

NIGERIA

Strategy Support Program II

After years of decline, agricultural growth in Nigeria—the key to lifting the country out of poverty—is rising. However, this growth is currently neither sustainable nor pro-poor, as it is mainly driven by expanded land use, not improved productivity, and the poorest and most vulnerable are not sufficiently benefitting from its effects. Furthermore, the performance of the sector is still far below its potential, as evidenced in past decades, when Nigeria used to export cocoa, groundnut, and other crops in large amounts. The Nigerian government is working on policy and investment strategies to enhance agricultural growth while simultaneously making it sustainable and pro-poor, but progress is hindered by incongruous targets, as well as inadequate evidence-based analysis to guide the sequencing and prioritization of activities.



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BACKGROUND

The Nigeria Strategy Support Program (NSSP) is mainly funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to respond to the research, analysis, and capacity needs of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) and other key stakeholders in the Nigerian agricultural research and policy community, and to assist the government of Nigeria and the private sector to enhance the productivity of the agricultural sector and the agricultural growth and poverty reduction contributions of such productivity increases.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

NSSP of the International Food Policy Research Institute is supporting the Nigerian government's efforts to address challenges to fostering agricultural growth and making it sustainable and pro-poor. The program focuses on:

- Enhancing knowledge through research, information, data, and tools for the analysis, design, and implementation of pro-poor and gender-sensitive agricultural and rural development policies and strategies in Nigeria;
- Strengthening the capacity of government agencies, research institutes, and others to carry out and use applied research for agricultural and rural policies and strategies; and
- Promoting improved and informed dialogue on policy issues among all stakeholders in agriculture, thereby helping the government to enhance inclusiveness in policy formulation and implementation.

ANALYTICAL SUPPORT TO AGRICULTURAL STRATEGIES

NSSP has in the last few years provided support for the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in Nigeria. This support focused on activities related to the National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP), which was originally prepared in order to translate FMARD's agricultural strategy into plans and annual budgets to meet the Federal Government of Nigeria's commitment under the CAADP Compact. With the new Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) driving agricultural policies and investments, NSSP has begun to undertake capacity strengthening activities and research that identifies how these policies and investments can be most effectively implemented, and how they can best achieve productivity, food security, and other core development outcomes.

ACTIONABLE RESEARCH

Research is being conducted to support evidence-based policymaking that affects the agricultural sector directly or indirectly. Themes addressed include: agricultural productivity, value chains and markets, food security and nutrition, governance and institutions in agriculture, and the linkages between agriculture and the broader Nigerian economy. There will also be a synthesis of the results from these individual research efforts.

The topics are determined by the key strategic approaches expressed in the principal agricultural strategies and investment plans, including the ATA, that require additional evidence-based verification. These research themes are strategic in nature, considering issues that the country will face in the near future, if it is not

doing so already. Therefore, these research programs have a mid- to long-term orientation, both in terms of the research questions that they consider and the time that they will require to complete.

CAPACITY BUILDING

NSSP is committed to providing assistance to strengthening federal, state, and local government capacity in agricultural policy formulation, as well as strengthening agricultural and rural policy networks. This capacity strengthening assistance focuses on governance and institutional development issues for federal, state, and local government agencies in the agricultural sector. Also under this component is support to FMARD to strengthen the capacity of a dedicated and effective policy analysis unit within the ministry. The interventions within this component are intended to improve monitoring and evaluation for agriculture-related activities in the public sector; strengthen the knowledge base of the Nigerian agricultural sector; and support public and private agencies in managing, analyzing, and reporting on agriculture-related data.

TIMELY POLICY ANALYSIS SUPPORT

This component involves mostly short- to medium-term research to examine the effect of key emerging policy issues that require timely ex-ante assessments, principally using existing secondary data and other information. This activity complements the other three categories of NSSP activities, most of which are being carried out over a longer time period, and improves the timeliness of NSSP's evidence-based contributions to policy dialogues. The scope and output of activities under this category are more flexible than those of the other components.

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