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National Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) and Grassroots Development in Nigeria, 2015–2025: Perceptions and Policy Implications.

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ABSTRACT

Between 2015 and 2025, Nigeria implemented a range of agricultural policies and strategies intended to improve productivity, strengthen food security, create employment, promote agro-industrial development, enhance rural livelihoods and diversify the economy. Prominent among these interventions were the Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) 2016–2020, commonly known as the Green Alternative, amongst other programmes and policy strategies. This article examines the nature of the Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) 2016–2020, assesses its perceived contribution to grassroots development and identifies strategies and policy implications for improving agricultural development in Nigeria. The study is anchored on Endogenous Development Theory, which emphasizes the mobilization of local resources, knowledge, institutions and productive capacities by local actors. A quantitative descriptive survey design was adopted. The study covered selected communities across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones and used a multistage sampling technique. The target population was about 1,000 respondents, while a total of 827 respondents constituted the achieved sample. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, with a criterion mean of 3.00. The empirical finding for the Agricultural Promotion Policy dimension produced a grand mean of 2.97, which was marginally below the criterion mean of 3.00. The finding indicates that respondents generally did not perceive the agricultural policies as having generated sufficiently strong grassroots-development outcomes, although the result was close to the acceptance threshold and therefore indicates a mixed or moderate perception rather than complete rejection of policy relevance. The article argues that the major challenge is not the absence of agricultural policy but the gap between policy formulation, implementation, local accessibility and the conversion of agricultural interventions into sustainable grassroots economic outcomes. Various recommendations were made such decentralized agricultural governance, provision of adequate rural agricultural infrastructure, etc.

Keywords: Agriculture, Grassroots development, Agricultural Policy, Endogenous Development, Policy Implications

1. Introduction

Agriculture remains a critical sector in Nigeria’s economic and rural development, contributing approximately 24 percent to the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector is predominantly characterized by smallholder production, with small-scale farmers estimated to constitute about 80 percent of the farming population and contribute roughly 90 percent of agricultural output. The prominence of smallholder agriculture makes the sector particularly relevant to grassroots development because farming represents an important source of food, employment, household income, and livelihood security for communities across the country. Nigeria’s agricultural activities are largely concentrated on the cultivation of major food crops, including cassava, maize, millet, rice, sorghum, and yam, which together account for approximately 65 percent of cultivated land. Livestock production also forms an important component of the agricultural economy, with cattle production being particularly prominent in the northern regions of the country (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2025).

So, agriculture occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's development process because of its contribution to food production, employment, household livelihoods, raw materials, rural income and economic diversification. Its significance extends beyond the farm because agricultural production is connected to transportation, processing, storage, marketing, manufacturing and numerous other economic activities.

Nigeria's agricultural policy environment has undergone several changes in response to persistent challenges. The Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) 2016–2020, also known as the Green Alternative, was developed as a successor to the Agricultural Transformation Agenda and sought to address food production, agricultural productivity, private-sector participation, employment and economic diversification. The policy was intended to build an agricultural and agribusiness ecosystem in which government provided an enabling environment while farmers, investors and other market actors played stronger productive roles (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2016).

The Agriculture Promotion Policy identified major structural constraints including inadequate access to land, weak input systems, poor access to knowledge and extension, inadequate production management, storage and processing constraints, weak marketing systems and inadequate quality standards. Its approach therefore extended beyond increasing production to improving the broader agricultural value chain (FMARD, 2016).

The period under review subsequently witnessed further policy development. The Agricultural Sector Food Security and Nutrition Strategy 2016–2025 extended the policy focus toward food security and nutrition, while the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP) 2022–2027 shifted greater attention toward technology, innovation, mechanization, research, extension, digital agriculture, climate resilience, value chains, agricultural finance, irrigation and the inclusion of women and young people (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2022).

The evolution from APP to NATIP therefore represents a movement from a predominantly productivity and market-oriented framework toward a broader technology-, innovation-, resilience- and inclusion-oriented agricultural development strategy.

However, the existence of agricultural policies does not automatically guarantee grassroots transformation. The FAO's 2025 agricultural policy monitoring review found that although nominal public agricultural spending increased between 2015 and 2021, agricultural expenditure remained approximately 2% of federal expenditure, considerably below the continental commitment associated with the CAADP framework (Nwafor et al., 2025). The same review identified the need for greater policy coherence and improved alignment of agricultural interventions with NATIP and broader agricultural-development objectives.

It is against this background that this article examines the Agricultural Promotion Policy and grassroots development in Nigeria between 2015 and 2025, with particular emphasis on the perceptions generated from the empirical study.

2. Background to the Study

The Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) was introduced following the recognition that previous interventions had not fully resolved the country's food-production and agricultural-export challenges. The policy sought to "refresh" the agricultural strategy by concentrating on food security, productivity, private investment, agribusiness development and export competitiveness (FMARD, 2016).

Basically, the Agriculture Promotion Policy, commonly associated with the Green Alternative, represented a major attempt by the Federal Government of Nigeria to reposition agriculture as a central component of economic diversification, food security, employment creation, and rural development.

The policy was designed within the broader international development context of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 2, which focuses on ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

The APP emerged partly from lessons associated with the Agricultural Transformation Agenda and sought to develop agriculture beyond subsistence production toward a more integrated agribusiness system. Its vision was to create an agricultural economy capable of generating sustainable income, employment, domestic food supplies, and export opportunities (Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development [FMARD], 2016).

The policy placed emphasis on several interconnected objectives. These included:

- improving agricultural productivity;
- strengthening agricultural value chains;
- increasing employment;
- enhancing food security;
- promoting responsible resource use;
- improving food quality and safety;
- expanding agricultural exports;
- increasing private-sector participation; and
- strengthening institutional coordination between federal and state governments (FMARD, 2016).

The policy also identified food security, import substitution, job creation, and economic diversification as important strategic priorities. The policy also emphasized priority commodities and value chains. The World Bank observed that the APP sought to promote productivity enhancement, attract private-sector investment and realign agricultural institutions to improve the business environment for agriculture (World Bank, 2017). The focus was therefore both developmental and commercial, with the expectation that stronger agricultural productivity would contribute to employment creation, poverty reduction and economic diversification.

The Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) was consequently different from a narrowly defined production policy. It viewed agriculture as a complete economic system involving farmers, processors, investors, financial institutions, markets, researchers, government institutions and communities. The policy explicitly recognized the importance of stakeholder participation and expected farmers, investors, communities and other market actors to contribute to its implementation (FMARD, 2016).

The policy's emphasis on smallholder farmers was especially important for grassroots development. Smallholders constitute a major component of Nigeria's agricultural production system, and policies that fail to reach them directly may have limited implications for rural livelihoods. ActionAid Nigeria's assessment of the APP emphasized the centrality of smallholder women farmers and argued that the policy's success depended on strengthening the productive capacity and access of small-scale farmers (ActionAid Nigeria, 2018).

The agricultural policy environment subsequently expanded. In addition to APP, government interventions included fertilizer and input programmes, agricultural credit schemes, irrigation initiatives, value-chain programmes, rice development interventions, livestock strategies and agro-processing initiatives. More recently, NATIP has emphasized technology, innovation, climate-smart agriculture, mechanization, extension and stronger agricultural value chains (FAO, 2025).

Thus, the period 2015–2025 can be characterized as one of policy expansion and policy transition. The central challenge is whether this expansion has translated into corresponding improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of rural communities.

Agriculture and Grassroots Development

Development is understood as a multidimensional process through which individuals and communities experience improvements in productive capacity, income, employment, infrastructure, social services, participation, dignity, security, and quality of life. This interpretation provides an appropriate basis for evaluating grassroots development because the impact of national policies should ultimately be assessed according to the changes they generate in the lives and productive capacities of local populations.

The term grassroots generally refer to the foundational or local level of a society. It is commonly associated with communities, households, local organizations, small producers, informal enterprises, farmers, artisans, and other groups operating close to the base of society. Grassroots should not, however, be treated as an exact synonym for rural. Rurality has geographical, demographic, economic, administrative, and sociocultural dimensions. The distinction between rural and urban areas varies across countries and may also change over time (Madu, 2010; Dijkstra et al., 2020).

Agriculture occupies a central position in Nigeria’s economic and rural development landscape, contributing approximately 24 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector is largely characterized by small-scale production, with smallholder farmers constituting about 80 percent of the farming population and accounting for an estimated 90 percent of agricultural output. This structure makes agricultural development particularly important to grassroots communities, where farming serves not only as a source of food but also as a major means of employment, household income generation, and livelihood sustenance. Nigeria’s agricultural production is concentrated substantially around staple crops, including cassava, maize, millet, rice, sorghum, and yam, which collectively occupy approximately 65 percent of cultivated agricultural land. Livestock production, particularly cattle rearing in the northern part of the country, also constitutes an important component of the national agricultural economy.

The significance of agriculture extends beyond its direct contribution to GDP because of its strong linkages with employment, household welfare, food security, and local economic activity. Agriculture provides employment for nearly half of Nigeria’s working population, while an additional proportion of the workforce is engaged in off-farm activities associated with the wider agri-food system. Resultantly, changes in agricultural productivity, access to productive resources, market opportunities, infrastructure, and agricultural support services can have substantial implications for the socioeconomic conditions of rural and peri-urban populations. In this context, agricultural policy is not merely an instrument for increasing national food production; it can also function as a mechanism for stimulating local economic activity and improving the material conditions of households at the grassroots level.

Given the predominance of smallholder producers in Nigeria’s agricultural system, the effectiveness of such interventions has direct implications for grassroots development. Where agricultural policies successfully improve productivity and market participation, they can potentially contribute to increased household incomes, employment creation, food security, rural enterprise development, and poverty reduction.

Hence, the importance of the Agricultural Promotion Policy can therefore be examined in terms of its capacity to translate national agricultural objectives into tangible improvements in local communities. The relevance of the policy is particularly evident in the extent to which smallholder farmers and rural enterprises can participate in agricultural value chains and benefit from government interventions. Such participation may strengthen local productive capacity by enabling communities to mobilize their agricultural, human, social, and economic resources for development.

However, the existence of a comprehensive agricultural policy does not automatically guarantee corresponding improvements in grassroots socioeconomic conditions. The actual developmental effect of agricultural interventions depends on factors such as policy implementation, institutional capacity, access to finance and inputs, infrastructure, extension services, market accessibility, transparency in programme delivery, and the participation of intended beneficiaries.

Consequently, assessing the relationship between the Agricultural Promotion Policy and grassroots development requires attention not only to the policy's stated objectives but also to the extent to which its interventions have reached local producers and translated into measurable socioeconomic outcomes. This provides an important basis for examining the perceptions, implementation experiences, and developmental implications of Nigeria's agricultural policy interventions at the grassroots level.

3. Aim and Objectives of the Study

3.1 Aim

The aim of the study is to examine the nature and perceived grassroots development impact of national agricultural promotion policies implemented in Nigeria between 2015 and 2025 and to identify strategies for strengthening their contribution to sustainable grassroots development.

3.2 Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the nature and evolution of national agricultural policies implemented in Nigeria between 2015 and 2025;
2. assess respondents' perceptions of the contribution of agricultural policies to grassroots development;
3. examine the extent to which agricultural policies address the productive and socioeconomic needs of grassroots communities;
4. identify implementation gaps that limit the grassroots impact of agricultural policies;
5. examine the implications of the findings for agricultural policy and grassroots development; and
6. propose strategies for strengthening agricultural policies as instruments of sustainable grassroots development.

4. Theoretical Framework: Endogenous Development Theory

This study is anchored on **Endogenous Development Theory** majorly advanced by scholars such as Romer, Lucas, and Uzawa, whose work challenged models in which long-term economic growth was largely explained by external or exogenous technological change (Romer, 1986, 1994; Lucas, 1988; Uzawa, 1965).

Endogenous Development Theory emphasizes development from within a locality through the mobilization of resources, knowledge, institutions, skills, social relationships and entrepreneurial capacities available within the community. The theory challenges development approaches that treat local communities merely as passive recipients of externally designed policies. Instead, it regards local actors as important agents in identifying problems, mobilizing resources and constructing development solutions.

The theory is particularly relevant to agricultural development in Nigeria because agriculture is deeply embedded in local economic, social and ecological systems. Farmers possess local knowledge about soils, rainfall patterns, cropping systems, indigenous varieties, livestock management and community institutions. Rural communities also possess social networks, traditional institutions, labour resources and local markets that can contribute to agricultural development.

An agricultural policy based on endogenous development should therefore not simply distribute inputs from the national government to farmers. It should strengthen the capacity of farmers and communities to determine their own productive priorities and to mobilize local resources alongside external support. For example, an agricultural community with comparative advantages in cassava production may require processing equipment, storage facilities, market access and technical knowledge rather than simply fertilizer distribution. A rice-producing community may require irrigation, improved seed, mechanization, processing and structured markets. A livestock-producing community may require veterinary services, grazing and water infrastructure, improved breeds and market facilities.

The theory therefore suggests that agricultural policies should combine national coordination with local participation. Federal and state governments should provide enabling policies, infrastructure, finance, research and technical support, while local communities should participate in identifying priorities, organizing productive groups, managing local resources and determining the most appropriate agricultural interventions.

5. Nature of Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) in Nigeria, 2015–2025

The Agriculture Promotion Policy, commonly referred to as the Green Alternative, constituted the principal national agricultural policy framework during the 2016–2020 period. It was developed to build on the Agricultural Transformation Agenda while addressing continuing problems of domestic food production and agricultural exports (FMARD, 2016).

The policy adopted three broad organizing themes: productivity enhancement, crowding in private-sector investment and institutional realignment. These themes were intended to address weaknesses across agricultural production and value chains (FMARD, 2016).

Productivity enhancement focused on issues including land access, soil fertility, inputs, information and knowledge, production management, storage, processing and marketing. The intention was to increase productivity while reducing post-harvest losses and improving market access.

The second major dimension was private-sector participation. The policy recognized that government alone could not finance and manage the transformation of the agricultural sector. It therefore sought to create an environment capable of attracting private investment into agriculture and agribusiness (World Bank, 2017).

The third dimension was institutional reform. The policy envisaged a stronger regulatory and facilitative role for government institutions while allowing market actors to take a more prominent role in agricultural production and investment.

From a grassroots perspective, the APP was significant because it recognized the importance of farmers, communities and local agricultural systems. Its effectiveness, however, depended heavily on implementation capacity, access to resources and the ability to translate national policy priorities into local agricultural outcomes. The APP sought to strengthen storage, processing and marketing, while subsequent interventions have increasingly promoted agro-industrial development and value-chain integration (FMARD, 2016; FAO, 2025). This approach is especially important for grassroots development because local processing can create employment opportunities beyond farming and reduce the tendency for communities to export raw agricultural products without capturing higher-value stages of production.

Table 1: History of Agricultural Development Policies and Programmes in Nigeria

S/N	Developmental Policy/Programme/Project	Date	Development Areas
1	Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs)	1972	Extension of supply of inputs and infrastructure
2	Reorganization of Agricultural Research Institute Decree 33 Research Institutes Establishment Order National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) Decrees	1973-1975	Emphasis on agriculture research and the establishment of many research institutes
3	National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP)	1975	Food production, supply of inputs and new technology to farmers
4	Tree Crop Programme	1975	Tree Crop Production
5	River Basin Development Authorities (RDBAs) Decree 25 (Amended 1977, 1979	1976	Direct government involvement in agricultural production activities, provision of water and irrigation to farmer settlements, supply of fertilizers and other

S/N	Developmental Policy/Programme/Project	Date	Development Areas
6	Farm Input Subsidies and Fertilizer Subsidies Programme	1976	Supply of fertilizers and other inputs
7	Operation Feed the Nation	1976	Trying to make everybody a farmer (through subsidies on) fertilizers, livestock products and inputs, seeds etc., to increase production
8	Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB)	1973	Establishment of Guaranteed Loans and other credits to farmers
	The Rural Banking Scheme	1977	
	Agricultural Credit Schem	1977	
9	The Green Revolution Programme	1980	Nigeria's food production plan
10	Agricultural Policy Initiative and Reforms Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)	1986	Construction and repair of rural roads, provision of water and electricity to rural communities Reduction in the number of River Basin Authorities
11	National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)	1992	For land clearing and mechanization
12	State-wide Agricultural Development Projects (SADPs) Support for Farmers Associations and the formation of Federation of Farmers Association of Nigeria (FOFAN)	1992	Engagement of small scale farmers Reduction of export of commodities Promotion and Adoption of new technologies by new farmers. Encouragement of co-operatives formation and pressure groups Government engagement in direct food production
13	Agricultural Policies under the Obasanjo Administration Restoration of fertilizer subsidies at 25% Establishment of Department of Fertilizer, FMA Food Security and Poverty Alleviation Programmes	1999-2002	Encouragement of food production by small and medium-scale farmers
14	Agricultural policies under Vision 20-2020	2007-to date	Serve as youth employment spinner (especially youths in rural areas), improving proving productivity in the agricultural sector

S/N	Developmental Policy/Programme/Project	Date	Development Areas
15	Fadama, 1, 11, and 111	2000 till date	Creating agricultural irrigation schemes across rural communities in Nigeria
16	Anchor Borrowers Programme	17 Nov, 2015	Create a linkage between anchor companies involved in the processing and small holder farmers of the required key agricultural commodities Provision of farm inputs in cash and kind (for farm labour) to small holder farmers to boost production of these commodities Payment at harvest to the small holder farmers' account by the Anchor (Agro Processeor) the cash equivalent for commodities supplied.
17	Presidential Fertilizer Initiative	Dec, 2016	Supply of fertilizers to farmers on P-P-P led by the NSIA, Fertilizers Producers and Suppliers Association of Nigeria
18	Presidential Economic Diversification Initiative	July, 2017	The revival of moribund agro-processing industries by facilitating new investments, reducing regulatory bottlenecks and enabling access to credit
19	Food Security Council	26 March, 2018	Developing sustainable solutions to farmer-herders clashes. Handling the impact of Climate change and desertification on farmlands, grazing areas, lakes, rivers, water bodies. Oil spillage and its effects on the Niger Delta Fishing Communities Piracy and Banditry Agricultural Research Institutions, Extension Services Tackle Smuggling Regional and Global policies on Food Security in Nigeria
20	National Agricultural Technology and Innovation		NATIP aims to boost agricultural growth and resilience for food security and job creation. Its **10 pillars** focus on: Strengthening agricultural research Developing priority value chains Mechanization Enhanced extension services

S/N	Developmental Policy/Programme/Project	Date	Development Areas
	Policy (NATIP), 2022–2027.	Launched in August 2022	Livestock development Fisheries and aquaculture Establishment of the Agricultural Development Fund Irrigation and rural infrastructure Nutrition and export improvement Digital and climate-smart agriculture Inclusion of women and youth Strengthened agricultural lending and insurance
21.	Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZ) 2022-2027 Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria. Vision 20-2020 Blueprint and Collation by Author.	Launched on 24th October, 2022	Part of a strategic initiative in Nigeria aimed at promoting agricultural industrialization. The concept involves creating designated zones where agribusinesses can operate efficiently, benefiting from infrastructure, services, and policy support. Major activities include; Infrastructure Development Clusters of Agribusinesses Access to Finance Technology Transfer Socio-Economic Impact

Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria. Vision 20-2020 Blueprint and Collation by Author.

Table 2: Thematic Interventions Employed in Achieving the Agricultural Promotion Policy

Productivity Enhancements	Crowding in Private Sector Investment	FMARD Institutional Realignment
1. Access to Land	9. Access to Finance	11. Institutional Setting and Roles
2. Soil Fertility	10. Agribusiness Investment Development	12. Youth and Women
3. Access to Information and knowledge		13. Infrastructure
4. Access to Inputs		14. Climate Smart Agriculture
5. Production Management		15. Research & Innovation
6. Storage		16. Food, Consumption and Nutrition Security

Productivity Enhancements	Crowding in Private Sector Investment	FMARD Institutional Realignment
7. Processing		
8. Marketing & Trade		

Source: Agriculture Promotion Policy, 2016

Table 2 shows the various intervention strategies embarked upon the Nigerian government and its stakeholders in implementing the Agricultural Promotion Policy in the country.

Table 3: Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies: Public Expenditure.

Sector	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2020 (%)	2021 (%)	Average (%)
Crops	80	79	84	78	81	71	81	79
Livestock	11	11	8	13	10	12	9	10
Forestry	7	7	5	4	5	9	3	6
Fisheries	2	3	3	5	5	8	7	5

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization (2024).

Table 3 shows the various percentages of public expenditure on the agricultural sector.

Table 3: Objectives and Targets of Agriculture and Food Security

Objectives	Key Performance Indicators	Baseline	Target
Reduce post-harvest losses	The total amount of post-harvest from key value chains	60 percent for all agricultural output	30 percent of all agricultural output
Build a sustainable food production	Total arable land under cultivation	34 million hectares	42 million hectares systems
Increase agricultural export volume	Share of agricultural exports in total exports	4.37 percent	6.12 percent
Increase female participation in agriculture.	Share of women in the population of women 15 years and above.	19.6 percent	25 percent
Improve national food security ranking	Increase National food security ranking	92 out of 104 countries 13 out of 28 sub-Saharan countries	Top 50 in the in global ranking to top 3 in SSA
Increase private sector investment in the agriculture sector	Bank credit allocation to agricultural activities/sector	5.1 percent of total private sector credit.	10 percent of total sector credit
Increase food self-reliance through increased productivity	Share of foods in total imports (%)	20 percent	15 percent

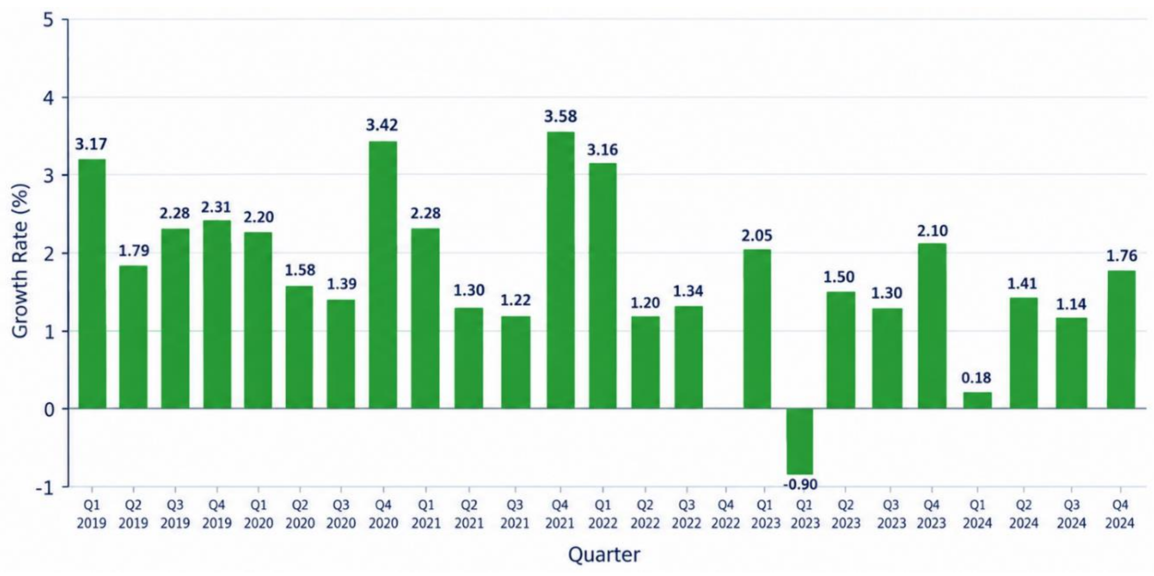
Sources: NBS (2023) & FMARD (2024)

Table 4: Comparative Impact Table: 7 Key Agricultural Extension Programs in Nigeria (2025-2026)

Program Name	Main Objective	Modern Method Introduced	Digital Innovation Used	Estimated Farmers Benefited (2025)	Climate-Smart Practices Implemented	Est. Environmental Impact
NAERLS	Co-ordinate national extension/research linkages	Farmer field schools, demo plots	e-Learning, SMS advisory	6 million+	Climate-resilient crops, water-smart farming	High
ADPs	Local state-level training/services	Seed supply, mechanization outreach	Geo-advisory apps, WhatsApp groups	5 million+	Soil fertility, integrated pest management	High
E-wallet Input Schemes	Digital input subsidies/advisory	Input vouchers, digitized supply chains	Mobile wallet, USSD	3 million+	Efficient fertilizer, adaptive irrigation	Medium
Private Agri-Advisory	Tech-driven, tailored support	App monitoring, remote diagnostics	AI, Satellite, IVR	2.5 million+	Precision farming, climate risk alerts	High
NGO-led Initiatives	Empower vulnerable/smallholder farmers	Business skills, group learning	e-Learning, SMS polling	1 million+	Agroforestry, conservation, organic training	Medium
University/Research Outreaches	Grassroots research dissemination	On-farm trials, field days	Virtual workshop, content, libraries	1 million+	CSA tech evaluation/water management	Medium
Community-Based Extension Agents	Community peer extension	Peer demo, local youth training	Mobile extension toolkit, WhatsApp			

Source: Farmonaut, 2025

Figure 1: Agricultural Sector Growth Rate in Nigeria, Q1 2019–Q4 2024



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2025)

The chart shows considerable quarterly variation in agricultural-sector growth over the six-year period:

- Highest growth: Q4 2021, at 3.58%.
- Second-highest: Q4 2020, at 3.42%.
- Lowest growth: Q1 2023, at −0.90%, indicating contraction.
- Growth was also relatively weak in Q1 2024 (0.18%).
- The sector recovered from the negative Q1 2023 figure, recording 1.50%, 1.30%, and 2.10% in Q2–Q4 2023.
- In 2024, the supplied year-on-year series shows growth of 0.18%, 1.41%, 1.14%, and 1.76% from Q1 to Q4.

Table 5: Implementation of Agriculture Promotion Policy in Areas of Study

Area	**Implementation**
Afaka Community, Kaduna State	• Creating organic and inorganic fertilizer accessibility for soil fertility, • Local demonstration and trials • Crop Diversification initiatives such as tree planting and apiculture (bee farming) • Agricultural grants and input distributions (like the recent distribution of over 300 truckloads of fertilizer to 100,000 farmers in Kaduna State). • Agro-processing development and commercialization to create transition from subsistence farming to agripreneurship, significantly increasing household earnings.
Akwanga Community, Nasarawa State	• The distribution of agricultural machinery (like tractors) and subsidized farm inputs to shift local farmers from purely subsistence methods to more mechanized, commercial production • Agripreneurship policies to create localized employment opportunities, and to reduce rural-to-urban youth migration Input Subsidies such as the distribution of thousands of bags of fertilizer to small-scale farmers in Akwanga wards • The establishment of local packaging and processing facilities to make the community a commercial hub. • Active lobbying of the State government by local stakeholders for increased budgetary allocations to agriculture and improved rural infrastructure
Bolori II Community, **Borno State.**	• Agricultural promotion policies and state intervention programmes in the Bolori II ward of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council to drive vital economic and nutritional impacts and build a transition from post-conflict food reliance to community resilience • Resilience and Food Security initiatives focused on providing productive assets, subsidised farm inputs (like NPK fertilizer and improved wheat seeds), and water pumps to help households mitigate the chronic hunger and malnutrition caused by the Boko Haram insurgency • Income Generation and Livelihoods support through the year-round

	irrigation schemes to offset the effects of drought and enable continuous production of high-value crops like wheat, vegetables, and peppers • Youth and School Engagement through a pilot site for agricultural training programmes at a Junior Secondary School designed by Plan International and the EU. The policy focus is to get youth involvement in agriculture, providing garden supplements and teaching essential agribusiness skills to students.
Nibo Community, Anambra State	• Input Subsidies & Output Growth such as the free and subsidized distributions of improved seedlings (like cassava cuttings and maize) to increase small-scale farm productivity and stabilized local food prices. • Value Chain Expansion and participation in state-assisted programs (such as the Value Chain Development Programme - SVCDP) enable farmers to transition from subsistence farming to commercial agripreneurship, creating supplementary income streams through local crop processing • Poverty Alleviation by empowering vulnerable groups (including rural women and widows) with agricultural grants and micro-loans
Oshodi, Lagos	• Establishment of Mid-Level Agro-Produce Hubs and Last-Mile Outlets that streamlines food distribution, moving farm produce directly into Oshodi and surrounding markets • Food Security and Affordability (Mixed) such as the *Ounje Eko* subsidized food markets and price control, reducing the cost of staples (like rice, beans, and vegetables) for low-income households in Oshodi • Agripreneurship and Employment like the Lagos Agripreneurship Programme (LAP*)* and initiatives like Lagos Agrithon provide agrifood startups and youth in the community with grants and training. • Due to its state as a commercial hub, Oshodi cannot support primary crop cultivation, rendering the community entirely dependent on imports from other regions
Umuaja, Delta State	• Heavy focus on cassava cultivation, with 650+ hectares utilized, alongside small-scale livestock support, to drive food sustainability, create jobs, and supply protein • Vast lands extending around Umuaja and Umutu serve as hubs for extensive cassava cultivation, shifting the area's agricultural focus toward large-scale crop production. • Farmers in Ukwuani LGA can access agricultural intervention funds via the Delta State Investments Development Agency (DIDA), which focuses on harnessing agricultural natural resources and concessions. • The State Ministry of Agriculture facilitates the provision of high-yielding crop varieties and fertilizer to smallholder farmers to boost yield.

Source: Compiled by Author, 2025

6. Study Area

The study covered selected communities distributed across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. The geographical spread was designed to capture perceptions of national policy implementation across different social, economic and ecological environments.

The **North-Central** zone was represented by Akwanga in Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The **North-East** was represented by Bolori II in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, Borno State. The **North-West** was represented by Afaka in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The **South-East** was represented by Nibo in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The **South-South** was represented by Umuaja in Ukwuani Local Government Area of Delta State. The **South-West** was represented by Oshodi in Oshodi-Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos State.

The selection of communities across the six geopolitical zones was important because agricultural systems differ substantially across Nigeria. The dominant agricultural activities, resource endowments, infrastructure conditions, market structures and security environments vary between regions. A national policy can therefore produce different outcomes depending on the local context in which it is implemented.

The study's geographical coverage consequently supports the interpretation of agricultural policy from a grassroots perspective rather than from a single-region experience.

7. Population of the Study

The study population was structured around respondents drawn from the six geopolitical zones.

The choice of a geographically distributed population was consistent with the objective of examining national policies from the perspective of communities located in different parts of Nigeria.

Table 6: Population of the Study

Geopolitical Zone	State	LGA	Community	Population
North Central	Nasarawa	Agwanga	Akwanga	37,473
North West	Kaduna	Igabi	Afaka	500,000
North East	Borno	Maid. Met. Council (MMC)	Bolori II	138,800
South South	Delta	Ukwuani	Umuaja	3,791
South East	Anambra	Awka South	Nibo	11,897
South West	Lagos	Oshodi-Isolo	Oshodi	931,000
			Total	1,622,961

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2023); World Population Review (2026); City Population (2026) & Umuaja Development Association (2026)

8. Sample and Sampling Technique

The study achieved a sample of **827 respondents** distributed across six selected communities:

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by Geopolitical Zones and Communities

Geopolitical Zone	State	LGA	Community	Number	Percentage (%)
North Central	Nasarawa	Akwanga	Akwanga	126	17.1
North East	Borno	Maiduguri Metropolitan Council	Bolori II	105	11.5
North West	Kaduna	Igabi	Afaka	115	17.6

Geopolitical Zone	State	LGA	Community	Number	Percentage (%)
South East	Anambra	Awka South	Nibo	112	12.3
South South	Delta	Ukwuani	Umuaja	204	22.3
South West	Lagos	Oshodi/Isolo	Oshodi	165	19.2
			Total	827	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

A **multistage sampling technique** was employed. The sampling process involved geographical selection at different levels, moving from geopolitical zones to states, local government areas, communities and finally individual respondents.

The multistage approach was appropriate because the study covered geographically dispersed populations. It provided a practical mechanism for achieving geographical representation while allowing the researcher to concentrate data collection within selected communities.

The sample size of 1,000 respondents was determined by using the Cochran's Sample Size Formula in simple random sampling technique,

Cochran's Sample Size Formula is used to compute an ideal sample size for a desired level of precision, it is recommended to be used for studies with infinite populations (Cochran, 1977).

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

where;

e = the margin of error (0.031)

p = the fraction of the population that displays the attribute (0.5)

z = the z-value (1.98)

$$= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.000961}$$

= 999.37

= 1,000 approx

9. Research Method

The study adopted a **quantitative descriptive survey design**. The design was appropriate because the objective was to measure respondents' perceptions of the implementation and impact of selected national policies using standardized quantitative indicators.

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed around the study variables and included items measuring perceptions of the selected national policies and their implications for grassroots development.

The instrument underwent validity assessment through expert review, while reliability was assessed using an appropriate reliability procedure, including Cronbach's alpha. Ethical considerations included informed participation, confidentiality and appropriate treatment of respondents' information.

The study was therefore designed to generate measurable evidence concerning how national agricultural policies were perceived at community level.

10. Method of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using **frequency distributions, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations**. These techniques enabled the researcher to summarize respondents' perceptions and determine the general direction of their responses.

A **criterion mean of 3.00** was adopted for decision-making. Accordingly:

- **Mean ≥ 3.00:** Accepted
- **Mean < 3.00:** Rejected

The mean was used to determine whether respondents generally agreed or disagreed with the statements measuring the policy variable, while standard deviation was used to assess the dispersion of responses around the mean.

The study also computed aggregate or grand means to provide an overall assessment of each policy dimension.

11. Findings of the Study

11.1 Perception of Agricultural Promotion Policies

Table 8: Impact of the Agricultural Promotion Policy on Grassroots Development

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	Improved agricultural productivity in rural communities	235	123	26	385	58
2.	Increased access to farm inputs and resources	242	107	45	286	147
3.	Improved income for farmers in local communities	278	127	39	207	176
4.	There is poverty reduction in rural communities	107	124	83	283	230
5.	Availability of machinery and agro-processing facilities	122	113	28	306	258
6.	Rural-urban migration has greatly reduced	141	193	54	293	146
7.	Rural livelihoods are economically self-reliant	193	74	79	302	372

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork (2025)

The findings reveal a mixed but largely negative assessment of the impact of agricultural policy on grassroots development in Nigeria.

For agricultural productivity, a combined 42.5% (SA = 27.9%, A = 14.6%) of respondents agreed that productivity has improved, while a higher proportion, 52.6% (SD = 45.7%, D = 6.9%), disagreed. This suggests that although agricultural output may have improved in certain contexts, a majority of respondents do not perceive widespread or sustained productivity gains at the grassroots level.

Similarly, on access to farm inputs and resources, 41.5% of respondents expressed agreement, whereas 51.5% expressed disagreement. This indicates persistent constraints in the availability and accessibility of agricultural support inputs such as fertilizers, credit facilities, and mechanized tools. Regarding farmers’ income, 48.2% of respondents (SA = 33.1%, A = 15.1%) agreed that incomes have improved. However, 45.6% disagreed, suggesting that income gains are uneven and not broadly experienced across rural farming communities.

In contrast, perceptions of poverty reduction were largely negative, with 60.9% (SD = 33.6%, D = 27.3%) disagreeing that agricultural policy has reduced poverty in rural areas. Only 27.4% expressed agreement, indicating limited effectiveness of agricultural policy in addressing rural poverty. A similar pattern was observed regarding agro-processing facilities and machinery availability, where 67.1% of respondents disagreed that such facilities are adequately available. This highlights infrastructural and technological gaps within the agricultural sector.

On rural–urban migration, responses were more balanced, with 39.8% agreeing that migration has reduced, while 52.3% disagreed. This suggests that rural push factors such as unemployment and poor infrastructure continue to influence migration patterns. Also, on rural economic self-reliance, a substantial 80.1% (SD = 35.9%, D = 44.2%) of respondents disagreed that rural livelihoods are economically self-sustaining. This indicates that agricultural policies have not significantly achieved the objective of rural economic independence.

Table 9: Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis of Responses on Impact of Agricultural Promotion Policy, 2015

S/N	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Improved agricultural productivity in rural communities	3.11	1.33	Accepted
2.	Increased access to farm inputs and resources	3.01	1.46	Accepted
3.	Improved income for farmers in local communities	3.15	1.51	Accepted
4.	There is poverty reduction in rural communities	2.39	1.39	Rejected
5.	Availability of machinery and agro-processing facilities	2.44	1.42	Rejected
6.	Rural–urban migration has greatly reduced	2.62	1.43	Rejected
7.	Rural livelihoods are economically self-reliant	2.30	1.53	Rejected
	Grand Mean	**2.60**		**Rejected**
	Grand Standard Deviation	**1.41**		

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

The principal finding relating to agricultural policy was a **grand mean of 2.60**.

Decision

The grand mean value of **2.60** falls below the criterion mean of **3.00**, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that the selected national policies have significantly improved grassroots development outcomes in Nigeria.

The grand standard deviation of 1.41 indicates a moderate variation in respondents' opinions across the sampled geopolitical zones and communities. This suggests that although the dominant perception was negative, respondents differed moderately in their assessment of the extent to which national policies have contributed to grassroots development.

The respondents perceived the impact of selected national policies on grassroots development as generally inadequate. Although some aspects of agricultural development recorded moderate positive responses, the broader indicators of socio-economic transformation at the grassroots level remained weak.

Specifically, improved agricultural productivity in rural communities obtained a mean score of 3.11, indicating that respondents acknowledged some positive contributions of agricultural policies toward enhancing farming activities. Similarly, increased access to farm inputs and resources recorded a mean score of 3.01, while improved income for farmers recorded 3.15. These findings suggest that agricultural intervention programmes may have contributed moderately to agricultural output and farmers' welfare.

However, broader developmental outcomes such as poverty reduction, infrastructure support, economic self-reliance, and reduction in rural–urban migration recorded low mean scores below the acceptable threshold. Poverty reduction in rural communities recorded a mean score of 2.39, while the availability of machinery and agro-processing facilities recorded 2.44.

Furthermore, rural–urban migration reduction and economic self-reliance recorded mean scores of 2.62 and 2.30 respectively, indicating that respondents did not perceive significant improvement in the socio-economic stability of rural communities.

Therefore, it implies that while selected national policies may have achieved limited progress in agricultural productivity, such gains have not translated into comprehensive grassroots development outcomes. This suggests the persistence of structural challenges such as inadequate implementation, insufficient infrastructural support, poor funding mechanisms, and weak policy sustainability.

12. Discussion of the Findings

12.1 Agricultural Policy and Grassroots Productivity

The purpose of agricultural promotion policy is ultimately to improve productive capacity. The APP sought to increase agricultural productivity by addressing constraints relating to inputs, land, soil fertility, information, production management and market systems (FMARD, 2016).

The study's grand mean of 2.60 suggests that respondents did not perceive these interventions as producing a sufficiently strong overall improvement in grassroots agricultural development.

One possible interpretation is that agricultural interventions may have reached some farmers without being sufficiently comprehensive to transform the broader production environment. Productivity depends on the interaction of several inputs. For example, improved seed without adequate fertilizer may produce limited benefits; fertilizer without irrigation may be constrained by rainfall; production without storage may lead to post-harvest losses; and increased production without market access may result in weak farm-gate prices.

This reinforces the importance of integrated agricultural policy. The policy should not treat agricultural inputs, finance, infrastructure, technology and markets as independent interventions. They should operate as interconnected components of a productive system.

12.2 Agricultural Policy and Smallholder Farmers

The importance of smallholder farmers to grassroots development cannot be overstated. Many rural households depend on small-scale farming as a primary source of food and income. Consequently, a national agricultural policy that does not effectively reach smallholders will have limited grassroots-development effects.

The APP recognized the importance of smallholder farmers, including women farmers, while seeking to improve productivity and agricultural value chains (ActionAid Nigeria, 2018).

However, previous Nigerian agricultural policy experiences demonstrate the difficulty of ensuring that policy benefits reach intended beneficiaries efficiently. Ayoola and Ayoola (2016), for example, found significant weaknesses in the structure and performance of agricultural input markets despite substantial public expenditure on fertilizer and seed subsidies.

The study's grand mean of 2.60 can therefore be understood within this broader implementation challenge. Policy interventions may exist, but their grassroots impact depends on accessibility, targeting, transparency and continuity.

12.3 Agricultural Policy and Access to Inputs

Inputs remain fundamental to agricultural productivity. Farmers require quality seeds, fertilizer, crop-protection products, machinery and other inputs at the right time and at affordable prices.

The APP identified access to quality and price-competitive agricultural inputs as a major policy concern (FMARD, 2016). However, the historical challenges surrounding fertilizer distribution and input subsidies indicate that the mere allocation of public resources does not guarantee efficient input delivery.

The policy implication is that Nigeria should continue moving toward market-based input systems supported by transparent targeting, private agro-dealers, farmer organizations, digital registration and monitoring. Input support should also be matched to agro-ecological conditions rather than applied uniformly across the country.

12.4 Agricultural Policy and Finance

Agricultural finance is central to grassroots agricultural development because farmers need working capital before returns from production are realized. Agricultural production is also exposed to climate, price and biological risks, making conventional commercial lending difficult (FAO, 2025). The study's aggregate finding, however, indicates that respondents did not perceive the agricultural policy environment as producing sufficiently strong grassroots outcomes. This suggests the need for agricultural finance systems that are more accessible to smallholders and linked to production cycles and value chains.

Credit should be complemented by agricultural insurance, extension, market information and structured marketing arrangements. Such integration would reduce the risk associated with agricultural lending and improve the probability that credit produces productive rather than distress outcomes.

12.5 Agricultural Policy and Extension Services

Extension services represent an important mechanism through which agricultural research and innovation reach farmers. The APP recognized information and knowledge as important elements of productivity enhancement (FMARD, 2016; FAO, 2025). The contemporary extension system should move beyond conventional government field officers. Digital platforms, mobile advisory systems, farmer organizations, private extension providers and community-based extension agents can supplement traditional services. This is particularly relevant because local farmers should not be treated merely as recipients of technical information. Their indigenous knowledge and experience should be incorporated into agricultural innovation.

12.6 Agricultural Policy and Infrastructure

Infrastructure constitutes a major determinant of agricultural productivity and rural development. Roads determine access to markets; irrigation influences production reliability; electricity supports processing and storage; and telecommunications facilitate access to prices, weather information and markets (FAO, 2025).

The grand mean of 2.60 suggests that infrastructure and other interventions have not yet translated into sufficiently strong overall grassroots agricultural outcomes. This indicates that agricultural policy should be integrated with rural infrastructure planning rather than implemented as a stand-alone sectoral intervention.

12.7 Agricultural Policy and Value-Chain Development

The APP's emphasis on storage, processing and marketing was significant because agricultural development cannot be sustained by increasing primary production alone (FMARD, 2016).

Value-chain development enables rural communities to retain more value from agricultural production. When farmers sell raw commodities at low prices while processing and marketing occur elsewhere, much of the economic value generated by agriculture leaves the community.

Grassroots agricultural policy should therefore promote local processing, packaging, storage and marketing enterprises. This would create employment opportunities and strengthen local economic multipliers.

12.8 Agricultural Policy, Employment and Rural Development

Agriculture has the potential to generate employment across multiple stages of the value chain. Farm production creates direct employment, while processing, transport, storage, marketing, equipment maintenance and agricultural services create additional opportunities.

The APP explicitly connected agricultural development with employment creation and poverty reduction (World Bank, 2017).

However, the study's overall finding indicates that respondents did not perceive agricultural policies as producing sufficiently strong grassroots-development outcomes. This suggests that policy should move beyond production support toward **agricultural enterprise development**.

Young people in particular should be supported not only to become farmers but also to become agricultural service providers, processors, aggregators, logistics operators, digital agriculture entrepreneurs and equipment operators.

13. Agricultural Policy and Endogenous Grassroots Development

The findings have important implications for Endogenous Development Theory.

The grand mean of 2.60 suggests that national agricultural policies have not generated sufficiently strong grassroots effects from the respondents' perspective. One explanation is that agricultural policy implementation remains more strongly organized around national programmes and externally defined interventions than around locally generated development priorities.

Endogenous development requires that agricultural policy begin with the productive realities of communities. Local actors should be involved in determining which crops, livestock activities, processing enterprises, irrigation systems, markets and technologies are most appropriate.

For example, agricultural communities in Nasarawa may possess different production opportunities from communities in Borno, Kaduna, Anambra, Delta or Lagos. The same national policy framework should therefore permit differentiated implementation.

This does not mean that national policy coordination should be abandoned. Rather, national government should establish broad objectives and provide resources, while local institutions and communities should have greater influence over implementation priorities.

Such an approach would allow national agricultural policy to become a framework for **local economic development rather than merely a mechanism**

for transferring agricultural inputs.

The theory consequently provides an important lens through which to interpret the empirical finding of this study. The Agricultural Policy grand mean of 2.60 is close to the criterion mean of 3.00 but remains below it. This suggests that respondents recognized some policy relevance but did not perceive the agricultural policies as producing sufficiently strong grassroots transformation. From an endogenous-development perspective, such a result may indicate that policy interventions have not been sufficiently integrated with local resources, institutions, knowledge and productive systems.

14. Policy Implications

The findings generate several important policy implications.

14.1 Policy Continuity

The transition from APP to other programmes and policies such as the NATIP demonstrates the importance of continuity in agricultural policy. Repeated policy changes can disrupt implementation and reduce the ability of farmers and investors to plan for the long term. Agricultural policies should therefore preserve successful institutional mechanisms while adjusting programmes in response to evidence.

14.2 Implementation Should Be Given Due Diligence and Adopt an Integrated Approach

The study's grand mean of 2.60 suggests that policy formulation has not necessarily been matched by equivalent grassroots outcomes. Policy implementation should therefore receive the same level of attention as policy design. All stakeholders must appraise and develop strategic pattern of implementation of policies that ensures that attainment or achievement of the intended policy outcomes in the target audience.

An integrated implementation should be used rather than the fragmented nature of policy implementation in Nigeria. Factors such as finance, inputs, extension, infrastructure, markets and technology should be implemented as complementary components. A fragmented intervention system is less likely to produce sustained grassroots transformation as there are loopholes in the administration of the policy implementation process, due to the solitary dependence on a particular policy to perform the miracle

14.3 Community Engagement and Participation in Agricultural Policy Implementation

National agricultural policy should provide a common framework but allow local differentiation. Agricultural programmes should be designed according to agro-ecological conditions, local resources, dominant commodities, infrastructure and market opportunities. Local farmers and communities should not be regarded merely as beneficiaries. Their knowledge, institutions and productive capacities should be integrated into policy design and implementation, to reflect their unique development needs and priorities.

14.4 Public Investment Should Be Better Aligned with Agricultural Priorities

The FAO's 2025 policy monitoring review found that agricultural expenditure between 2015 and 2021 remained around 2% of federal expenditure and identified the need for greater policy coherence and alignment with agricultural transformation objectives (Nwafor et al., 2025). This implies the need for stronger alignment between agricultural policy ambitions and actual public-resource allocation.

15. Recommendations

15.1 Decentralize Agricultural Policy Implementation and Embrace Community-Based Agricultural Planning

Agricultural policy should be implemented through stronger state, local government and community-level structures. Local agricultural development committees should include farmers, cooperatives, processors, women and youth groups, traditional institutions, extension officers and private-sector actors.

Each agricultural community should develop local production plans based on its ecological conditions, productive resources, existing knowledge and market opportunities. This would operationalize an endogenous approach by placing local actors at the centre of agricultural planning.

15.2 Strengthen Agricultural Extension Services and Improve Access to Quality Inputs

Extension services should be expanded through a combination of public extension officers, digital platforms, private-sector providers, farmer organizations and community-based extension agents. Government should strengthen transparent systems for delivering improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and other inputs. Digital farmer identification, private agro-dealer networks and cooperative purchasing can reduce leakage and improve accessibility. The rapid infusion of agricultural education and information through the use of technological platforms shoud be widely deployed using the native language and indigenous mode of communication to arrive at positive policy outcomes. Digital agriculture should be used to provide farmers with weather information, market prices, extension advice, financial services and production information. Climate-smart technologies should also be promoted to strengthen resilience to changing weather conditions.

15.3 Expand Agricultural Infrastructure to Improve the Local Agriculture Value Chain

Developing and expanding the agricultural infrastructure, which is the network of physical structures, equipment, transport, and public services that supports the production, processing, storage, and marketing of farm products should be basis at the grassroots level, since this is where agriculture is mainly practiced as the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. There must be an intentional policy drive to fund and develop these infrastructures across the rural areas of Nigeria. Agricultural finance should be made more accessible through credit guarantees, cooperative lending, value-chain financing, agricultural insurance and seasonal repayment structures.

15.4 Develop Agricultural Enterprise Clusters and Regional Markets

Clusters should be created around commodities and activities for which communities possess productive advantages. Such clusters can provide shared machinery, storage, processing, packaging, training and marketing facilities. Government should support local processing centres for commodities produced in particular communities. This would reduce post-harvest losses and enable communities to retain more value from agricultural production. Farmers should be connected to institutional buyers, processors, wholesalers, exporters and government procurement systems. Market access should be considered a central component of agricultural policy rather than an afterthought.

15.5 Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation

Agricultural policies should be evaluated using measurable grassroots indicators such as agricultural productivity, household farm income, employment generated, number of farmers receiving productive support, access to finance etc. This would provide relevant data for accurate policy planning and implementation and provide the windows for effective assessment and measurement of the policy goals and outcome in grassroots communities.

16. Conclusion

Nigeria's agricultural policy environment between 2015 and 2025 was characterized by substantial policy activity and institutional evolution. The Agriculture Promotion Policy 2016–2020 sought to improve productivity, food security, private-sector investment and economic diversification. Despite this extensive policy architecture, the empirical evidence from the study presents a more cautious picture of grassroots impact. The grand mean of 2.60, compared with the criterion mean of 3.00, indicates that respondents generally did not perceive the agricultural policies as having produced sufficiently strong grassroots-development outcomes. The result points to moderate or marginally unfavourable perceptions rather than an absolute rejection of agricultural policy relevance.

The central issue emerging from the study is therefore the gap between agricultural policy formulation and grassroots policy outcomes. Nigeria has developed policies addressing many of the constraints confronting agriculture, but implementation challenges, infrastructure deficits, limited access to finance and inputs, weak extension systems, market constraints and insufficient local participation can limit the conversion of policy interventions into sustainable development.

Endogenous Development Theory provides an important basis for addressing this gap. Agricultural transformation is more likely to be sustainable when national resources and policy support are combined with local knowledge, local institutions, community participation and locally available productive resources. Grassroots communities should therefore be treated not merely as recipients of agricultural programmes but as active participants in agricultural development.

Therefore, the strategic direction for the future should consequently be an integrated, locally responsive and productivity-oriented agricultural policy framework. Such a framework should combine finance, inputs, irrigation, infrastructure, extension, technology, processing and markets while allowing local communities to determine how these resources can best be applied to their specific economic circumstances.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of agricultural policy should be judged by tangible grassroots outcomes: higher agricultural productivity, increased household income, employment creation, reduced post-harvest losses, improved food security, stronger local enterprises and greater community capacity to sustain development. The challenge for Nigeria is therefore not simply to formulate more agricultural policies but to improve the implementation, localization, coordination and accountability of existing policy frameworks so that national agricultural objectives translate into measurable improvements in the lives of rural households and communities.

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