

# A Review Paper on the Contributions of the Various Agricultural Policies in Nigeria

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Article History	Abstract
<b>Original Research Article</b>	<p><i>Despite all the policy actions of the various regimes, food insecurity remains a threat in Nigeria. This situation calls for an investigation into the policies and programmes on agriculture to ascertain how they have contributed to food productivity. This present study reviewed past literatures on the contributions of some agricultural policies/programmes directed at improving food supply in Nigeria. Findings from the reviews indicated that at the individual level, the programmes improved the productivity of the beneficiaries which led to improved food productivity within the period. This study is however of the view that the fact that the country is still faced with acute food deficit is an indication that the programmes were not designed to be sustainable. Consequently, the study recommends an effective monitoring of the beneficiaries of future programmes. Also, exit strategy should be factored in the design of the agricultural interventions to ensure the sustainability of the programmes.</i></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Agricultural programme; Food security; Agricultural productivity.</p> <p><b>JEL Classification:</b> Q120, Q180, Q110</p>
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<p>Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p> <p><b>Citation:</b> Innocent Chile Nzeh, Rosita Chinwe Anayanwu, Henry Obinze Ebo, Sandralyn Ifeoma Obiukwu, Kenneth Jegbefumwen, (2025), A Review Paper on the Contributions of the Various Agricultural Policies in Nigeria, UKR Journal of Economics, Business and Management (UKRJEBM), 1(4)135-143.</p>	

## Introduction

The discovery of crude oil in Nigeria greatly displaced the agricultural sector as attention has always been on how to increase oil output in order to increase revenue. Consequently, the agricultural sector in the country cannot supply adequate food both in quantity and quality to cater for the ever growing population. Owing majorly to this factor, the phenomenon of food insecurity has been heightened, resulting in hunger and malnutrition among the populace (Abu, 2012). In a bid to boost the productivity in the agricultural sector, the Nigerian government has over the years implemented several policies and programmes. A brief chronicle will reveal the commitments of several governments in implementing different forms of agricultural policies and programmes to nip the ugly trend to the bud. In 1972, the then government of General Yakubu Gowon implemented the National Accelerated Food Production programme (NAFPP). The programme aimed to improve food production through educating the farmers. In

1973, the River Basin Development Authority (RBDAS) was implemented with the major objective of providing irrigation facilities to enhance all year round agricultural production through the construction of dams. The Agricultural Development Projects (ADPS) was implemented in 1975 with the objectives of raising food production and the income of the small scale farmers. In 1976, the Military regime of General Olusegun Obasanjo came up with Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) which aimed to improve food availability by ensuring that everybody got involved in farming. In 1980, the regime of President Shehu Shagari introduced the Green Revolution (GR) whose primary aim was to make Nigeria self-sufficient and self-reliant in food production.

In 1986, the General Ibrahim Babangida's Administration introduced the Directorate for Food and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) which was designed to improve the

quality of life of mainly rural dwellers through the use of resources that exist in the rural areas. In 1992 the National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) was established with the aim of providing assistance and to promote better uses of rural land and their resources. In early 1990s, the National Fadama Development Project (FDP) was introduced with the main objective of improving the incomes of the Fadama users through expansion of farm and non-farm activities. The National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS) was launched in 2003 which aimed at attaining food security and alleviating rural poverty. In 2003 also, the Root and Tuber Expansion Programme (RTEP) was launched with the aim of multiplying and introducing improved root and tuber varieties. There was the Presidential Initiative on Cassava which ran from 2002-2007. Among the objectives of the policy was to encourage the export of processed cassava products. Also, in order to support cassava processing industry, the federal government came up with the Cassava Transformation Agenda in 2011 with an objective to increase the demand for cassava flour. The Anchor Borrowers' Programme (ABP) was established in 2016 with the core aim of providing loans to smallholder farmers to increase the production of a range of agricultural products such as rice, maize, wheat, cotton, roots and tubers (Olusola *et al.*, 2021).

Despite this avalanche of policies and programmes, food production in Nigeria has remained low. The country still relies heavily on food importation to feed its citizens. Currently, food inflation has risen to a zenith, making it impossible for families to have adequate food for healthy living. As observed by Ozoani (2019), several factors are fingered to be responsible for the failure of these programmes to improve agricultural productivity. Among them are: inability to monitor and evaluate the programmes/projects, top-bottom approach in project

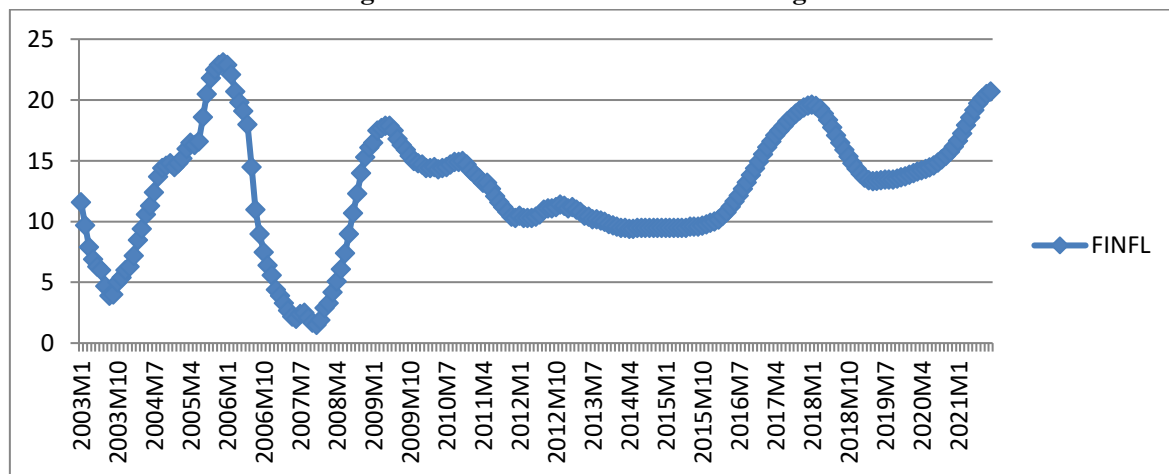
implementation which alienates the beneficiary communities, lack of continuity as any new administration will abandon existing projects/programmes and initiates its own as well as embezzlement and misappropriation of funds earmarked for the projects.

In this study, the general objective is to review extant literatures on the contributions of the various agricultural policies to agricultural productivity in Nigeria. Specifically, the study reviewed past literatures on the contributions of selected agricultural policies implemented mainly to improve food production in Nigeria. Such evaluation has become necessary, especially now that the country is facing acute food shortage and needs policy interventions. The outcome of the review will raise the consciousness on the effectiveness or otherwise of these programmes and the need to borrow some ideas from them as part of the way forward.

### 1.1 Stylized Facts

In this sub-section, the trend in some relevant variables was analyzed in order to present the true state of affairs of the factors that affect food production in Nigeria. To begin, it is proper to present the picture on the trend of food inflation in the country. In Figure 1, the trend in food inflation reveals that the variable exhibited much fluctuations within the period covered. It is shown that in October 2005, it trended high but approached a trough in April 2007. However, beginning from April 2008 through January 2019, it exhibited a rising trend. It however trended low between June to December 2015. In May 2017, it reached a peak, descended from December 2017, and began to rise in 2019 and afterwards. What this implies is that there is high volatility in food inflation in Nigeria. It further implies that food production is yet stable in Nigeria, notwithstanding the numerous policies put in place to increase productivity in the agricultural sector.

**Figure 1 Trend in Food Inflation in Nigeria**



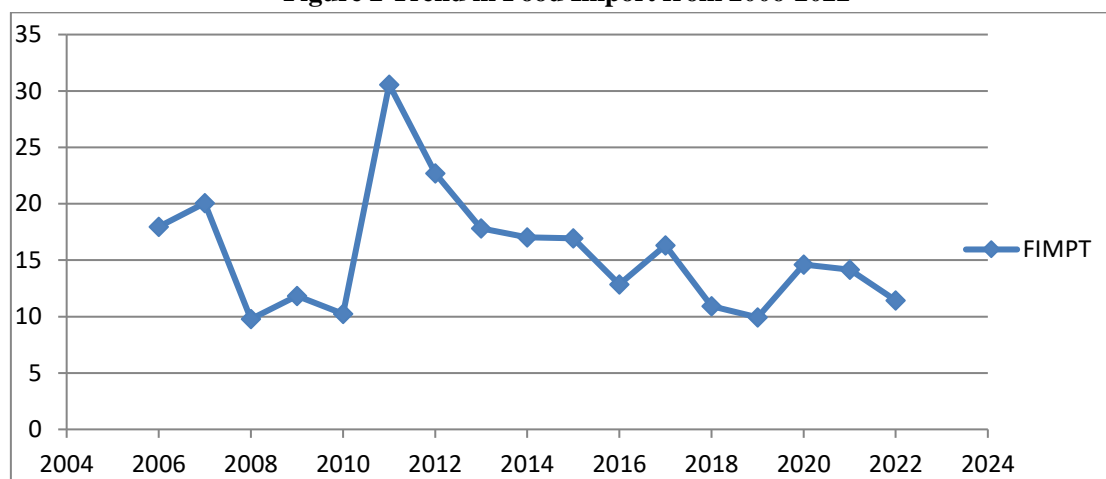
Note: FINFL = food inflation

Source: CBN (2021)

As a way of augmenting the shortfall in domestic food production, the country imports food. Owing to the role played by food importation, evaluating the trend in food import becomes necessary, especially when it is considered that Nigeria is a food import dependent country. Information in Figure 2 reveals that after 2007, food importation declined but began to rise and got to a peak in 2011. It exhibited a declining trend after attaining a peak in 2011 until it got to its lowest in 2016 and attained a new peak in 2017. After this, it descended and got to its lowest in 2019. It rose marginally after 2019 and declined from 2011. The recent ban placed on some food items accounted for the reasons for the falling trend in food importation. In

addition to this, the exchange rate liberalization policy implemented recently which has led to much depreciation of the domestic currency could be partly blamed for the fall in food importation. The relationship between food inflation and food importation has been revealed in this trend analysis. Looking closely the trends in food inflation and food importation, it has been shown that as food importation rises, food inflation declines. In 2007 for instance, food importation attained a peak but food inflation got to a trough. Also, in 2011 when food importation was very high, food inflation was low and similar trend occurred in 2018 when food importation declined but food inflation was high.

**Figure 2 Trend in Food Import from 2006-2022**



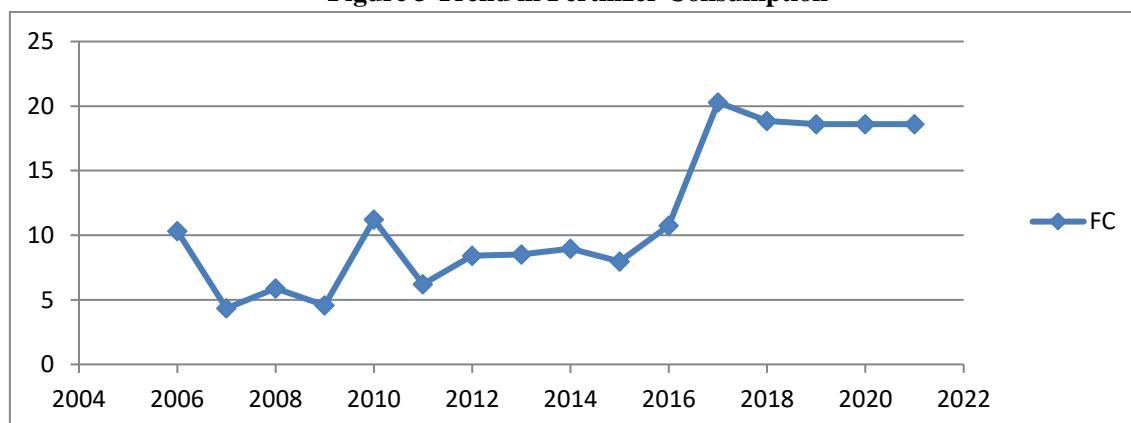
Note: FIMPT = Food imports (% of merchandise imports)

Source: WDI (2023)

The rest of the trend analysis focused on the factors that affect food production. In Figure 3, the trend in fertilizer consumption was evaluated. It is shown that in almost all the years, this variable experienced falling trend mostly. It rose marginally in 2010 and between 2016 and 2017 after which it became flat. Fertilizer is an important input in crop production as it assists in improving crop yield. Several

regimes in Nigeria usually release fertilizers to be distributed to the farmers at subsidized rates. However, these hardly get to the actually farmers as they are often diverted along the line or released only when the farming season is over. Therefore, the picture of the trend in fertilizer consumption is an indication that food production will continue to be hampered in the country.

**Figure 3 Trend in Fertilizer Consumption**



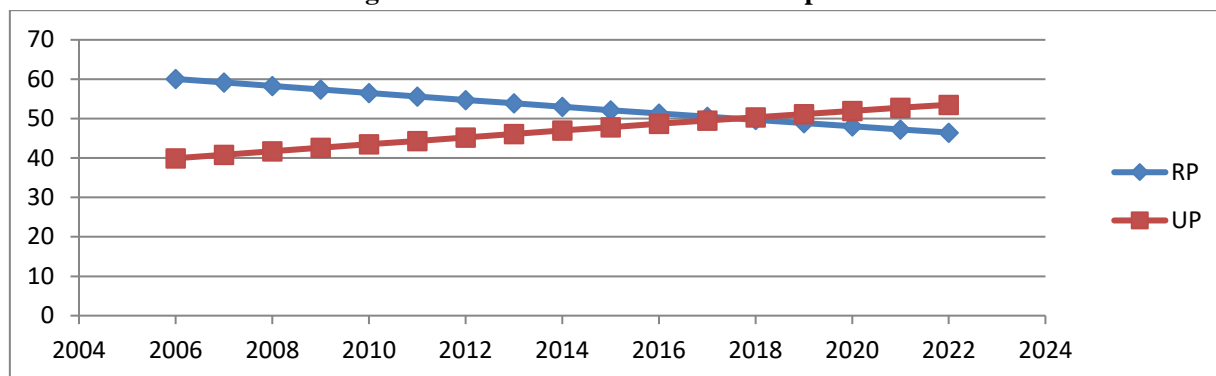
Note: FC = Fertilizer consumption (kilograms per hectare of arable land)

Source: WDI (2023)

The manpower need of the agricultural sector is paramount in agricultural productivity. This has warranted the study to examine the trend of rural versus urban population as well as the trend in employment in agriculture. In Figures 4 and 5. Since agriculture is usually done in the rural areas, the study deemed it necessary to compare the population in the rural area and urban area to provide a clue of the manpower need of the agricultural sector. In Figure 4, it is revealed that while rural population kept descending all through the

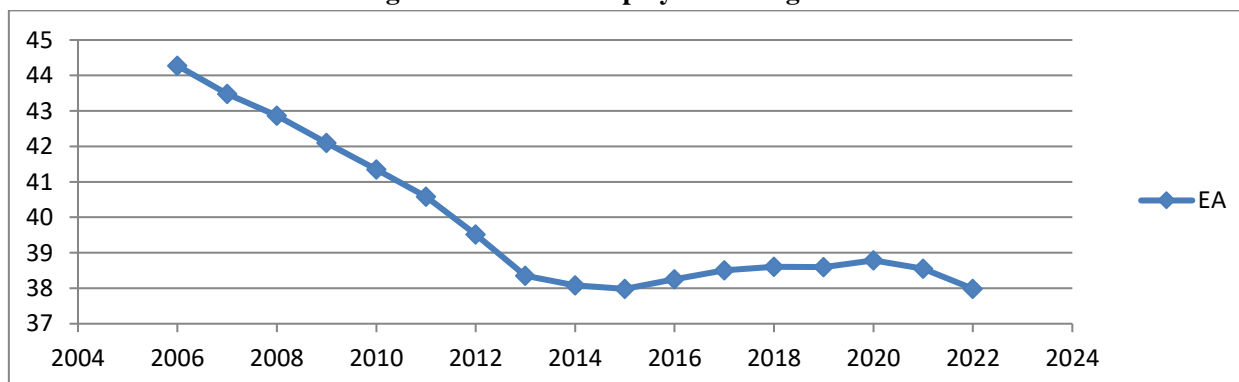
period of study, urban population keeps rising. This is a pointer to the adverse effect of rural-urban drift on agricultural productivity. It indicates that few hands are on the farms to feed the growing urban population. In a similar respect, Figure 5 reveals that employment in agriculture descended steeply all through the period covered. This again indicates that the number of people engaged in agricultural activities is small, accounting for the low productivity in the sector.

**Figure 4 Trend in Urban and Rural Population**



Note: UP = urban population(% of total population),  
 RP = rural population(% of total population)  
 Source: WDI (2023)

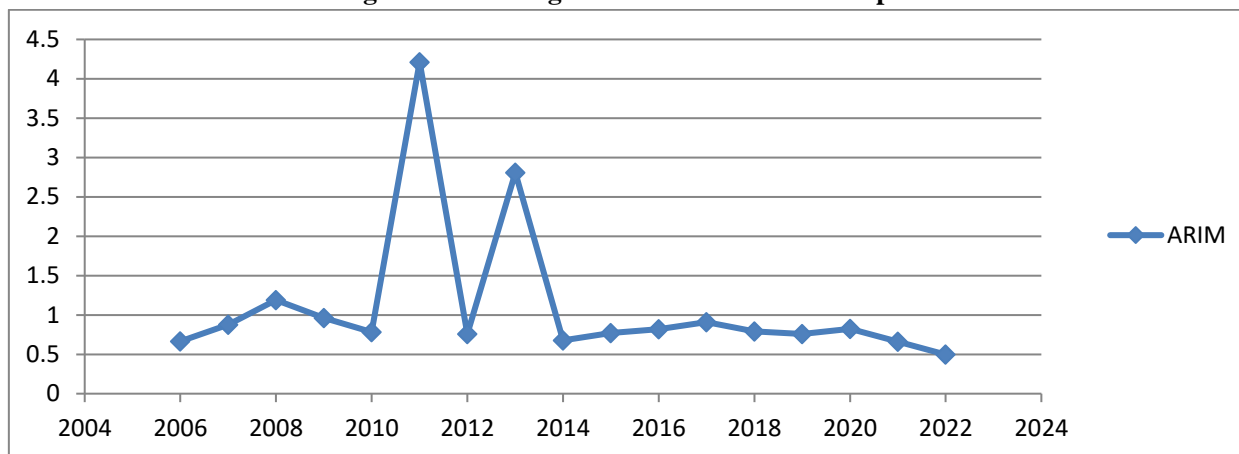
**Figure 5 Trend in Employment in agriculture**



Note: EA = Employment in agriculture (% of total employment)  
 Source: WDI (2023)

The study also examined the trend in agricultural raw material import within the period covered. Evidence in Figure 6 reveals that apart from 2011 and 2013 when the variable attained a high trend, it was very low in other years. What this implies is that the importation of farm inputs such as fertilizers, pest control chemicals, tractors and others that enhance agricultural productivity is low in the country which could be mainly associated with the rising exchange rate and high import duties over the years. The results of the trend analysis so far have revealed part of the reasons why food insecurity continues to stare the country on the face.

**Figure 6 Trend Agricultural raw material import**



Note: ARIM = Agricultural raw material import (% of merchandise imports)

Source: WDI (2023)

## 2. Methodology

In this study, the review of extant literature was done thematically and chronologically. Thematically, the study focused on the review of extant literatures on the contributions of selected agricultural policies on food production in Nigeria. The review is limited to agricultural policies that were relatively recent in order to dwell on the current state of affairs in the agricultural sector as well as policies meant to directly address issues relating to food production. Thus, the review is limited to three relatively recent agricultural programmes, namely: the FADAMA Programmes, the Anchor Borrowers' Programme and the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative. This study only considered papers that were peer-reviewed and published in the English language. In carrying out the review on the extant literatures, the paper included articles published in indexed journals such as in SCOPUS, Google Scholars and other indexing bodies with agricultural productivity and programmes as the main keywords. The essence is to ensure that only papers that have visibility are considered. From the outcome of the reviews, discussion of findings is presented and the paper proffers recommendations.

## 3. Review of Empirical Literature

The contributions of the various agricultural policies and programmes in boosting food production have received some empirical attention over the years. In this study, the contributions of three of such policies are reviewed, namely: the FADAMA Programme, the Anchor Borrowers' Programme and the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative.

### 3.1 Literature on the Contributions of FADAMA Programmes

As part of measures geared towards meeting the

millennium development goals (MDGs), especially in alleviating poverty among the rural populace, the Nigerian government embarked on the development of Fadama lands. Through this, it was envisaged that the country could attain food sufficiency and reduction in poverty by the introduction of small-scale irrigation in states that have the potentials for Fadama. Girei, Dire and Yuguda (2014) observed that Fadama is a Hausa language which refers to low-lying swampy areas that consist of alluvial deposits and containing exploitable aquifers. Fadama lands are seasonally flooded, providing opportunity for seasonal farming. The FADAMA I project made its debut in 1992 as a pilot agricultural programme. In 2003, FADAMA II was launched, while FADAMA III was made to cover most of the geological zones. In 2019, the FADAMA project series ended.

The contributions of the FADAMA projects have been evaluated in literature. In their study, Bature, Sanni and Adebayo (2013) evaluated the impact of Fadama III project on the income of the beneficiaries in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The study found that the beneficiaries' productive assets improved after the project. However, the study revealed that the net farm income of the beneficiaries reduced despite acquiring the productive assets. In another study, Eze (2014) examined the contribution of Fadama 111 in Ebonyi state with findings showing that the counterpart fund provided by the state government had significant effect on the socio-economic wellbeing of the state. In a paper that focused on the contribution of Fadama 11 in Kwara state, Apata and Saliu (2014) found a significant difference between the productivity of Fadama participants and non-Fadama participants. In South West, Nigeria, Agunloye, Fasina and Akinagbe (2017) found that the implementation of Fadama 111 enabled the beneficiaries to increase their scope in the production of yam, plantain,



maize, cassava and some livestock such as goatry, poultry and fisheries. In a study of the contribution of Fadama 111 in Akwa Ibom State, Inam and Effiong (2017) indicated that the project had positive impact on the beneficiaries as it increased their output performance. Idris and Jabo (2017) evaluated the impact of Fadama III in Sokoto state with the findings revealing that farmer's crop yield increased significantly as a result of participating in the programme. A study in Gombe by Kolo and Sani (2019) revealed that the implementation of Fadama improved the value of productive assets of the beneficiaries as well as their income level. These led to increased productivities in both the crop and livestock sub-sectors. In Niger state, Chidawa, Ambali, Salahu and Salawu (2021) found that the implementation of Fadama III assisted the beneficiaries in diverse ways such as increase in their income, savings and ability to sponsor their children in schools. In a study in Adamawa, Shelleng and Tabitha (2021) examined the impact of Fadama III on the rural rice farmers. Findings indicated that revenue generated by the beneficiaries was higher than that of the non-beneficiaries. In another study on Fadama 111, Sa'idu, Murtala and Idris (2022) assessed the impact of the programme on Fadama Community Associations (FCAs) and Fadama User Groups (FUG) units from Kaduna and Sokoto States. Results showed that productive assets acquisition impacted the beneficiaries positively, leading to an increase in the crop area cultivated.

### **3.2 Literature on the Contributions of the Anchor Borrowers' Programme**

As a way of finding solutions to the numerous challenges facing the agricultural sector, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the Central bank of Nigeria initiated and implemented the Anchor Borrowers' Programme (ABP) in 2015 in some selected states. Among the objectives of the programme include: to link the small holder farmers to the local processors (Anchors), raising banks' agricultural financing, improve the capacity of farmers, reduce commodity importation and assist the rural small-holder farmers to grow from subsistence to commercial production levels (Ayinde, *et al.*, 2018).

Some empirical studies have been conducted to evaluate the performance of the Anchor Borrowers' Programme across the states where it was implemented. In a study in Kwara, Ojo, Olalere and Adeiza (2013) revealed that the ABP scheme improved the food security of the households that benefited from it even though the effect varies with each household's characteristics. In another study in Kwara, Ayinde *et al.* (2018) found that the programme impacted the income of the beneficiaries positively. This finding finds support in the earlier finding by Ojo *et al.* (2013). In Kebbi state, Badejo and Adekeye (2018) showed that the

ABP assisted the farmers positively and significantly through poverty reduction; increased food supply and employment generation. In another study in Kebbi state, Gona *et al.* (2020) showed that the rate of return on investment for the ABP beneficiary farmers was higher than that of the non-beneficiaries and this implies that the ABP enhanced the profits of the beneficiaries. A study in Lagos by Balogun *et al.* (2021) found that rice farmers who benefited from the programme had a higher profit than non-beneficiaries as most of the beneficiaries received subsidized inputs supply. In Anambra State, Onuoha and Ejikeme (2021) revealed that the ABP contributed positively to the farmers in the state as it improved agricultural value chain and eased the burden of agricultural financing among the farmers. In a study carried out to ascertain the impact of the ABP on rice production in Southeast, Okoroh, Eze, Apu and Ekwe (2021) revealed that the programme had significant positive impact on rice production in the study area as the output of the beneficiaries of the programme was higher compared to the output of the non-beneficiaries.

Nasiru (2022) evaluated the impact of the implementation of the ABP in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Findings indicated that the programme empowered smallholder farmers in Abuja through boosting their productivity and achieving food security. In Jigawa state, Mahmud *et al.* (2022) revealed that the ABP's facilities were accessible among the farmers in the state and the level of awareness was high among smallholder rice farmers. Another study in Kebbi by Salisu, Adebayo, Jirgi and Ojo (2022) revealed that the ABP credit had a significant impact on the productivity of the rice farmers. Belewu, Ajao and Babatunde (2023) evaluated the impact of the programme on rice farmers in Kwara State and Niger States. The study found that the poverty rate of the beneficiaries was lower compared with non-beneficiaries and that the beneficiaries of rice farmers in the areas studied are well-served by the ABP. In Kebbi State, Baraya, Handoyo, Ibrahim, Badayi and Muhammad (2023) found that the beneficiaries' income level was impacted positively by the ABP funds as their farm size increased. This result finds support in the previous studies carried out in Kebbi state (Badejo & Adekeye, 2018; Salisu *et al.*, 2022; Gona *et al.*, 2020). In Ekiti state, Akinbile, Akingbade and Salaudeen (2023) found that the programme led to an increase in rice productivity and the incentives provided during ABP that resulted into increase in rice farmers' productivity were improved rice seeds and the timely use of herbicides and insecticides.

### **3.3 Literature on the Contributions of the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative**

The relevance of cassava in reducing food insecurity stems

from the fact that its value-chain is enormous. With Nigeria been among the highest cassava producers in the world (Esiobu *et al.*, 2023), improving cassava productivity will go a long way in resolving the acute food shortage in the country as well as providing foreign exchange. It is against this backdrop that in 2003, the Nigerian government established the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative (PCTI). Among the objectives of the programme was 10% cassava flour inclusion to wheat flour for production, inclusion of 10% bioethanol in gasoline and using paraffin with ethanol gel fuel as the cooking fuel (Ohimain, 2015). In addition, the programme sought to encourage an expansion in the use of cassava into other forms such as flour, ethanol, livestock feed, starch and for industrial raw materials (Sanni *et al.* 2009).

Some studies have been undertaken since the introduction of the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative which sought to examine the extent to which the programme has contributed to the improvement in agricultural productivity. Ohimain (2015) found that the PCTI enhanced investment and employment in the cassava subsector just as it reduced food importation and improved cassava yield. The study noted that such led to Nigeria attaining the number one position in cassava production in the world. Donkor *et al.* (2017) found that the implementation of the PCTI led to improved cassava output and promotion of food supply. In their study, Okhankhuele *et al.* (2017) observed that the PCTI helped in raising the average scale efficiency of the Micro-Scale Cassava Processing Enterprises (MSCPE) in all the Southwest states. Precisely, it was noted that before the initiative the scale efficiency was 69.4%, however after the implementation, it increased to 88.5%. In a related study involving the MSCPE in the Southwest states, Okhankhuele *et al.* (2022) found that the implementation of the PCTI impacted significantly on the local marketing of the various cassava bye-products, even though there was no significant impact on international marketing of the cassava products.

## Discussion of Findings

The review of extant literature has so far revealed the relevance of the various agricultural policies and programmes in boosting food productivity in Nigeria. Findings indicated that the implementation of the various FADAMA programmes improved the productive assets of the beneficiaries more than non-beneficiaries. The various literature reviewed has thus showed that the programme was successful in raising food productivity and therefore should have been sustained. It seems that as soon as the programme was wound up the beneficiaries were no longer serious with their respective agricultural projects and there

was no plan on ground to keep monitoring their progress. In a similar respect, findings across the states revealed that the implementation of the Anchor Borrowers' Programme led to the productivity of the beneficiaries which led to improvement in food supply. It was revealed that at the individual level, the implementation of the programme improved the income level of the beneficiaries who are mainly small-holder farmers. However, more could have been achieved if there was effective monitoring of the activities of the beneficiaries after the programme. As observed by Ayinde *et al.* (2018), there was a breach by the beneficiaries who refused to deliver their produce to the Anchors. Another issue that constrained the effective utilization of the programme was non-membership of cooperatives (Balogun *et al.*, 2021). The review also show that the implementation of the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative raised cassava productivity in the country. As noted by Ohimain (2015), the implementation of the programme placed the country as number one in cassava production in the world. Despite such outcome, the country is still unable to meet the world demand for cassava just as there is currently high cost of cassava derivatives such as garri, *fufu* and others. The cost of flour currently has soared even though the policy on cassava was meant to add cassava into flour production, thereby reducing the importation of flour.

## Conclusion

This study set out to review extant literatures on the contributions of the various agricultural programmes and policies in Nigeria, concentrating on three of the relatively recent programmes, directed at improving food supply, namely: the FADAMA programme, the Anchor Borrowers' Programme and the Presidential Cassava Transformation Initiative. Findings from the literatures reviewed showed that the productivity of individuals who benefited from them was improved within the study period. However, the fact that despite these laudable outcomes Nigeria still suffers food shortage calls for serious interrogation of the actual relevance of these programmes. The actual benefits of the programmes should be evaluated from their ability to reduce the acute food shortage in the country in a sustainable way as well as being a source of improved foreign exchange. In a nutshell, the inability of the programmes to solve the food deficit in the country is an indication that they lacked sustainability which could be due to lack of effective supervision. As noted by Adamu and Kalgo (2019), the major setback to the success of these programmes is lack of effective supervision of the small holder farmers' activities. In order to ensure that going forward, such programmes contribute meaningfully to food production in a sustainable manner; this paper is of the view that there is need for effective monitoring of the

beneficiaries even after the programme is concluded. It is also recommended that exit strategy should be factored in the design of the agricultural interventions in order to ensure the beneficiaries enjoy the effects of the programmes in a sustainable way. Finally, the paper recommends that there is need to improve information concerning these programmes right from the initiation to the implementation so that people will be acquainted with them and be able to key into them, possibly through joining or forming cooperatives societies.

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