

The Imperative of Agriculture for Development Administration in Nigeria

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Publication Date: 2025/10/24

Abstract: The study examined the imperative of agriculture for development administration in Nigeria. It studied various agricultural programmes of governments and administrations in Nigeria which shows that the programmes remained unsuccessful due to many factors such as lack of involvement of the rural and the beneficiaries of such programmes, corruption, haphazard formulation and implementation of programmes of agriculture amongst others, proposing three approaches that could revamp the agricultural sector and bring about the needed development. The three approaches: the Provision of Market and Mechanism for Export (PMME), Massive Self Involvement (MSI) and Gentleman Farmer Approach (GFA) are viable and more practical approaches that can be adopted by Nigeria and any other country for viable pursuit of agriculture as business to boost the GDP of any country. The study made use of secondary source of data collection and contextual/descriptive method of data analysis. The method allows for analysis of various programmes and policies in agriculture in Nigeria to assess the viability of the three proposed approaches to agriculture for national development. It revealed that agricultural programmes and policies should have the nature of *musa paradisiaca*, a plantain theory of sustainable development. The study stem from the fact that Nigeria is blessed with favourable weather and climatic conditions, natural resources, fertile soil, abundant land that could she can exploit to bring about economic Eldorado.

Keywords: Agriculture, Administration, Development, PMME, MSI, GFA, Programmes, Policies.

How to Cite: Udotim, Akerete Anthony (2025) The Imperative of Agriculture for Development Administration in Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(10), 1085-1092.
<https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25oct600>

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the economics of developing countries of the world. The growth of this sector is, however, not in consonant with its strategic importance in the economics of various countries (Ogbonna, 2011). In Nigeria, the growth of the agricultural sector has declined drastically since independence with the contribution of agriculture to the national economy dropping from 80% in the 1960s to a mere 34% in 2003 (Chigbu, 2005). Conscious of the strategic importance of agriculture in the economy, the federal government of Nigeria (FGN) has formulated and implemented various national agricultural programs aimed at boosting agricultural production since independence in 1960. (Yusuf & Francis, 2019).

A program is a comprehensive plan that includes objectives to be attained, specifications of resources required and stages of work to be performed (Asiabaka, 2002). Olatunji (2005) defines a program as a collection of coordinated activities that are mutually directed towards the

attainment of a definite goal and made up of several segments or projects which can be separately pursued as components of the whole.

This study examines some of the agricultural programs undertaken by various administrations in Nigeria; assessing what contributed to the failure of those programs. The agricultural sector in Nigeria is untapped gold mine that is under rated by successive administration. The problem of the sector has to do to a greater extent with the peoples' mindset. An average Nigerian see agriculture as a demeaning and dirty job and wait for the available "white-collar" job. These, one could trace to when Nigeria experience oil boom and the attitude of 'get-rich-quick' syndrome.

➤ Statement of the Problem

Agricultural policies and programmes have always been serious issues irrespective of any name given to it by past and successive governments. A bird-eye view of some of the agricultural programmes will reveal that agriculture is taken into cognizance just for food sufficiency and limited

attention is paid to exportation and commercialization. None of the programmes has been able to give agriculture a business outlook, which entails adequate market for sales of agricultural produce.

Between the colonial times and more than half a century after independence, Nigeria is still grappling with the issue of implementation of natural agricultural programs. Numerous national agricultural programs have come and gone and yet more are on the way. There is however, very little tangible practically useful result that has emerged from the implementation of the past programs. According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012), changes in Nigerian agricultural policies and programs emphasize almost same objectives like the provision of food for the inhabitants of the State (food security and sufficiency) and exportation of the anticipated excess food to other countries, the provision of rural dwellers and farmers with extension services, agricultural support and rural development services, concluding that agriculture has policies and program reformation that pervade Nigeria (Agber, Iortima, & Imbur, 2013). The assessment of the various agricultural policies and programs revealed that neither food security nor exportation of any surpluses of agricultural products; suffice it to say that although there have always been concerted efforts towards revamping the agricultural sector, the intentions of such reforms has never been achieved.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

The main objective of the study is to assess the approaches that would successfully revamp the agricultural sector and lead Nigeria to economic Eldorado. These will be done by:

- Assessing some of the pasts agricultural programs and policies of the federal government towards harnessing the potentialities in the agricultural sector, their success and failures; and
- Presenting three approaches that could help successfully revamp the agricultural sector for increase of the GDP of Nigeria and for economic diversification.

II. CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL REVIEWS

A. *Assessment of Some Agricultural Programs of the Federal Government of Nigeria*

➤ *National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP):*

The National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) was an agricultural extension programme initiated in 1972 by the Federal Department of Agriculture during General Yakubu Gowon's regime. The programme focused on bringing about a significant increase in the production of maize, cassava, rice and wheat in the northern states through subsistent production within a short period of time.

- *Objectives of the Programme:*

The programme was designed to spread to other states in the country after the pilot stage that was established in Anambra, Imo, Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Benue, Plateau and Kano

states. Mini –kit, production-kit and mass adoption phases were the three phases of the programme.

- *Failure of the Programme:*

Lapses found in the programme included:

- ✓ Farmers sponsored (financially) the last two phases of the programme. This discouraged some farmers from participating in the programme.
- ✓ Farmers who could not form co-operatives were likely to be left out in the programme since the programme relied on disbursement of credits and farm inputs through co-operative societies.
- ✓ Abrupt/premature withdrawal of funding by the Federal Government due to the introduction of another programme termed Operation Feed the Nation.
- ✓ Demonstration trials were done on some selected farmers' plots by the research and extension personnel which did not give a true/good representation of the outcome of the technology or programme. In other words, it lacked farmer's participation. (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012).

➤ *National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)*

This was established in 1992 much more lately than the Decree (Land Use Decree, 1978) and Act (Land Use Act 1979).

- *Objectives of the Programme:*

The authority aims at giving strategic public support for land development, assisting and promoting better uses of Nigeria's rural land and their resources, boosting profitable employment opportunities for rural dwellers, raising the level/standard of living of rural people, targeting and assisting in achieving food security through self-reliance and sufficiency.

- *Failure of the Programme:*

The land reform Act/decreed has been criticized most because highly placed officers used to usurp land that belonged to poor people.

➤ *Agricultural Development Projects (ADP)*

ADP formerly known as Integrated Agricultural Development Projects (IADP) was earlier established in 1974 in the North East (Funtua), North West (Gusau) and North Central (Gombe) states as pilot schemes. The objectives of the programme are to bring about solution to the decrease found in agricultural productivity by sustaining domestic food supply, through massive infusion of World Bank funds, the ADPs were established to provide extension services, technical input support and rural infrastructure (Ayoola, 2001) to the farmers/rural dwellers.

- *Failure of the Programme:*

Some problems that occurred in the course of executing the projects were:

- ✓ Shortage of fund due to decline in oil prices that started in 1982 which led to delays in recruiting competent staff

and provision or purchasing of materials and facilities needed for the projects take off. This made implementation much slower than scheduled.

- ✓ Secondly, ADP emphasizes more on modern/ high input technology like sole cropping while majority of the farmers practiced mixed/relay cropping.
- ✓ There was also untimeliness of subsidized input supply for the programme.
- ✓ High frequency of labour mobility, limited involvement of input agencies, dwindling funding policies and counterpart funding, intricacies of technology transfer etc.

➤ *Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)*

This programme evolved on 21st May 1976 under the military regime of General Olusegun Obasanjo. The programme was launched in order to bring about increased food production in the entire nation through the active involvement and participation of everybody in every discipline thereby making every person to be capable of partly or wholly feeding him or herself. Under this programme every available piece of land in urban, sub-urban and rural areas was meant to be cultivated while government provided inputs and subsidies (like Agrochemicals, fertilizers, improved variety of seed/seedlings, day olds chicks, matchets, sickle, hoes etc) freely to government establishments. Individuals received these inputs at a subsidized rate.

• *Failure of the Programme:*

The failure of the programme can be attributed to:

- ✓ Farming was done on any available piece of land irrespective of its suitability for agriculture.
- ✓ Majority of the participants in the programme had little or no farming background and there was no formal or informal preparatory teaching or advice given to them on how to manage their farms.
- ✓ They practiced mono cropping instead of mixed/ relay cropping and relied on hired labour to carry out their farming activities, which resulted in high input and low output /yield per unit of land.
- ✓ Preference was given to government establishments and individuals in authority/administration over the poor farmers (real producer of food) in terms of input supply.
- ✓ There was abundance of food in the market and less demand for the food because many people produced part or almost whole food they consumed.
- ✓ There was incidence of endemic poultry diseases especially new castle disease that wiped out the birds due to lack of quarantine and necessary routine inoculation /vaccination.

➤ *The Green Revolution Programme (GRP)*

The Green Revolution programme was formally launched on June 3, 1980 by Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the GRP was a replacement for OFN.

• *Objectives of the Programme:*

GRP was to ensure that Nigeria attains self-sufficiency in food production within five years. The programme

depended on the ministry 8 based extension system and was instrumental to raising mass awareness on the problems of food confronting the nation. The FGN ensured the success of the programme by providing agrochemicals, improved seeds/seedlings, irrigation system, machine, credit facilities, improved marketing and favourable pricing policy for the agricultural products and encouraged farmers to produce food, cash crops, and livestock.

• *Failure of the Programmes:*

The programme failed because there was delay in executing most of the projects involved in the programme.

- ✓ There was also no monitoring and evaluation of the projects for which huge sums of money were spent. It is necessary to understand here that the Green Revolution was a continuation of Operation Feed the Nation.
- ✓ They programmes were supposed to provide the desirable result but failed, because of mismanagement of funds and proper monitoring. It was not properly articulated.

III. GAPS IN THE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMMES/ POLICIES

Several gaps and challenges have been identified in the various agricultural programmes and policies of government in the past. The gaps identified is based on the believe and the fact that policies that are not implemented, impact assessment carried out and seen to have impacted positively on the people and the economy will invariably be seen and regarded as failed policies/programmes.

The gaps on the programmes/ policies included:

➤ *Lack of Bottom-up Approach and Non-Interactions with Stakeholder:*

The common problem that is noticeable in Nigeria as far as public policies and programmes are concern is the inability of policy makers to carry out research, using the necessary research techniques to interact with the intended beneficiary of such projects and programmes, thereby rendering a seemingly good policy inconclusive and projects that will turn out to be useless to the people. In the same vein, the continued absence of progress in these policies and programmes in agriculture in Nigeria is the consequence of non-interaction between the government and the various stakeholders within a particular programme as well as lack of opportunities for decision making and policy dialogue with other stakeholders such as: agriculturists, scientists researchers and more importantly the farmers/rural dwellers are usually ignored during planning and implementation of agricultural/rural development policies and programmes. (Iwuchukwu & Igboke, 2012).

➤ *Inconsistency/Lack of Continuity in Programmes/ Policies:*

Inconsistency in agricultural programmes and policies stem from the incompatibility and harmony between regional and national policies, making such programmes and policies a mirage to the actualization of its objectives and

for a successful food security. Lack of continuity in policies by successive administration attest to the fact that policies and programmes are not meant to bring development and the needed change in the agricultural sector, but for self-aggrandizement and for settlement of political cronies. These very facts buttresses the reason why there is always a fire brigade approach to policies and programmes that concerns the agricultural sector. A programme and policy that consider the people, real farmers and beneficiary in the policy framing and formulation has strong propensity to succeed. According to Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe (2012, p. 7), “The good rapport /relationship and peaceful atmosphere will always ensure success of agricultural policies and programme and consequent agricultural development.”

➤ *Politicization of Agricultural Programmes/Policies:*

Elite theory to public policy making has it that public policy is simply the ‘reflection of the values and preferences of the ruling elites’. In other words, the ruling elites and political office holders and policy makers decides who benefits from any public policy including agricultural policies. This is where politicization of agricultural programmes and policies comes to play which are submerged with embezzlement, misappropriation and other forms of corrupt practices. In this vein, more often than not, farmers are ‘political farmers’, not the real farmers, thereby thwarting a perceived sound and people-oriented policy/programme.

Lack of programme monitoring is seen as a calculated effort to embezzling funds meant for a viable agricultural programme. Project or programme monitoring is a key to successful implementation. Evaluation is purposely done to determine achievements of rural development programme vis a vis the set aims/objectives. Evaluation techniques can serve to improve implementation and efficiency of programmes after interventions have begun, provide evidence as to the cost efficiency and impact of a specific intervention within and between policy sectors (FAO, 2003). Evaluations especially continuous/on-going and stage by stage evaluation are important because they expose lapses associated with achievement of programme objectives thereby affording opportunities for adjustment. Unfortunately importance of monitoring and evaluation have not gained full recognition in Nigeria. This is evident in Green Revolution Programme where there was no monitoring and evaluation of programme which huge sums of money was spent on executing. (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012).

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory that is applicable and suitable in this study is the theory of sustainable development propounded by Professor Frank (2015) called *Plantain theory of sustainable development*. According to the theory, any policy pursued by the State, and investment meant for Sustainable Development, should be able to behave like the sucker of ‘musa paradisiaca’ (plantain), for sustainable human development.

Plantain is a common food plant dominant in Africa, Latin America and many parts of the world and serve as a stable food crops for some countries some of which are; Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria to mention but a few. Its scientific name is *Musa Paradisiaca*. *Musa* being the genus name and ‘*Paradisiaca*’ being the specie name. They are large perennial, herbaceous plants that consist of underground stem the ‘corm’, ‘bulb’, or rhizome with 200-500 fibrous roots from which it propagate by sprout or suckers. This is an illustration of sustainability.

The theory stressed the situation in which a leader generate and execute social and economic development policies in which every project duly implemented serves as the plantain ‘bulb’ or ‘rhizome’ by sprouting into several other positive indices in terms of human development which are beneficial to the society. Thus; by fixing the stem in the environment (this imply leadership, which planned to keep hunger away), because it is perennial, it last for a very long time before it could be destroyed.

Any policy or programme on agriculture in Nigeria should have the nature of *musa paradisiaca* for sustainable development. This is because agricultural policies should not be a temporary policy or a fire brigade approach used. A sustainable development through agriculture would produce more benefits and produce a multiplier effects in development of the Nigerian economy with less or no harmful environmental degradation.

➤ *The Three Approaches to the Successful Revamping of the Agricultural Sector*

There have been numerous national agricultural programs in Nigeria in the past fifty years. These programs were aimed at creating jobs as well as bringing about economic and national development, food sufficiency amongst other objectives. All the programs such as:

National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP, 1972), Agricultural Development Project (ADP, 1975), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN, 1976) and the Green Revolution Program (GRP, 1980); National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA, 1992) were put in place to fulfill the aims stated above.

These approaches is based on the fact that Nigeria has untapped gold mine (agricultural-sector) and also that there is no food security in the country. If the agricultural sector is heavily invested for business and fully tapped, it would not only provide the country with about 75% to 80% increase of its GDP but also to diminish youth insatiable interest in politics.

- *The Three Approaches are:*
- ✓ *Provision of Market and Mechanism for Export (PMME)*
- ✓ *The Massive Self Involvement (MSI)*
- ✓ *Gentleman Farmer Approach (GFA)*

➤ *The Provision of Market and Mechanism for Export (PMME)*

Under this approach, government at all levels (federal, states and local government), corporate and private investors can provide market for farmers; whether commercial or medium scale farmers to encourage many people especially the youth to realize the untapped gold mine in the agricultural sector and venture into it as business that could boom and improve the economy of the country more beneficial than the crude oil with its attendant environmental hazards and degradation.

Nigeria is said to be approximately 150,000,000 by population. This is a ready-made market for Nigerians, if local foods and delicacies are promoted and consumed within the country. This fact apart, agriculture could be done as business if industries that would process these agricultural produce into finished and consumable goods are established. If industries to produce cassava flour, tomato paste, (tin tomato), canned foods like geisha, beef, beverages, confectionaries, groundnut oil, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, rubber products etc. these industries would be a source for farmers to sell their farm produce without labouring for the middlemen in the distribution chain to benefit to the detriment of those who toil to produce. This ugly scenario is rampant in the rural areas. The rural farmers who produce the greater per cent of food and other agricultural produce are discouraged to farm in large proportion as a result of lack of market to sell their farm produce. Here, the middlemen buy at a 'begging' and 'take away' prices, expatriating same to the urban centers and make huge profits.

The PMME approach, if taken seriously and as a matter of utmost priority, farmers would not only have market to sell their produce profitably, but would be encouraged to farm in large quantity, hence, the need to export to other countries. Again the government has as a duty to make necessary provisions for exportation of the excess/surplus farm produce to other countries. Corporate bodies and individual entrepreneurs could also involve in facilitating the exportation process. Governments in this case provide the necessary environment and the necessary laws. For instance, there should be laws regulating standard price for farm produce and the scaling system in selling to avoid a situation whereby buyers / middlemen cheats and shortchange farmers.

There is the need for revival of commodity boards which will promote commodity stabilization schemes, mediate prices, provides services and incentive mechanisms for farmers as well as quality control, particularly on cash crops. The adoption and implementation of the PMME approach for the successful revamping of the agricultural sector would further boost the sector and encourage and promote the next approach which is the Massive Self Involvement (MSI) approach.

➤ *The Massive Self-Involvement (MSI)*

The MSI approach is predicated upon the PMME approach. The take-off of MSI approach is based on the

success of the PMME approach. The prominent believe here is that when there is market for farmers to sell their farm produce, they would be many people that would be attracted to the agricultural sector to farm for business. Under the PMME approach, the establishment of industries that would use various farm produce as raw materials for finished and consumable goods and the mechanism and regulation for exportation of surplus farm produce is a way of changing the mind set of people about agriculture. When agriculture is carried out as business with good and reasonable profits made from it, there would be a massive participation and involvement in agriculture for business – hence the approach MSI.

Under MSI approach, people would massively and voluntarily involve themselves in farming to make profits. Although the PMME approach is a sound and attractive foundation for the MSI approach, government still have vital roles to play for complete success. The fact remains that, if many people and corporate bodies involve in large scale and commercial farming, there would be many roles government need to play in the area of distributing subsidized fertilizer equitably and directly to the real farmers, provisions of loans (both soft and refundable), grant, subsidized farm tools and machineries at a subsidized services, insecticides, pesticides, storage facilities, subsidized seedlings, (improved varieties) and other farm usable.

All these provisions can only be successful, devoid of politics and favouritism, if it is made accessible directly to the real farmers. The MSI approach, with the effective government distribution of farm implements and services and accessible loans would not only attracts unemployed youths-both skilled and unskilled to venture into farming as business, but will also attract and encourage investors to come in for business. Investors would invest either on farming (as people are willing and ready to farm) or in the establishment of industries for the production of finished and unfinished products for exportation or expatriation to their mother or home country.

This approach would guarantee food sufficiency as even those who cultivate for domestic or household consumption would sell the surplus for cash. Every household would be encouraged to farm for their consumptions and for revenue generation. This in essence is a way of diverting Nigerian youth's insatiable appetite for politics as a ready-made and quick avenue of becoming richer overnight.

The federal ministry of agriculture can invite the World Bank team on agriculture to explore ways and means of prompting agricultural production in Nigeria by way of rehabilitating and resuscitation of cocoa production, groundnuts, cotton, millet, guinea corn and cowpeas and palm oil plantation schemes in the country. The blending of factors such as technology, appropriate physical inputs, extension services, market and basic infrastructural facilities in the rural areas is essential for the enhancing and success of the MSI approach. It is crystal clear that almost nothing can be successful without the availability and constant

power supply. Of course no economy of any country of the world can succeed without electricity. The federal government, state government and the partnership with some world organizations such as the World Bank etc. has so much to do for the success of MSI approach and the general successful revamping of the agricultural sector. The federal government has to disburse grants through the federal ministry of agriculture and water resources, generation of power in partnership with state governments and the World Bank can provide the necessary loans and other aid.

A further look and consideration of the rural areas in the area of the following provisions would further boost the MSI approach:

- The construction of small dams, wells and boreholes for rural water supply schemes and feeder roads for the evacuation of farm products.
- The provision of power for rural electrification schemes from suitable irrigation dams another types of power stations
- The establishment of agro services centres
- The establishment of grazing reserves and
- The training of staff for the running and maintenance of rural development schemes and for general extension work at the village level (Cross River Basin News, no.1, April, 1984:2).

In addition to the above, Nigeria as a country has the capacity to generate electricity based on her natural resources such as good climatic condition for solar power, waste and agricultural product for bio-gas which will give a constant power supply for favourable agricultural operations.

Many scholars, authors and experts have shown keen interest on how the agricultural sector could be revived to return to its past glory and for food sufficiency and employment.

The Massive self-involvement (MSI) approach would further be straighten and brought to fruition if what Eminue (2005:396) has succinctly pointed out as strategies for increasing agricultural production are rekindle, reinvented and taken into consideration for the successful revamping of the agricultural sector:

- Increased budgeting allocation for agriculture must not only be disbursed but also prevented from being cornered by unintended beneficiaries.
- Access to agricultural credit by genuine farmers on terms that de-emphasize collaterals must be guaranteed.
- Provision of adequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity, rural feeder roads, potable Water and health care delivery, including access to arable land resources, must be guaranteed. The land use laws must be redesigned to permit re-allocation of land to those who wish to farm but have no access to arable and. Over cultivation and overgrazing must be discouraged.

- Technological innovations must be created, disseminated and adopted. Farming households must increase their access to improved technologies, which are well-funded and kept functioning effectively. The use of modern technologies such as zero tillage, alley farming and application of manure, should be encouraged in place of wholesome deforestation for agricultural production.
- Access to inputs devoid of political consideration and to the exclusion of middlemen who tend to benefit from agricultural activities.
- Inculcation of agricultural insurance culture.
- Government intervention in agricultural cooperatives should be minimized and, rather, government should concentrate on supervisory, guidance and monitoring activities. Government should create a conclusive policy environment for the development of member – operated and member-controlled co-operative societies.
- Capacity-building programmes for training farmers and other rural people on project identification/imitation, planning, evaluation and monitoring should be launched.

In this computer and globalization era, farmers and other rural dwellers need to be well –informed about world commodity prices and other rural situations as well as national outlooks.

- Agricultural policies, programmes and strategies should be allowed to endure, mature and outline their initiators so as to be well tested for their weak and strong points to be identified.
- Outlets and storage facilities should be found for the surpluses produces by the farmers with attractive prices.

➤ *Gentleman Farmers Approach (GFA)*

This approach is similar to what is obtainable in Europe – where people working in factories would dress well and change into the factory attire for the day's work. The GFA is an alternative to Nigerians who have the chronic desire for office work to satisfy their wants. Under this approach, government, corporate bodies and multinational companies can establish farms; mostly plantations and large hectares of farm lands whereby people, especially graduates can work. The federal and state governments can achieve this in collaboration with ministries of agriculture and agricultural extension agencies. This kind of farming, in order to attract gentlemen to work daily like in other government or public jobs, it should be basically mechanized farming, all necessary farm equipment and facilities – both for farming and for workers to be motivated.

There should be offices for these workers with all the facilities enjoyed by others in all sphere of government work, because nowadays, the strain of farming is more mental than physical. With good and conducive working condition, the approach can succeed and whatever could be achieved in the agricultural sector through this approach. The idea is that, people employed in this farming company or farming corporation or whatever nomenclature that may be given to the scheme, would be motivated, since they

would see their job as the usual going to work daily and closing at the official hour – without seeing it as punishment or as dirty and demeaning job.

The gentleman farmer approach (GFA) is capable of employing many people from almost every discipline. This would further make the approach and scheme smooth and successful. To say that this approach would generate and increase/improve the economy and people working under the approach, well paid – is an understatement.

According to Titilola (1998) in Eminue (2005:383) “... the impact of the agricultural sector on the industrial sector is greater than that of the industrial sector on the agricultural sector”. This shows that agriculture transcend all spheres and sectors. Suffice it to say that this approach is capable of employing many Nigerians across different disciplines. What government require to do for the success of this approach is serious investment in the area of setting aside and acquiring land, all necessary farm tools, equipment and machines for all types of agriculture (crop and animal husbandry etc.), necessary laws, and adequate budgetary provision etc.

This approach does not only favour those who studied agricultural science and related fields; but other people in other disciplines and both skilled and unskilled labour and educated and uneducated with the necessary and proper orientation and training and retraining. The approach would further promote the PMME and MSI approaches. Researchers and scientists employed under GFA would provide hybrid seeds, herbicides, precise fertilizers, training and advice on best farming techniques.

The GFA would (if adequately implemented) change and re-oriented the minds of Nigerians about the effect of over-dependence on crude oil and the need to go back to agriculture for its tremendous benefits to the country. Thomas Malthus, a late 18th century Anglican Clergyman, who was worried that human population would outrun available resources, had predicted decades ago, that hunger, pestilence and disease would ensue if food production increased at arithmetical ratio while population grew at a geometrical progression.(Eminue, 2005). Malthus was absolutely right considering the population of Nigeria. But the effective exploitation of these three approaches (PMME, MSI, and GFA) does not only target food sufficiency which Malthus advocated, but also employment and a meaningful one at that for Nigeria’s teeming unemployed youths.

V. CONCLUSION

The agricultural sector and the provision of meaningful employments to all unemployed Nigerians would be a Brobdingnagian success if the three approaches (PMME, MSI and GFA) as propounded are expeditiously implemented. These approaches would certainly stabilize the economy of the country – making it one of the top vibrant and successful economies of the world.

An assessment of food production at the world level revealed that there is not food security which presents a good opportunity for Nigeria to tape to improve its foreign exchange and general economic growth:

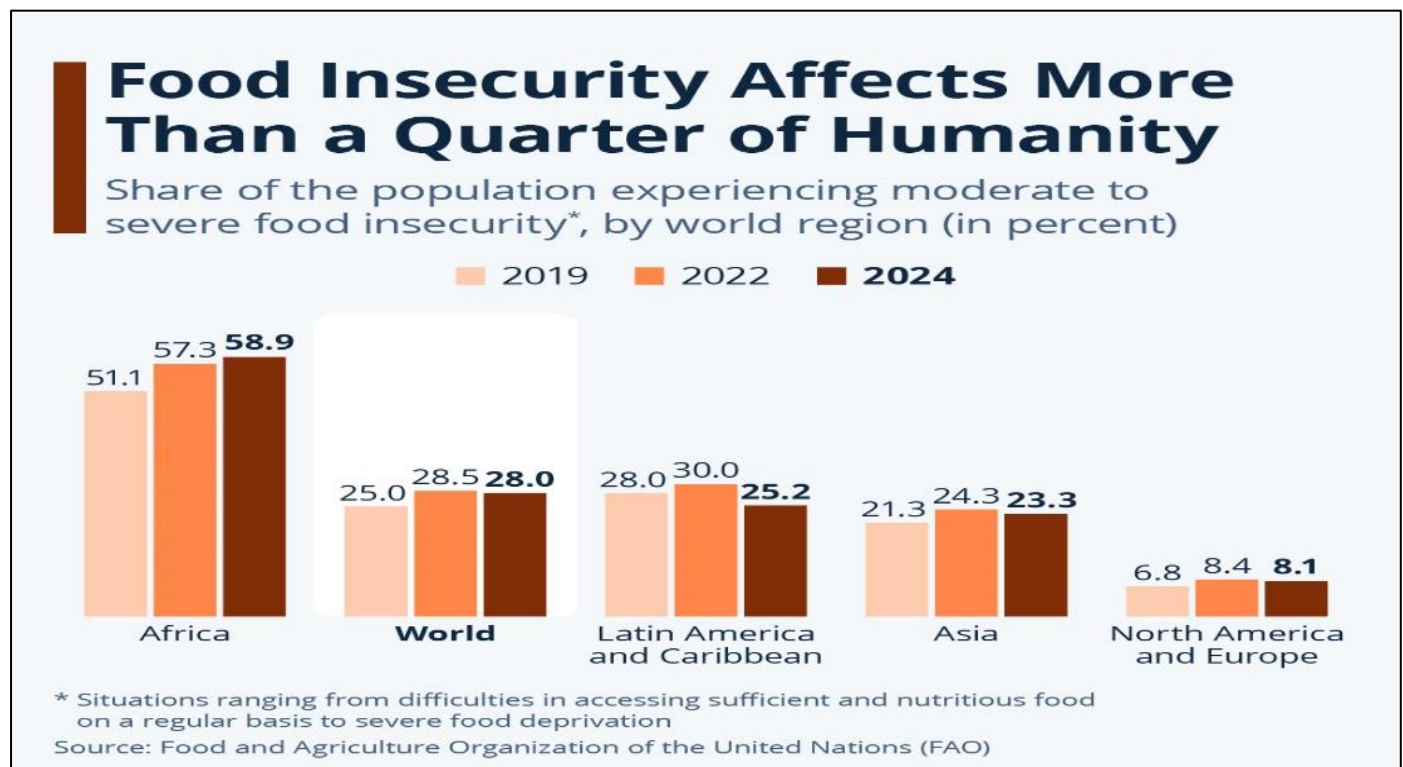


Fig 1 Food Insecurity Affects more than a Quarter of Humanity
Sources: felix.richter@statista.com (2025)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) latest status report on world hunger, around 670 million people across the globe faced hunger in 2024. According to the FAO's latest estimates, about 2.3 billion people, or 28 percent of the world's population, were moderately or severely food insecure in 2024. While that's down from 28.5 percent in 2022, it's a significant increase from 21.4 percent in 2015 and from 25 percent in 2019, the last year before the Covid-19 pandemic destroyed years of progress in the fight against hunger and food insecurity. According to FAO, 58.9 percent of the African population was experiencing moderate (including not enough money for healthy food, self-sufficiency problems, having to skip meals) or severe (including no food stocks, entire days without food) food insecurity. According to the report, this represents an increase of 7.8 percentage points, since 2019.

The above assessment buttress the need for agriculture to be taken as serious investment in Nigeria with her numerous natural resources to facilitate the needed development through agriculture. This is nothing more than the effective exploitation of the favourable weather and climatic conditions of the country; and her good soil and topographical advantages – couple with her abundant natural and human resources, the three approaches are capable of leading the country into economic Eldorado.

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