorded for rural women in agriculture with this initiative. While these could be laudable as relatively new initiatives, rural women are still not positioned beyond group formation, to benefit from such initiatives. Therefore, while not defective as structures within governments and private sector interventions, rural women are by default excluded from the accruing benefits of such initiatives and their participation is most likely to remain as labour suppliers for these plants in which case their direct role in agriculture is likely to continue its decline.

Human Capital and Social Safety Nets

Contrary to study carried out by Owolabi, Abubakar and Amodu (2011), the communities visited and participants interviewed agree that the human resource in agriculture is experiencing ageing population. Com 1 and Com 2 women FGD participants agree that the younger community members are no longer interested in agriculture and as a result, out- migration into the cities is commonplace.

According to the UNDP (2009) report, human capital is prerequisite to poverty reduction. The recommendations from this report include provision of safety nets for the vulnerable, which will allow effective engagement with policies. From the literature and field research findings, it has been established that in exercising their agriculture profession, rural women are confronted daily with poor functional education, double roles of catering for the welfare of their household members and improving their agricultural productivity (Boserup, 2007; Moser, 1989). This therefore does not encourage surplus income enough to encourage reinvestment and savings. Although conditional cash transfer is a novel initiative in Nigeria, the need to tie it to agriculture as well as education and health is underscored by this research. With the 2013 joint governments provision of about 10 billion naira/\$64.4 million (*Prima Times*, 2013) announced in support of a conditional cash transfer (CCT) scheme that will support agriculture in addition to education and health, it remains to be known what far reaching impact this will have on rural women farmers since a bulk of the fund will be directed at youth entrepreneurial skills and by a general definition and unit analyses, rural women will not fall within this category. There exist independent lessons learned from the pilot

phases of the education and health related CCT pioneered by UNICEF and some state governments. A functional CCT will no doubt respond to the social service assistance that the research participants alluded to as requisite for their ability to save, reinvest and for a continuous stay in the sector. In the field discussions held, all (100%) rural women farmer participants did not have an education level that could be considered functional. Education is thus considered a requisite to access required technology and skills (Fabiya et al, 2007; Owolabi, Abubakar and Amodu, 2011).

An entrepreneurial and literate skill to operate above subsistence farming is also a challenge to be overcome with a functional education (Borode, 2011). Field research revealed that extension services to build rural women's capacity to function effectively in the development process are weak. This gap was particularly visible in communities visited as the women agree that through farming they are able to assist their household meet daily basic needs but could not categorically state what their net income was and did not have formal savings or investments. The interviewees in the study however agree that the issue of value for money could arise due to poor entrepreneurial and education skills coupled with poor to no physical monitoring of agriculture activities by rural women in the north.

There are equally no evidences of functional or affordable social services which could pass for safety nets in the two communities visited. Although social networks exist, they have attempted without much success to bridge the social safety net gaps. The above situation continues to impede rural women. The women participants and interviewees, confirm that they were yet to benefit from the growth enhancement support of the federal government. In addition, the poor health and education services provided

by the State creates stress on the little resource that might have been derived from sale of surplus harvest and this will impact on the rural women getting beyond subsistence level in agriculture. No clear indication on off-season provision. Given that rural women farmers are about 90% involved in processing in the agriculture value chain as presented by (Owolabi, Abubakar and Amodu, 2011), the field results proved that this has not been taken into account in the past and new initiatives. Therefore, traditional means of food processing is employed which does not add enough value in income terms to the rural women's effort. A need to address this gap therefore becomes imperative to encourage continuous stay in the profession as rightly identified in the UNDP report on Nigeria (NHDR 2008).

Poor access to inputs and infrastructure

The field research corroborates the views from the literature review that rural women farmers, are into crop production, livestock (poultry, goat rearing etc.) and agriculture processing and marketing. These inputs as listed by most interviewees should include friendly and affordable technology to reduce drudgery, access to credit and market, although the Bank of Industry is making effort in this direction, rural women farmers are still far down the ladder because of their small holdings. Agricultural insurance facility is still very inaccessible to rural poor farmers especially to the category who are unlikely to have premium to pay because of poor or no savings. Infrastructure provision and extension services dynamism is also required to make a difference and improve on the participation level of rural women in agriculture.

All interviewees and discussants agree that, to address the identified gaps impeding rural women’s participation in agriculture, a concerted effort of public, private partnership; development partners (including CSOs) and rural communities is vital to achieving success in harnessing rural women farmers potentials and lifting them from a subsistence level to an empowering level of income savings and better livelihoods within their locality as represented below

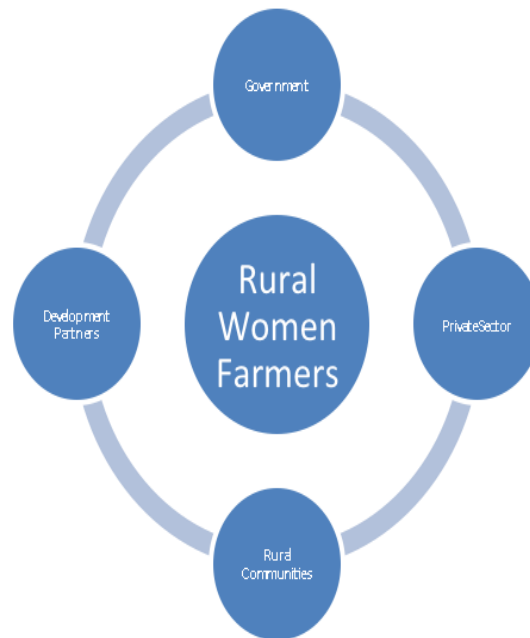


Figure 3: Key stakeholders required to harness rural women’s potentials for income oriented agricultural activities.

The literature and field research suggest that rural women remain dominant actors and significant contributors to food security since they are mostly involved in food crops production, agriculture produce processing and marketing although control of resource especially from sale of ‘cash’ or ‘male’ crops is very limited. Their holding is usually small between 0.25 and 2 hectares. Aging population seem to be apparent with younger

women representing only about 5.5% of the total number of participants in the focus group discussions. Drudgery, low yield and income compared to labour input is said to keep younger women away from the profession.

4.7 Agricultural policies and practice in Nigeria

Agriculture policies in Nigeria according to literature review have mostly enhanced the production point of the value chain. This therefore demonstrates that a significant number of farmers are by default excluded in policies and strategies that should boost agriculture. This exclusionary factor therefore stifles and weakens their participation in agriculture limiting them to subsistence level of production. Also the literatures reviewed, interviews and discussions held, suggest that access to agro-inputs is limiting and not in synch with requirements of the rural women farmers as is the case in Com 2 where no woman indicated participation in the e-wallet scheme that gives access to fertilizer. Also in Com 1 women farmers had access to fertilizer but required improved seedlings instead.

There is equally no market channel to absorb their produce as is currently the case with the cash crops. Value addition although mentioned in the ATA does not appear to have structures in place that addresses this in particular at the rural farm level. As is the case with production enhancement supported by extension services from the about 18 agriculture research institutes in Nigeria. No known private organization was also mentioned during the interviews and focus group discussions conducted that supports post-harvest and food processing training, entrepreneurial capacity-building.

There were no market linkages or networks established for majority of produce by rural women farmers as is the case for rice and cassava produce as promoted by the agricultural transformation agenda indicated in the literature review.

With the above analysis, it is evident that Nigeria's past and present agricultural policies have been designed not with participatory process in mind but rather it is by default skewed to the disadvantage of a majority of farmers who incidentally are women rural small food crop farmers. Also, an accurate asset mapping in the sector seems not to have been carried out hence the exclusiveness of the sector's driving policy and orientation towards macro-economic goals. In addition, a concentration on yield to the detriment of small-scale produce processing and marketing has contributed to the exclusionary nature of current policies and strategies which impact more on rural women in agriculture. This has impacted negatively on rural women's participation in agriculture. The likelihood therefore exists that further inequality will be created within the sector with snowball adverse effect on poverty reduction.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Conclusion

From the perspective of the ‘new developmentalism’, the paradigm of ‘inclusive development’ constructed within the framework of the ‘post-Washington consensus’, underdevelopment is a social condition, a state of well-being, measured by the rate of poverty, which is calculated or determined by reference to the ability of individuals, families and households to access the resources and services needed to meet their basic needs-‘basic needs satisfiers’- such as income or employment (decent work), education, sanitation, potable water, and shelter. According to the research findings that we have reviewed, there is a prevalence of poverty in rural areas, requiring a contextualized and holistic approach at the level of diagnosis, analysis, and development practice.

Consequently, for poverty reduction and for development to be achieved, there is a need to employ an approach that takes into consideration the totality of productive resources or assets, as well as opportunities, capacities and institutions available to people within a rural locality or community beset by poverty (with a high incidence of absolute poverty). Also, the effective interaction between these opportunities, capacities assets, and the institutional structure of the economic and social system, for the purpose of enabling access and igniting the conversion of these resources into sustainable livelihoods for the poor cannot be overemphasized. In spite of the recommendation to

take the agriculture pathway out of rural poverty rather than the labour and migration option routes, the continued extraneous influence of established economic and social structures on policies is likely to bring an imbalance between opportunities and actions, and reduce the effectiveness of the SRLA to poverty reduction and development. As revealed in the Vision 20:2020 document, Nigeria is looking to de-emphasize agriculture by 2020, with a goal to reducing its contribution to the economy and the GDP. However, since this is premised on the country achieving industrial status this vision might be very difficult to realize if not farfetched, in which case the immediate goal of reducing poverty will be highly dependent on agriculture and rural development.

Social inequalities in the distribution of wealth and income, and poverty (a state of deprivation) at one extreme of this distribution, are highlights of the development problematic at both the micro and macro-level. Although policy generated economic growth, or an annual increase in the GDP, might not suffice as a single measurement of development, it is nevertheless significant in the development equation, as reflected in the widely accepted human development index, which includes per capita GDP growth as one of three critical variables of development, and as argued by many analysts in the mainstream of development thinking and practice. Even so, according to proponents of ‘another development’ and ‘inclusive development’ from within the framework of a new (Post-Washington) consensus, the most critical variable in the development equation is ‘human development’, which is predicated on capacity building, or the development of knowledge and skills among the poor as well as within the general populace. Human resource development with enhanced open opportunities to participate in the process, are vital strategies for poverty reduction and development.

As previously established in this study, although poverty has both rural and urban dimensions, there is clear evidence that in the case of Nigeria rural poverty outweighs urban poverty, suggesting—and in this thesis we argue—the need for a development focus on poverty reduction and the improved wellbeing of the rural populace. This will contribute immensely to achieving national development. As for the best or most effective pathway out of rural poverty we conclude that conditions for taking the labor and migration pathways out of rural poverty, the preferred strategy for most development theorists and practitioners, including the World Bank, until the mid-1990s, are not favorable. Thus, we agree with reports and studies that identify agriculture as a strategic requirement and a catalyst for rural development. However, for rural development based on agriculture to be an effective solution, a strategy that ensures that development is facilitated through both the micro and macro level is required. In support of this recommendation, a multi-level analysis that considers the poor and their capability and impediments to achieving same is prescribed. To this end, the sustainable rural livelihood approach to development is proposed to provide options for poverty reduction based on rural asset mapping that involves all stakeholders. The involvement of stakeholders as confirmed by these research findings has to be considered from a participatory process with beneficiaries as agents for and targets in poverty reduction and development. In addition, the participatory process provides an interactive platform for capabilities, structure and policies that ensure equity of access, as well as generate activities from interaction between assets, structure, social relations and institutions.

Our research findings confirm that Nigeria has equally identified existing poverty reduction and development potential in agriculture. Agriculture is practiced more in the

rural than urban areas, and women carry out the majority of the agriculture activities but mainly at a subsistence level. This situation undermines the ability of rural women to effectively and efficiently contribute to the wellbeing of their households, themselves and the country at large. Although the route out of poverty for Nigeria has been identified, the strategies and structure in place to achieve this need to be modified to enable a level playing field for the critical actors and contributors to the agriculture sector. This will enable the rural population and agriculture workforce, who in the case of Nigeria are women, to be economically active and productive beyond the level of subsistence agriculture, thereby contributing more to bridging the inequality gap which breeds poverty and underdevelopment.

Nigeria, like any other country, is confronted with global realities that include a global economic push, which influences public policy and the national development agenda in every sector (as reflected in its Agriculture Policy of 1978, National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy and Vision 20:2020 document). As revealed by the academic literature reviewed, development interventions in the agriculture sector have tended to be narrowly focused on a deficit-analysis, a diagnosis of what the target population and the intended beneficiaries of the interventions lack. This is important to the thesis argument and thus recommendation is an asset-based approach: development interventions based on an assessment of the productive resources available to the target population, or community although this approach will not be exactly sufficient to interrogate structural impact on the agency of women for poverty reduction and self-development in Nigeria.

Notwithstanding, arguments advanced in this regard by proponents of ‘another development’, including advocates of the SRLA and the conclusion drawn from the evidence in support of these arguments, it appears that attempted development interventions based on this approach have thus far failed to yield the desired sustained results. This suggests, and we argue, that development analysts and practitioners have to pay closer attention to contextual factors (the institutional and public policy framework) inasmuch as they impede on or facilitate the decisions made and actions taken by the rural poor, and under some conditions prevent a successful development outcome. In spite of claims that awareness of capacity to act and potential hinders rural women’s participation in development, our research findings draw us towards a conclusion to the contrary, that an enabling structure to enhance the exercising of one’s own agency and capability for self-development is what is most lacking.

Another important fact is that rural women are significant players in small-holder agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa, and they currently make up the greater part of the rural poor. Their lifting from poverty and contribution to its reduction is synonymous to ensuring they are involved beyond subsistence in agriculture through an entrenched participatory process.

Although a comparison between rural and urban poverty and development was not investigated, research findings revealed a stress on mono-income (agriculture production) activity in the face of untapped diversified income from on-farm or off-farm opportunities. In addition, the lack or weak policy, social and infrastructural provisions required as buffers and stimulants to harnessing assets for development are all pointers and reinforce the view that poverty is a symptom of defective structures and policies

which are extraneously influenced and that rural poverty outweighs urban poverty in Nigeria and also that poverty or absence of it is synonymous to development .The possibility exists therefore that intervention that apply tools with weak synergy of assets mapping as depicted in Tables 1 and 2 will not allow for income diversification options occasioned by a participatory process which will enable adaptation to the dynamics of poverty and well-being. Findings from the study revealed that though existing agriculture initiatives do not apply the sustainable rural livelihoods approach, income options continue to exist at these rural communities. Furthermore, the communities are aware of these opportunities but their women minimally exploit them.

Furthermore, a balance that strengthens both the demand and supply side making this sector more beneficiaries focused will yield sustained development results. Although land holding is important, it nevertheless plays a less significant role than education and entrepreneurial skills for inputs access enhancement. Thus the interaction between people's capabilities and available assets is dependent on 'access' and it is on this premise that a participatory process is enhanced that ensures that the beneficiaries are not just means to an end which is what the subsistence agriculture represents for rural women but they become means to, as well as beneficiaries of the end result of improved well-being from income derived from livelihoods.

This research concludes therefore that agriculture holds a vital key to poverty reduction and development in Nigeria and rural women in the sector have a high potential to contribute to the achievement of country's poverty reduction and development goals if and when the necessary obstructions to achieve this are removed. Furthermore, interventions in the sector have not involved a majority of the key actors in

the sector and by default these are rural women. Their involvement in agriculture has been from a ‘tools’ and ‘input’ for food security perspective and this has therefore in most part reflected a WID approach which in its response to strategic needs makes the participation of women in agriculture that of ‘means’ and subsistence therefore discouraging continued stay in the sector. An approach that could ensure that rural women remain in agriculture must of necessity consider a sustainable livelihood outcome that attempts to synchronise the available assets while interrogating the impediments to maximize these assets and subsequently address such through review of structural and systemic defects as well as developing appropriate strategies to address same. In addition, because livelihood is continuous, participation in engaging and sustaining livelihoods should be a process providing a level playing ground for all its actors including rural women in the case of agriculture in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa.

We find that Nigeria’s current Vision 20:2020 and agriculture transformation agenda’s attempts at addressing rural women participation in agriculture are yet to holistically embrace the sustainable livelihood approach to development. While there might be various reasons responsible for this and the age long external influence on country’s structure and policies notwithstanding, a development approach that weaves these elements taking cognisance of the interaction between these and existing assets in given localities is more likely to produce livelihood diversification required to mitigate and address poverty dynamism and enhance development. Consequently, to encourage and sustain rural women’s involvement in agriculture beyond subsistence and for development process, a participatory process that includes assets mobilization and

livelihoods options mapping would suffice if rural women are to remain in their locality and live above poverty and remain in the agriculture sector, contributing aggregately to national development. Given that agriculture is the known traditional source of rural livelihoods, the dynamic nature of poverty requires a dynamic approach that diversifies source of livelihoods to ensure that food continues to be produced for nutrition and health of the population as well as having other supplementary source of income to meet other well-being needs. This scenario provides opportunity for women in rural communities to remain in agriculture and rural communities while contributing to poverty reduction and development.

Finally, an agriculture oriented country such as Nigeria would benefit from not overtly focusing on foreign earnings that agriculture would fetch but rather on the development of the people engaged in agriculture, who are mainly rural--poor and female. This will enhance poverty reduction predominant in rural areas. Equally important should be how in achieving the above, a country would be able to harness effectively its assets especially human capital to achieve robust development. Indeed, as revealed in this research the majority of the actors in the agricultural value chain in Nigeria are rural poor women. To facilitate the creation and diversification of livelihood options for this population subset is to support their development, that of their households, rural communities and aggregately the country at large. While globalization remains an inescapable reality, its negative impact on equality and development can be averted only when the appropriate development strategy that reflects the spirit of human development is put in place.

5.1 Recommendations

Rural poor are cumbered with an ever changing, variety, unforeseeable events, rural context and a convoluted reality with opportunities that must be mastered and appropriated in order to develop and live above poverty.

The research findings revealed that a large percentage of rural women's income is presently spent on providing basic nutritional, health, educational and other needs for household members although they do not belong to female-headed households. This is suggestive of a need to review social safety net programs to strengthen access to functional public health and education systems, which will free up a large percentage of rural poor farmers' resources for reinvestment purpose. A continuous decline in rural women's involvement in agriculture due to weak participatory process mechanisms will slow down poverty reduction drive and development in Nigeria as aimed for in the MDGs and Vision 20: 2020. In addition, our research regarding the initiatives (policy, strategy and interventions) put in place in Nigeria, points to the need for policy intervention in regard to the following issues:

- A macro-micro linkage as proposed in the SRLA is required to replace the current agriculture sector top-down (non-participatory) approach and strategy that is entirely focused on macro-level policies.
- There is a need to eliminate the exclusionary element in rural agriculture by applying multilevel analysis evidenced in strategies that target small scale agro-processing and marketing as currently seen in yield targeted agricultural production initiatives that favour a subset of the agricultural population but

excludes the majority of rural women farmers. This makes for better preparation against off-farm seasonal and environmental shocks. Our field research also points to the need for income diversification within available portfolios of on-farm and off-farm activities.

- An urgent need to articulate, study lessons learned from initial pilot CCT schemes to reflect family unit and multilevel analysis for better context and gender sensitive adaptation in the management of the current fund released by the government if this is to succeed and impact on rural women gains from agriculture.
- Equity of access to agricultural inputs is a critical factor for boosting the output and productivity of women in the agricultural sector, leading to economic gains and thus a more sustainable livelihood. These inputs include credit, infrastructure, market, extension services, education, analytical and business skills, and land. Entrepreneurial skills (education, analytical and business skills) appear to be top priority on this list of inputs. Knowledge and human capital base referred to as “fertile functioning” (Nussbaum, 2011) is essential to increasing the participation of women in the development process. As evidenced in the current state of affairs in Nigeria’s agriculture sector, initiatives such as Women in Agriculture and FADAMA II, although intended to target women, have not sufficiently addressed their participation in ways that would enhance their contribution to efforts of poverty reduction and development.

These interventions have largely been needs-based rather than asset-based. Furthermore, the backward and forward linkages efforts are yet to capture the small-scale agricultural producers who comprise the majority of rural women. We note that the high value crops of rice and cassava are based on large-scale production and are predominantly the domain of men. This also impedes a participatory development process. Thus, to encourage more or greater participation by women, and to generate backward and forward linkages into the economy, government regulation of private enterprise is needed and called for.

- There is a need to review the provisions for land tenure in the Constitution to update them in line with development realities. The structural issue of land tenure prevails in Nigeria's agriculture sector. While a large percentage of land is arable and uncultivated, access to it for the purpose of increased agricultural production remains a challenge though the government (executive arm at all tiers) is custodian of the land for the common good of the people, in accordance with the land act of 1978 and subsequently the 1999 constitution provision. The significance of a land tenure system that operates in equity and fairness therefore cannot be overemphasised.
- There is a need for a tax policy review for the purpose of agricultural and rural development. It will require a careful review and mapping of all productive resources available for development purposes to rural producers and their communities, including human resources and social capital. A review of the existing system in the rural communities reveals the lack of an adequate tax base.

This could weaken the demand for infrastructure provision. Harnessing existing social capital that might harness this could be considered in the light of existence of an informal contributory system. Rural women have more confidence in their informal ethnic or social networks since they contribute to a financing of these institutions.

The tradition has been to create parallel institutions that are hardly sustainable after the expiration of development initiatives. It could be argued that this impacts on the government's ability to provide the requisite interventions in the rural areas. In addition, it highlights the need for rural agricultural design to take cognisance of existing "tangible and intangible assets" or social capital, especially in regard to credit, inputs and information provision.

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Annexes

Annex 1

REB Certificate

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Annex 2

Interview and FGD Guide Questions

Interview

1. How will you describe your knowledge and or engagement with rural agriculture in Nigeria?
2. In your view, how can agriculture influence development in Nigeria?
3. What role does agriculture play in rural development in Nigeria?
4. What are rural women's roles in the country's agriculture sector?
5. At what level will you rank their agricultural productivity and what indicators inform your classification?
6. What are the impediments to rural women's contribution and/or benefits from agriculture?
7. How should the above and who should address the above impediments?
8. What efforts currently target these impediments and have they been successful?
9. Could you speak to any of these initiatives?
10. How were these designed to respond to rural women farmers and what successes or challenges have been recorded?
11. How and when will rural agriculture be said to make positive contribution to poverty reduction in Nigeria?

Further Questions!

1. What are the structural factors involve in women's participation in farming?
2. What access do women have?
3. Have there been changes and at what periods of the nation's development and what factors could be responsible for this.
4. What are the obstacles in your opinion constraining rural women from benefiting at an economic level?

5. What are the socio-structural gender issues that need to be addressed to improve rural women participation in agriculture?

Focus Group Discussion

1. What productive assets are available to you (human, physical, financial, social and natural capitals)?
2. Do you have access to productive resources?
3. Does belonging to a group facilitate or increase chances to access farm inputs?
4. How much service do you have to exchange for solidarity?
5. Do you have an education? What kind (formal or vocational)? And has this impact on your farming?
6. Which agricultural initiative in your opinion has been successful and when was this introduced in your community?
7. What is your household size and how many dependants do you have?
8. Who is responsible for making provision in your household?
9. How is food, shelter, education and health requirements of your household members met?
10. How will you rate yourself in terms of poverty?
11. What is the household division of labour?
12. Who owns and/or who works on the farm?
13. What are the sources of household income?
14. Are there issues of migration in the community?
15. Are there opportunities to benefit from remittances?
16. What welfare programs in your opinion could help?
17. What are your sources of income other than farming?
18. Explain rural women's participation level in agriculture in your community
19. Are there socio-ethnic associations that provide a platform to access opportunities to exercise farming profession at an economic benefit level?
20. What work hours do women dedicate to farm and household work?
21. Do women farmers pay tax?

Annex 3

Consent Script, Consent and Feedback Letters

CONSENT SCRIPT FORM²⁵

Title of the Study: Rural Women's Participation in Agriculture: Implications for Poverty Reduction and Development in Nigeria

REB File #12-277

Josephine Obinyan, International Development Studies (IDS)

Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Phone +1902 430 3590; Email: jose_piio@yahoo.co.uk

1) Introduction

I am Josephine Obinyan and will like to request your participation in a thesis research I am embarking on in partial fulfilment of the requirement for a Master's degree in International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. I will be carrying out this research under the supervision of Dr Henry Veltmeyer, Professor in the above named University.

2) Explain purpose, requirements, benefits and risks of study and how data will be used

The goal of my research is to find out how rural women farmers can gain economically from farming. To achieve this, and in addition to reviewing the current practice applied by some projects in the country, I will engage volunteer farmer participants in a focus group discussion to obtain their views on the issue. The information derived from this discussion will be used to support argument in my thesis paper to be submitted to my school.

While this research might not directly benefit you, it is hoped that it will enable your better understanding of rural women farmers' challenges and also strengthen your advocacy skills in future rural agricultural initiatives planned for your community. The research will also add to the growing knowledge of the topic under investigation. The information derived from this

²⁵ **Depending on the Participant's request, this will be read in English or Pidgin English which is strictly oral and not written in Nigeria**

discussion will be treated with confidentiality and no names will be mentioned. Although it is difficult to guarantee your fellow participants' handling of information, participation in this study means you have agreed to treat information from fellow participants with confidentiality.

I am aware that the focus group discussion might bring to remembrance the hardship of rural farmers especially the women, for this I will be sensitive to your emotions. I therefore urge you to skip questions you might not be comfortable with during the discussion. In addition you can withdraw your participation at any time in this process.

3) Provide contact information

I will be in Nigeria from September 2012 to November 2012 should you have need to contact me, the telephone and email address will be **070 43218700** or jose_piio@yahoo.co.uk. Also do not hesitate to use the attached contact sheet for any related information after my departure from Nigeria.

In the event that you have ethical concerns of this research process which you deem have not been duly considered by me, please address them to the Chair, Saint Mary's University Ethics Board at ethics@smu.ca or call + 1 902 420-5728 as they are the approving and supervisory body on research ethics in my school and are out to ensure that my research does not do any ethical harm to participants.

4) Get oral consent from farmers

5) Start Focus Group Discussion.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of the Study: Rural Women's Participation in Agriculture: Implications for Poverty Reduction and Development in Nigeria

REB File # 12-277
Josephine Obinyan

International Development Studies (IDS)

Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax, NS B3H 3C3

Phone +1902 430 3590; Email: jose_piio@yahoo.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

My name is Josephine Obinyan an International Development Studies graduate student at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. As part of my master's thesis, I am conducting a research under the supervision of Dr Henry Veltmeyer, Professor in the above mentioned University. I hereby solicit your participation in this study.

PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH

The principal aim of the research is to study the participation of rural women in the agriculture sector as it relates to gains beyond subsistence. In the process, the impediments to their involvement in agriculture at this level will be isolated with a view to understand the related impacts on poverty reduction and development. Agriculture projects of national scope will be analysed and at the same time interviews and focus group discussions will be held with participants from policy level, initiative design level, and practitioners of rural agriculture. The research will therefore attempt to situate the current level of rural women participation in agriculture within sustainable rural livelihood approach to development in an effort to suggest an appropriate model that is beneficial to rural women farmers as well as contributing to rural and national development.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO TAKE PART? (OR WHO IS BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?)

For the purposes of this research, an invitation to participate is extended to individuals who work for institutions where agriculture strategies and/or policies are formulated or where agriculture initiatives are designed and implemented and also to the end users especially the rural women farmers. Also, data may be gathered from NGO's whose work is related.

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATING MEAN? (OR WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO?)

You will be invited to meet the interviewer for face to face interview for 30 minutes which may be prolonged to 40 minutes depending on the information you will have to provide or you will be invited to a focus group discussion with other participants (male and female farmers). Subgroup discussion can be arranged if this is preferred by any group of participant to ensure better information gathering. During group interview, the researcher will respect the privacy of participants but cannot guarantee that other member of the group will not disclose information discussed or identify members of the group to other

members outside. However, your consent to this interview will preclude agreement to management of information arising from the interviews or focus group discussion with discretion not to cause harm to other participants.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THIS RESEARCH?

Although participants will not directly benefit from this research, they will however be better positioned to understand and articulate issues and challenges of rural women participation in agriculture and this will be useful for future advocacies for project initiatives that might come up in their locality.

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