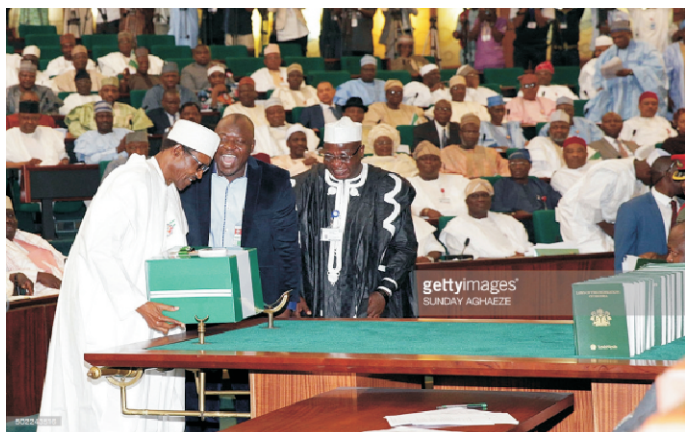


ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET FOR AGRICULTURE

1.0. INTRODUCTION



President Muhammadu Buhari presenting N6.08trn 2016 budget to the senate chambers

The year 2016 has become one of the most critical moments of economic turbulence ever in the history of Nigeria, and the agriculture sector which contributes about 22% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (after the rebasing of the economy) is therefore seen by many as the strongest sector and potential instrument for stability and sustainability. It is generally deemed as the most equipped for the nation's required diversification of the economy, import substitution, employment generation (especially among women and youths), poverty reduction and sustainable development. The foregoing was corroborated and highlighted by President Muhammadu Buhari's speech while presenting the 2016 budget to the Parliamentarians at the National Assembly.

Agriculture remains the largest employer of labour in Nigeria, employing over two-third of the nation's workforce population. There is no doubt that the agriculture sector made the immediate past administration in Nigeria popular. This was made possible through novel policy initiatives, strategies and actions that not only promoted access to inputs to small scale farmers but also focused attention on promoting farming as a serious business.

On the 29th of May 2015, the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari was inaugurated to lead Nigeria for the next four years, and the

Administration came through a slogan of 'change' which implies a difference in the running of affairs of the nation including governance at the various levels. According to the ruling party's manifesto, the 'change mantra' is fundamental and provides the anchor for every instrument of governance in order to achieve the required socio-economic development of the country. This becomes very imperative especially in the face of the nation's recent dwindling revenue. The new Minister of Agriculture had upon resumption also promised to follow through with many of the laudable initiatives of the past administration, and this was commended by many. Indeed, the budget is therefore seen as the most essential tool to exhibit the direction of government, the proposed investment focus, as well as the direction of planning and allocation of scarce resources for the nation's development, and consequently becomes the first instrument of change for the administration.

Before now, budgets in Nigeria have always allocated 'extra-large' percentages to recurrent expenses against capital projects, and a large chunk of these recurrent expenses have always found its way to the payment of 'ghost' (non-existent) workers as well as frivolous, illegal, and over-bloated line items of overhead. In addition, little or no recognition have always been given to gender issues in planning and budget implementation.

Non State Actors (NSAs) organisations have continuously advocated for these budget abnormalities to be corrected and sizes of allocations efficiently trimmed to optimum levels. Such advocacies have also been directed at the need for lumped sums such as the allocation to the National Assembly to be broken down for the citizens to understand how their collective wealth is utilised. While it cannot be said that 100 per cent fulfilment of citizens' demands has been achieved, nonetheless, it is clear that previous governments attempted to modify some budget practices. However, within the 'change mantra' as projected by the current Administration, the degree to which budget idealism in planning, transparency in implementation, and accountability in evaluation and reporting (Budget Change) is mainstreamed will henceforth be placed

under scrutiny. The 2016 agriculture sector Budget is the first by the administration and will form the genesis of this scrutiny.

1.1. Rationale for and Objective of the 2016 Agric Budget X-ray

The rationale behind the examination on the budget for agriculture is that the present administration harps on job creation, diversification of the economy away from oil, import substitution, reduction of food imports, etc., and all of these are anchored on the agriculture sector.

This analysis therefore not only considers an overview of the various key components of the overall and sector budget, but establishes its perceived strengths and weaknesses, considers the sectoral allocation against international benchmarks, evaluates its relations to the policy thrust and ancillary policies of government for the sector (in terms of sufficiency to the relevant projects that will help achieve the targets of the sector policies), compares the 2016 allocations to those of 2015 to determine whether there are percentage increases or decreases to the sector, compares capital to recurrent expenses to determine the extent of departure from the character of previous trends, conducts a gender appraisal to see how much of the needs of men and women farmers especially are differently planned for in the budget and how much of projects that have capacity to impact small scale farmers (SSFs) especially youths are accommodated in the budget, analyses the budgetary process at the federal level of government to identify entry points for stakeholders' advocacy and potentials, and of course makes recommendations for improving the process and outcome of agricultural budgeting in Nigeria, and particularly the 2016 budget.

2.0. AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2016 BUDGET



Audu Ogbeh as Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in his 2016 budget briefing to the press

Table 1: Summary of the details of 2016 proposed budget

Item	Value
Total Budget	6,077,680,000,000
Statutory Transfers	351,370,000,000
Debt Service	1,475,320,000,000
Recurrent Expenditure	2, 648,600,000,000
Capital Expenditure	1,845,540,000,000
% of total capital to total budget	30.36%
% of total recurrent to total budget	43.58%
Revenue Projection	3.86 trillion
Deficit	2.20 trillion ¹
Crude Price per barrel	\$38
Oil production	2.2million per Day
Total allocation to FMARD (Agriculture)	76,753,672,273
Total personnel to FMARD (Agriculture)	28,052,924,405
Total Overhead to FMARD (Agriculture)	1,699, 622,233
Total recurrent to FMARD (Agriculture)	29,752,546,639
Total capital to FMARD (Agriculture)	47,001,125,634
% of agriculture to the total budget	1.26%
% of personnel to Agriculture total budget	36.54%
% of overhead to Agriculture total budget	2.21%
% of capital to Agriculture total budget	61.23%
% of Agriculture capital to overall capital budget	2.54%

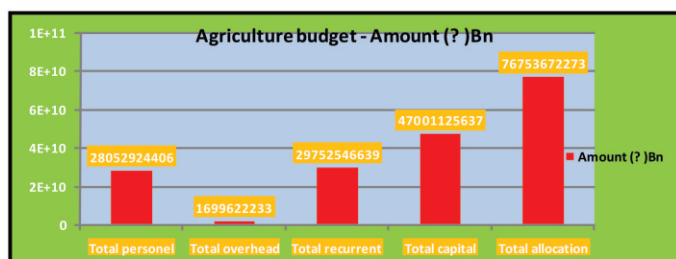
Table 1: showing the highlights of the 2016 total and agriculture budget

The table above shows the major highlights of the 2016 budget and that of agriculture. It can be observed that out of a total budget of NGN 6,077,680,000,000, agriculture sector got a total allocation of NGN76,753,672,273 representing 1.26% which is an improvement from the 0.90% allocation for 2015. It can also be seen that 30.36% of the overall proposed 2016 budget is planned as capital expenditure which is a total departure from the recent past. For example, the capital budget for 2015 was 8.88% while that of 2014 is 23.85%. The import of this positive development is that, all things being equal, there may be more capital projects than under previous budgets.

Specifically, with respect to the agriculture budget which amounts to NGN76,753,672,273, 36.54% thereof (NGN28,052,924,405) is planned for personnel costs, 2.21% (NGN 1,699,622,233) is proposed for overheads, while the largest chunk amounting to NGN47,001,125,634 (61.23%) is proposed for capital expenditure. It is also noteworthy that the agriculture capital budget as a percentage of the total capital budget is 2.54%.

¹With the drop in oil price per barrel to below USD30, budget deficit may be rolling towards N3trn.

Chart 1: Proposed Agriculture budget at a glance



2.1. Potential Strengths of the 2016 Budget/Agriculture Budget

There are key things that appear to attract positive comments and commendations for the proposed 2016 budget, and these include:

Increase in Capital Projects: The 2016 budget proposes to focus on capital projects both at the overall budget level and at the agriculture sector level. The proposal of 30.36% and 61.23% to capital development at the overall and sector level respectively is a demonstration of government's commitment to the development of the sector and the nation as a whole. Specifically, it implies that at both levels there are plans to improve the infrastructure (more roads, silos, water supply equipment, health facility equipment, etc) which eventually leads to socio-economic development.

Capital expenditure refers to the amount spent in the acquisition of fixed (productive) assets (whose useful life extends beyond the accounting or fiscal year), as well as expenditure incurred in the upgrade / improvement of existing fixed assets such as lands, building, roads, machines and equipment, etc., including intangible assets². Expenditure in education and research also falls within the context of capital expenditure. Capital expenditure in government's budget is usually seen as the aspect of the budget that is beneficial to the citizens in terms of creating jobs. The kind of projects that monies should be expended on are things like the establishment of plantations, purchase of agricultural equipment, construction of processing/storage mills, construction of rural feeder roads etc.

Reduction in Overhead, Personnel and Service-Wide

Votes: It is unprecedented in Nigeria's expenditure plan (at least for the last 10 years), that the national budget proposes reduction of overheads by at least 7%, personnel costs by 8% and other service wide votes by 19%. This commendable approach implies that more funds would be freed and may be channeled to capital expenditure and development

projects. The reduction is envisaged to happen through the implementation of the Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS) and the introduction of continuous audit process that are all meant to control the ghost workers syndrome. There is a presidential commitment that the 2016 budget will be executed to provide optimum value for every Naira spent by this Government (paragraph 39 of the Presidential Budget Speech (PBS)).

Zero-budgeting and Justification-Based

Expenditure: The 2016 budget is based on zero-budgeting principle as postulated in paragraph 17 of the Presidential Budget Speech presented to the Legislature on 22nd December 2015. The zero-budgeting principle means that every proposed expenditure has to be justified and not based on increments or otherwise of what used to be spent on that line item. This ideally should lead to more efficient management of national funds available for expenditure. The extent to which the MDAs imbibe this principle and are willing to adopt it make the practice a potential challenge.

The Promised Capital Projects focused Borrowing:

Paragraph 41 of the PBS states that, "our 2016 borrowings will be principally directed to fund our capital projects". If this happens in reality, it will justify the borrowing that is planned to fund the deficit of NGN2.20trillion because investments in capital projects will ultimately translate to national development as argued earlier.

Consideration of Inclusive Budgeting Process:

Perhaps the most important strength of the 2016 budget in terms of process is that the President promises to "...welcome and be responsive to citizens' feedback and criticisms" (paragraph 50 of PBS), implying that changes to the proposal from the Legislature and inputs from civil society and professional opinions are going to be considered in arriving at the 2016 Appropriation Act. This listening and interactive attitude is quite an asset to the efficient running of government because resource management wisdom is not a monopoly held by the Executive.

2.2. Some Weaknesses of the 2016 Agriculture Budget

Poor Revenue Base and Deficit Status: In terms of revenue generation, the 2016 budget is predicated on the revenue projection of NGN3.86 trillion, of which about 75% was planned to be earned from daily crude oil sales of 2.2 million barrels at \$38 each. However, between the commencement of budget planning and

²Oziengbe Scott Aigheyisi, (2012) The Relative Impacts of Federal Capital and Recurrent Expenditures on Nigeria's Economy (1980-2011) American Journal of Economics p-ISSN: 2166-4951 e-ISSN: 2166-496X 2013; 3(5): 210-221 doi:10.5923/j.economics.20130305.02

when it actually came to the Legislature for appropriation, the price of crude in the international market had fallen to somewhere around \$28 per barrel thereby already creating a loss of \$10 multiplied by 2.2million barrels per day amounting to \$22million daily. What this means is that there will be less than planned revenue to balance the planned expenditure.

Taxing the Already Poor to fund the 2016 Budget:

One of the economic remedies to deal with the deficit is as the President put it in the PBS (paragraph 15), to diversify the revenue sources and size to include “broader tax base and improving the effectiveness of our revenue collecting agencies”. Different direct and indirect taxes will crop up now in the form of more payments in:

- i. property taxes;
- ii. business permits;
- iii. company profit taxes;
- iv. vehicle licenses;
- v. Custom and Excise duties and new introductions such as the Stamp Duty tax where Nigerians will now pay NGN50 for every NGN1000 received in some transfers.

While this (taxation) is a standard strategy for resolving economic situations as deficit, it becomes a problem given that about 60-65% of Nigerians are still living below 0.5 dollar a day. When Nigerians are losing their jobs through retrenchment and termination of appointment with many economically depressed companies and the government plans to introduce extra taxes to make up for deficit of \$22million daily, it becomes a potential disservice to the populace and also somewhat unrealistic. More so, the chase for tax revenue has the capacity of increasing multiple-taxation across the States and ultimately thwarting the private sector’s investments plans.

A weak Attempt at the Maputo Benchmark Target:

While the increase in allocation to agriculture as a percentage of the federal budget from 0.90% in 2015 to 1.26% in 2016 is commendable as is the allocation of 61.23% of the agriculture budget to capital projects, the budget as proposed is still very weak in that it is still a very far cry from the international benchmarks set for African countries investment to the sector for optimal development.

Justification of Zero Budgeting missing in the

Allocations: Whereas the current budget year harped on justification for every budget line and allocation, yet this is lacking in every sense within the zero budget concept.

Discrepancy between the Budget Speech and the Reality:

While presenting the 2016 budget proposal at the National Assembly, the President noted that it is “a budget for the diversification of the economy, job creation, elimination of leakages, inclusive growth, and security”. However, in reality, both overall allocation to agriculture as well as specific line items do not show agriculture as a priority sector to the administration. The true reflection is that critical agric focused interventions that possess the capacity to create jobs such as the Growth Enhancement Scheme (GES), the cassava policy and others are not given any space in the 2016 agric budget.



Agriculture as the new oil business in Nigeria- Does this reflect with the budget?

Poor Attention to Small Scale Framers (SSFs): Placing a mirror on the 2016 budget, it is difficult to pinpoint specific SSFs-focused (especially women) interventions that the budget seeks to engage on; yet, this is the constituency that produces the major chunk of local food consumed in Nigeria.

3.0. MAJOR FINDINGS, CONSIDERATIONS AND ANALYSIS

3.1. The Proposed Budget has Poor Per Capita Investment

Based on 2.3% growth rate of the 2006 population census figures³, the National Population Commission estimates the Nigerian population in 2016 to be 178.52million. Looking at the proposed budgetary allocation to agriculture (NGN76,753,672,273) what amount per Nigerian is the nation investing in the agricultural sector. The per capita investment is N429.94k but since the investments at the states and local governments⁴ are not included in this matrix, the investments are definitely greater than that. But for the purposes of this review, it may be fairly assumed that agriculture investments of all the states and local governments added to the federal bit may bring the per capita agriculture investment much higher than the above figure.

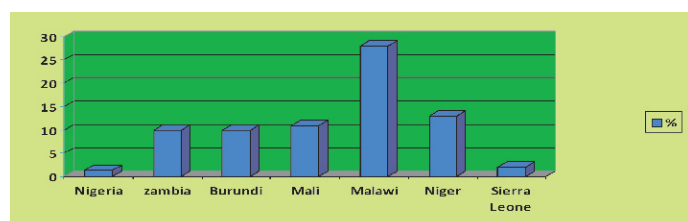
³BusinessDay Sunday 05 August 2012

However, linking this assumption of N429.94K to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 which seeks to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” the question is, can the sum be able to put in place practical measures and materials to meet the food needs of the country? The obvious answer may be NO because on face value it is absolutely impossible to feed a person at that rate for a year even with existing infrastructure and programme interventions in the sector. If agriculture is to be used as a means for achieving this SDG in Nigeria, greater investment is required for the sector. The recommendation is that the sector needs to be sufficiently financed as in other countries at similar levels of development as Nigeria.

3.2. Nigeria's Agriculture Investment is low in comparison with Similar Developing Countries

The figure below shows that as at 2010 (for which we could gather data for comparative analysis), out of seven countries sampled, Nigeria ranked 7th in terms of percentage allocation to public spending in agriculture. According to the report, Niger invested 11% of national budget to agriculture while Nigeria according to local budgetary sources invested 1.33% in 2010. In the light of the Maputo Declaration, Nigeria should be seen to be increasing its percentage allocation to meet the likes of Niger but instead its investment in the sector has dangled from 1.33% in 2010; 1.81% for 2011; 1.66% for 2012; 1.77% for 2013%; 0.90% in 2015 and to 1.26% proposed for 2016. The obvious is that Nigeria has never attained the Maputo Benchmark that stipulates 10% of total budget allocated to agriculture and the argument of government in this regard is that it cannot heed the Maputo Advice with precision due to scarce resources and other competing sectoral needs. While the argument may be tenable, the trend of allocation is not in tandem with the much spoken commitment of government to agriculture. Otherwise, there should have been some progressive growth instead of the trend seen over the years.

Chart 2: showing the percentages of national budgets invested into agriculture by some African nations in 2010



Source: ReSAKSS based on national sources, IFPRI 2011, IMF 2012, and AUC 2008 cited in The Maputo Commitments and the 2014 African Year of Agriculture (ONE, Oct 2013). Data from Nigeria Budget 2010

3.3. FMARD Swallows the Major Chunk of the Agric Sector Budget

Whereas there are forty one (41) Ministries, Agencies and Departments (MDAs) in the agricultural sector, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture gulped around 53% of the total allocation appropriated to the sector while the remaining 40 agencies and departments are left to share the remaining 47%. Very important is that these agencies and departments are actually the implementing agencies of government, while the Ministry is mandated to perform policy and supervisory/regulatory functions on these agencies and departments.

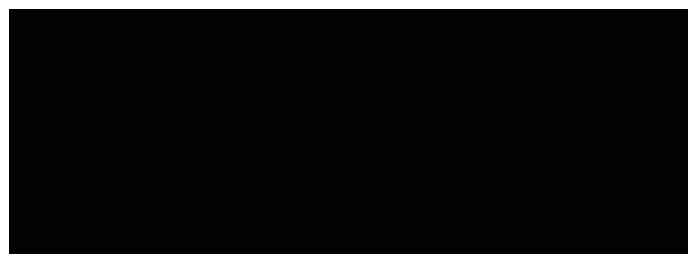
Table 2: Details of allocations to MDAs in Agriculture

	MDAs	Total allocation
1.	Federal Ministry of Agriculture	40,918,856,925
2.	Produce Inspection and Stored Products Technology, Kano	299,062,971
3.	Agricultural Research and Management Institute (ARMTI) –Ilorin	979,107,453
4.	National Centre For Agricultural Mechanisation- Ilorin	1,198,311,942
5.	National Cereals Research Institute Badeggi	1,486,184,344
6.	National Root Crops Research Institute, Umudike	2,729,632,143
7.	National Veterinary Research Institute, Vom	745,303,840
8.	National Institute For Oil Palm Research (NIFOR) – Benin	1,586,048,390
9.	Institute of Agricultural Research- Zaria	1,318,727,552
10.	National Animal Product Research Institute- Zaria	271,475,214
11.	National Horticultural Research Institute Ibadan	1,481,125,089
12.	Cocoa Research Institute- Ibadan	1,175,955,944
13.	Institute Of Agricultural Research and Training- Ibadan	1,227,034,461
14.	Rubber Research Institute- Benin	927,783,050
15.	National Institute of Freshwater Fish- New Bussa	914,007,247
16.	National Agric. Extension Research Liaison Services- Zaria	1,060,020,169
17.	Veterinary Council of Nigeria	131,280,767
18.	Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology – Ibadan	1,237,012,253
19.	Federal College of Agriculture – Akure	514,609,542
20.	Federal College of Agriculture, Moore Plantation- Ibadan	785,883,137
21.	Federal College of Agriculture – Ishiagu	1,643,352,879
22.	Federal College of Fresh Water Fisheries Technology – New Bussa	333,549,968
23.	Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology – Vom	490,084,517
24.	College of Veterinary and Medical Laboratory Technology – Vom	398,303,105
25.	Federal College of Fresh Water Fisheries – Baga	483,586,772
26.	Federal College of Fisheries And Marine Technology – Lagos	1,411,879,881
27.	Federal Co-operative College- Ibadan	275,485,156
28.	Federal Co-operative College- Kaduna	572,449,615
29.	Federal Co-operative College- Oji River	256,793,149
30.	Federal College of Land Resources Technology – Owerri	354,439,673
31.	Federal College of Land Resources Technology, Kuru –Jos	232,988,151
32.	Federal College of Horticulture, Dadinkowa, Gombe	705,286,262
33.	National Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC)	116,729,114
34.	Nigerian Institute of Animal Science	306,915,636
35.	Nigeria Stored Products Research, Ilorin	851,518,183
36.	National Agriculture Seeds Council	1,440,100,685
37.	Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service	204,302,351
	Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria	701,572,998

*Not available at the time of this review

38.	Office of the Permanent Representative to FAO	614 93,804,582
39.	Lake Chad Research Institute Maiduguri	716,072,270
40.	Nigeria Institute of Oceanography and Marine	1,639,001,933
41.	Research	

Chart 3: Share of 2016 propose agric allocations



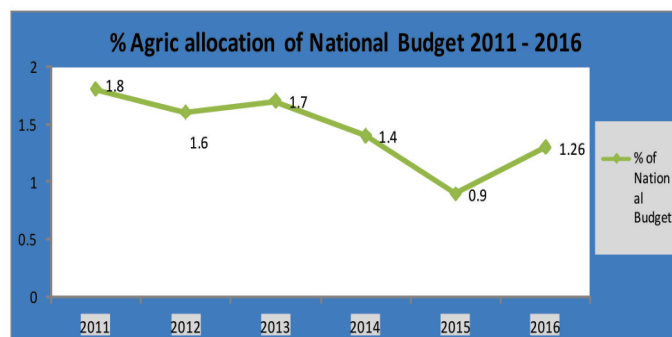
3.4. 2016 Agriculture Budget again fails Maputo/Malabo ECOWAP/CAADP Standards Test

Nigeria is a signatory to the Maputo declaration of 2003 and the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) framework that set a target of investing 10% of national budget to agriculture for achieving 6% annual growth rate in agricultural productivity for African States. As at 2014⁵, the World Bank reports that annual growth rate for Nigerian agriculture was 4.27% showing a gap of 1.73% though CAADP lists Nigeria among some nine countries that have achieved the growth rate target. The federal budget allocation to agriculture has not been anything up to 3% in the last five years. While the 2016 budget proposed a theory of change in dependence on oil for national revenue, it does not display any serious commitment to agriculture as a historical, present and sustainable alternative to oil wealth for Nigeria.

The commitment to increasing investment in Nigeria's agricultural sector is fundamental to growth because over 60 percent of the nation's population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. Greater investment especially for the capital component would have meant more fertilizer, seeds, loans, equipment and machinery being available to Small Scale Farmers (SSFs) who drive Nigeria's food security and are responsible for over 80% of domestic food production.

The chart below shows that although the 2016 appropriation has slightly changed the course of budgetary allocations to the agricultural sector, however, over the years (2011 – 2016) the allocations to the sector have disregarded the Maputo/Malabo commitment of at least 10% of the national budget.

Chart 4: Yearly allocations to agriculture from 2011 to 2016



3.5. Strange Omissions and Concerns

The Absence of GESS, Farm Inputs and Cassava Components in the Budget: Farm inputs are key to current agricultural practice and technology. These inputs include fertilizer (organic and inorganic), seeds, seedlings, insecticides, herbicides, and other agro-chemical items needed by smallholder farmers to increase yield and improve productivity. The 2016 budget proposal has strangely omitted any provision to support smallholder farmers with their farm inputs. Glaringly omitted is the popular Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GESS) that enabled smallholder farmers to access inorganic fertilizer and seeds at subsidized costs without passing through middlemen. Although the scheme had its challenges, it however provided the government the platform to reach smallholder farmers with minimal interference from political and middlemen sharks. It is therefore important for the government to provide information on the status of the GESS. If the scheme has been discontinued, farmers and stakeholders need to know why and if there were adequate consultations leading to such decision.



⁵2015 and 2016 figures are not yet available to this work



In addition to the above is the absence of actions and clear budget lines along the subject of cassava policy in the 2016 budget and this, despite the fact of Nigeria's comparative advantage as the largest producer of cassava in the world and the presence of clear initiatives such as the Cassava Bread Initiative developed and promoted by the immediate previous administration. Following the above is the absence of Youth Empowerment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP) which is a youth targeted agric intervention launched in December 2014 by the Federal Government/last administration. YEAP is a N37 billion program that aims to reach nearly 760,000 youths (20,000 per state and FCT) over a five-year period. The program was designed to tackle key constraints to youth participation including access to land, skills, finance, mechanization and business development.

3.6. Frivolous and Spurious Budget Lines

Although the greater focus of this analysis is on the capital budget because it translates to socio-economic development when implemented, the recurrent budget of the FMARD needs a comment. The allocation to the recurrent expenditure is N6,417,729,716 and has lines such as local travel and transport: Training (N15,178,053); local travel & transport: others (N24,734,604); Electricity charges (N23,329,229); telephone charges (N2,248,600); Water Rates (N3,653,975); office stationaries/computer consumables (N29,795,760); Uniforms and other clothing (N191,131); other maintenance services (N2,248,600); local Training (N12,426,721); security services (N7,589,026); Refreshments and Meals (N2,529,675); and Welfare packages (N24,734,604), etc.

These budget lines contain frivolous estimates such as electricity charges and when it is considered that there is a N3,935,050 budget for maintenance of plants and generators, it attains a ridiculous dimension. Also spurious budgets such as refreshment and meals as well as welfare packages are unreasonable. To discuss the inherent fraud of

these will be too lengthy and sickening but an analytical look at the refreshment and meals for example will drive home the point about resource wastage. There are 253 working days in the year 2016 and the cost of daily refreshment amounts to about N9,998.71. The questions are: (i) Who is refreshed from this budget? (ii) Does this refreshment happen every day? (iii) Does the MDA run a free staff restaurant? (iv) How exactly is this fund spent?

Considering the neighbouring item of welfare package to the tune of N24.73million despite the salaries and allowances claimable by staff and officers of this MDA, is this welfare package for Christmas and Sallah celebrations or to celebrate birthdays of staff? This budget and that of almost all the other MDAs including the Presidency and the NASS is so unfair and almost criminal especially in a country where 70% of the citizens survive daily on the fringes of society and lacking education, health, housing, adequate food and bear extra tax burdens to fund the deficit 2016 budget. These over-bloated, frivolous and repetitive items can be properly and efficiently reallocated so that funds are mopped up and reallocated to critical capital projects and programmes that will help eradicate poverty in Nigeria. If these funds are thus reinvested, the nation will discover a positive shock that it may meet the international benchmarks for investment in social sectors such as education (26%), health (15%) and Agriculture (10%) of annual total budgets.

3.7. Double Charging and Misplaced Budgeting

A run through the sector capital budget details (including that of 40 sector MDAs) reveals the following weird proposals:

Table 3: showing some weird proposals by the agricultural sector

Item	Implementing MDA	Amount	Comments and Concerns
Procurement of 5 Tractors, D-T Caterpillar, Implements and Consumable like Boom Sprayer, Mower Disc, Tarrup, Baler, etc; Maintenance of 12 Tractors,	National Animal Product Research Institute – Zaria	13,500,000	This amount is inadequate suggesting that it may be diverted
Purchase of Polythene Sheets Construction / Provision of Electricity	Cocoa Research Institute – Ibadan	8,460,000	Double/Triple Charging (electricity charges of N1,223,728 and electricity bills N8,460,000 are already in the overhead)
Construction of fertilizer	Institute of Agricultural Research and Training-Ibadan	4,867,066	This is completely ambiguous as its meaning is very difficult to infer
Construction / Provision of Roads	National Institute of Freshwater Fish - New Bussa	14,880,000	Road construction should rather be under the project of the Ministry of Works

Printing of Students Non Security Materials	Federal College of Agriculture, Moore Plantation-Ibadan	32,196,500	The two are one and the same Project, but billed differently
Printing of Students Non Security Materials	Federal College of Agriculture, Moore Plantation-Ibadan	23,800,000	
Advertisement in the dailies, opening ceremony and commencement of Training Programme, Purchase And Distribution of Start-Up Kits, Closing Ceremony and Departure.	Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology – Ibadan	64,350,000	The two are one and the same Project, but billed differently.
Advertisement in the dailies, opening ceremony and commencement of Training Programme, Purchase And Distribution of Start-Up Kits, Closing Ceremony and Departure.	Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology – Ibadan	48,300,000	In any case, how does opening ceremony, closing ceremony and departure amount to costs?

Following these examples, attention is being drawn to the reality that Agriculture and other sector MDAs' budgets are littered with such ambiguous, repetitive, frivolous and misplaced items that may ultimately defraud the nation. Such can be critically reviewed and expunged and the savings rechanneled to genuine capital projects in the budget.

4.0. COMPARING THE 2016 AGRIC BUDGET WITH SUBSISTING POLICY



Finance Minister Kemi Adeosun delivering the budget statement to senate

The Transformation Agenda (TA) was the blueprint adopted by the immediate past administration of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan for socioeconomic development of the nation. It has projects and programmes planned for 2011-2015 with far reaching expected results. Ideally, given the lifespan of the TA, this 2016 based analysis should have focused on a different strategy; however, the challenge is that the present Buhari administration has not yet developed a follow-up policy strategy and hence the constraint and resort to considering the TA.

The TA envisages a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 11.8% translating to N428.6billion and N73.2 trillion for real and nominal GDP respectively by 2015. The Agenda though recognizes the importance of other sectors of the economy to the achievement of its targets and places agriculture as its

main pillar. Similarly, the National Economic Management Team set up by Mr President identified and selected Agriculture as its main beacon for employment generation and poverty reduction and accordingly through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture articulated a programme for implementation called the Agriculture Transformation Agenda (ATA).

The reason for this is that agriculture is expected to contribute about 36% of the expected GDP growth rate by 2015. According to the Transformation Agenda, policies and objectives for developing the Agriculture and food security sector include (a) Secure food and feed needs of the nation; (b) Enhance generation of national and social wealth through greater export and import substitution; (c) enhance capacity for value addition leading to industrialization and employment opportunity; (d) Efficient exploitation and utilization of available agricultural resources; (e) enhance the development and dissemination of appropriate and efficient technology for rapid adoption; (f) achieve self-sufficiency in rice production; and (g) achieve self-sufficiency in fertilizer production. Summarily put the TA set Agriculture as:

- Key sector and driver of the economy to achieve socio-economic transformation of the country
- Employment generator
- Major contributor to GDP growth rate from 7.2% in 2011 to 11.8% in 2015

While these objectives are laudable, there is need to conduct an evaluation before judgement can be reached as to whether or not they were achieved; but that evaluation is yet to happen. In the meantime, the assumption is that they have not been achieved and that so doing will still require national commitment in terms of resource allocation, efficient implementation and patriotic management.

4.1. Funding Requirements of the Transformation Agenda

A review of the funding requirements for the Transformation Agenda reveals that overall public sector investment is N24.46 Trillion with N607,296.10 million for 327 agricultural sector projects and N500,795.59 million for key policies, programmes and projects (KPPP). The Transformation Agenda guarantees that Agriculture capital budget for agriculture/rural development KPPP, in 2016 will be N83,465,931,666.66⁶. However, given the explanation already made above, the adoption of TA as basis for comparison for the 2016 funding therefore subsists.

4.2. Infrastructure Requirements for the Transformation Agenda and Proposed Capital Expenditure in 2016 Budget

The TA did not provide clear infrastructural requirements for achieving its agricultural targets but believing that crafters of the budgets are aware of the TA targets, the FMARD has a budget line for purchase of agricultural equipment worth N1,010,000,000 for 2016 and so do other MDAs for various amounts. But since infrastructure needs of the Agricultural Transformation Agenda were not listed and quantified in monetary terms, less attention is paid to that as what is key is a faithful implementation of the capital votes allocated to the provision of agricultural equipment in the budgets and if so done, the infrastructure needs in the agriculture sector for achieving the targets of the Transformation Agenda may be met significantly.

4.3. Critical Reflection on Line Items of the Budget that have Direct Relevance to the Achievement of the Transformation Agenda

Table 4: showing funding for TA related items in the 2016 Sector budget

S/N	ITEM	IMPLEMENTING MDAS	PROPOSED BUDGET IN 2016
01	PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT	FMARD	1,010,000,000
02	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	FMARD	32,876,127,108
03	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	FMARD	265,000,103
04	PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF PRODUCE INSPECTION AND STORED PRODUCTS TECHNOLOGY, KANO	2,365,900
05	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF PRODUCE INSPECTION AND STORED PRODUCTS TECHNOLOGY, KANO	8,681,460
06	PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	3,408,000
07	CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	15,500,000
08	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	332,859,975
09	TRAINING AND EMPOWERMENT OF FARMERS, WOMEN & YOUTH ON AGRIBUSINESS & MARKETING MANAGEMENT & VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT (VCD) TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) AND EMPOWERMENT OF AGRIC AND AGRIC RELATED GRADUATES AND VILLAGE ALIVE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (VADI) IN FOUR (4) NEW STATES/COMMUNITIES AND TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARCN) EXTENSION SERVICES FOR VCD DEVELOPMENT (ZONAL TRAINING FOR EXTENSION MANAGERS IN FEDERAL/STATES AND OTHER AGENCIES/INSTITUTIONS) AND TRAINING OF YOUTH AND WOMEN ON CASSAVA PROCESSING IN 9 AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES, EZI-	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	332,859,975

	UKWU, ABIA STATE AND AGRIBUSINESS AND OUTREACH ON VCD IN KOGI STATE AND OUTREACH TRAINING ON ORANGE/FRESH POTATOS AS MEANS OF EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND POLICY AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW SEMINAR		
10	PROCUREMENT OF 420 UNITS PUMPING MACHINE FOR DRY SEASON FARMING	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	3,408,000
11	PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT	NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-BADEGGI	40,000,000
12	DESIGN, FABRICATION AND EVALUATION OF A RICE HARVESTER	NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-BADEGGI	1,888,400
13	VALUE ADDITION FOR RICE, ACHA, SOYABEAN AND BENISEED	NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-BADEGGI	16,933,148
14	RESEARCH INTO FARMING SYSTEM IN THE CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL ZONE OF NIGERIA (BENUE, KOGI, FCT, KWARA, NASSARAWA, PLATEAU, NIGER, TARABA STATES) AND DEVELOPMENT OF RICE DESTONNER	NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-BADEGGI	25,053,000
15	RESEARCH INTO BROWN SUGAR PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY & GENETIC IMPROVEMENT OF RICE CROP, ACHA CROP, SUGARCANE CROP, SOYABEN CROP, BENISEED CROP AND CASTOR CROP	NATIONAL CEREALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-BADEGGI	134,171,400
16	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	NATIONAL VETERINARY RESEARCH INSTITUTE-VOM	697,303,840
17	VACCINE PRODUCTION	NATIONAL VETERINARY RESEARCH INSTITUTE-VOM	334,652,799
18	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	NATIONAL ROOT CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-UMUDIKE	453,937,889
19	REHABILITATION / REPAIRS - AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES	NATIONAL ROOT CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-UMUDIKE	10,000,000
20	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	NATIONAL ROOT CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-UMUDIKE	85,500,000
21	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	NATIONAL ROOT CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE-UMUDIKE	6,000,000
22	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES OF THE PALMS AND SHEA	NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OIL PALM RESEARCH (NIFOR) – BENIN	38,000,000
23	SEED AND SEEDLING PRODUCTION OF NIFOR MANDATE CROPS TO MEET NATIONAL DEMAND	NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OIL PALM RESEARCH (NIFOR) – BENIN	47,500,000
24	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OIL PALM RESEARCH (NIFOR) – BENIN	6,000,000
25	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH-ZARIA	141,703,477
26	PROCUREMENT OF 5 TRACTORS, D-T CATERPILLER, IMPLEMENTS AND CONSUMABLE LIKE BOOM SPRAYER, MOWER DISC, TARRUP, BALER, ETC, MAINTENANCE OF 12 TRACTORS	NATIONAL ANIMAL PRODUCT RESEARCH INSTITUTE-ZARIA	13,500,000
27	PURCHASE OF POLYTHENE SHEETS	NATIONAL HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE-IBADAN	205,229,469
28	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	NATIONAL HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE-IBADAN	6,200,000
29	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	COCOA RESEARCH INSTITUTE-IBADAN	165,950,860
30	RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	COCOA RESEARCH INSTITUTE-IBADAN	6,005,000
31	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	COCOA RESEARCH INSTITUTE-IBADAN	40,675,000
32	PRODUCTION OF PLANTING MATERIAL FOR COCOA VALUE CHAIN	INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING-IBADAN	89,132,760
33	PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING-IBADAN	32,536,999
	TOTAL		37,113,431,763

⁹Calculated by dividing the total budget for the KPPP by 6 years (2011-2016)

4.4. Sufficiency of the 2016 Budget for TA Projects

Regarding the sufficiency of the budget for projects in the TA, it is absolutely clear that the total funding of items that have direct relevance to achieving the targets of the TA as shown in table above is N37,113,431,763 and we had earlier seen in section 4.1 that N83,465,931,666.66 is required to fund the KPPPs as stipulated in the TA and extrapolated for 2016. The gap of N46,352,499,903.66 exists and the sector is supposed to channel the gap to address TA related capital expenses. An example of such items is procurement and distribution of fertilizers and other inputs to SSFs at sufficient quantities and farmer friendlier rates. Dwelling on the fertilizer example, Nigeria requires about 12 million metric tonnes annually for food production. That quantity amounts to 240 million bags of 50kg and a bag costs an average of N5000. Not many SSFs can afford the required fertilizer and since they constitute the producers of 80% of food needs of the country, there needs to be 'guided' subsidy for farmers. The point is that the gap could be set aside to subsidize fertilizer for SSFs. If the nation wants a different result, wisdom and experience dictate that actions should be different. Part of what needs to be done differently is the budgeting priorities and patterns. The recurrent and some capital line items in the budgets of MDAs need to be pruned down and some analysts recommend a modest ceiling for line items and the place to begin is to review some weird proposals that some MDAs as well as some budget lines for the Presidency and the bulky lump sum of N115bn allocated to the National Assembly. The savings from the prunes are then re-channelled to capital budgets of social sectors such as agriculture and perhaps specifically for subsidizing fertilizer and other inputs.

4.5. Inhibitions against the Utilization of the 2016 Budget for Achieving the TA

In previous sections, five budget related challenges that could affect agriculture in Nigeria were identified including: disconnect between SSFs and budgets; poor release of appropriated sums; inadequate technical capacity to spend capital budgets; lower budgets than the Maputo benchmark; spurious, over-bloated, ambiguous, and repetitive capital and overhead items. These affect the size of funds available for developing the sector. But beyond those, some challenges can cause even the ones budgeted, released and cash-backed from being applied for achieving the agricultural targets of the TA.

First, is the lack of Prioritisation of KPPPs by the sector officials and their going on to implement the budget as if there was no set of targets to be achieved within a timeframe. The TA targets needed to be met between

2011 and 2015 and it required paying more focused attention on the priority projects that will lead to their achievement.

Second, is lack of time to implement specific programmes and projects for delivering the TA targets because there are 253 days in a year and 1012 days for executing the TA. During the period 2011-2015, the sector MDAs had more days for travels and trainings (international and local) than to spend for executing ATA KPPPs.

Third, is inadequate capacity and commitment of stakeholders to execute the technically challenging projects and programmes of the TA. Whereas the regular capital projects of the sector are accustomed to the MDAs, many of them may not have the technical expertise required for addressing the special projects for the TA leading to their non-implementation.

5.0. COMPARISON OF 2016 PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS WITH 2015 SPENT ALLOCATIONS OF THE FMARD



The objective of this section is to determine if the allocations in proposed 2016 budget differ from those of 2015 and why. It also seeks to pronounce a judgement on whether the budget reflects the present realities of dwindling revenues and change promised by the Buhari administration.

Table 5: showing 2016 FMARD budget proposals against 2015 and some observations/recommendations

CAPITAL BUDGET			
Item	2016	2015	Observations
PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT	1,010,000,000	Xxxxxx	The details of the equipment are not listed and this makes it cumbersome and difficult to monitor. It also creates space for embezzlement; therefore, the NASS should demand details through oversight.
PURCHASE OF LIBRARY BOOKS & EQUIPMENT	Xxxx	3,840,000	It is commendable that this is not listed in 2016 because FMARD does not require them yearly (if at all it does at all)
CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF WATER FACILITIES	Xxxx	69,335,360	These were not allocated funds for 2016 and it is commended as it makes more money available for more impactful projects.

CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES	Xxxxx	5,065,131,608	They served as conduits of corruption previously
CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF ROADS	Xxxx	174,400,000	
REHABILITATION / REPAIRS OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING	350,000,000	Xxxxx	This item is uncalled for as public servants have their accommodation monetized. Who are residing in the building(s)?
REHABILITATION / REPAIRS OF OFFICE BUILDINGS	Xxxx	46,600,000	It is commendable that this has no allocation this year because the line item had followed a yearly trend in the budget since 2009. Yet, these offices are neither repaired nor rehabilitated. Thumbs up!
EROSION & FLOOD CONTROL	Xxxx	11,520,000	We are of the opinion that provision of funds for this line item rather appears needful in 2016. This is because flood occurs naturally (as inevitable disaster) and if they do in 2016, FMARD may not have funds to address them. However, we further suggest that if provisions are to be made, it should not exceed 2015 amounts.
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	32,876,127,108	81,048,000	While research is needful, it is over-bloated and should be trimmed down to free resources for other necessities such as fertilizers/other inputs.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	265,000,103	54,065,000	To increase this by over 400% in a period of severe revenue constraints suggests insensitivity. Therefore trim down to 2015 figures or less and seek to accommodate CSO independent M&E
ANNIVERSARIES/CELEBRATIONS	Xxxxx	4,800,000	Cut out for 2016 commendably and should remain the practice going forward
PERSONNEL BUDGET			
SALARY	5,292,122,741	6,053,501,948	This reduction is commendable and a good reflection of change which comes from IPPIS implementation. Further reduction could be still possible with a reduction/weeding of ghost workers.
NON REGULAR ALLOWANCES	228,832,440	261,754,628	As above
SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS	661,515,343	756,687,743	As above
OVERHEADS			
LOCAL TRAVEL & TRANSPORT: TRAINING	15,178,053	14,241,762	Given that travel has taken much time that otherwise will be used for planning and executing KPPPs, it should be reduced by 50%
LOCAL TRAVEL & TRANSPORT: OTHERS	24,734,604	23,208,798	Same as above
ELECTRICITY CHARGES	23,329,229	21,890,116	Over-bloated and does not reflect current realities. FMARD has generator with maintenance and fueling budget as well. Reduce by 70%.
TELEPHONE CHARGES	2,248,600	2,109,890	Over-bloated and does not reflect current realities. Reduce by 70%

WATER RATES	3,653,975	3,428,572	Over-bloated and does not reflect current realities. Reduce by 70%
OFFICE STATIONERIES / COMPUTER CONSUMABLES	29,795,760	27,957,746	Over-bloated and does not reflect current realities. Expunge as the 2015 procurement should still do for 2016.
NEWSPAPERS	2,248,600	2,109,890	It amounts to N8,887 daily for 253 working days of the year. Reduce by at least 50%
MAGAZINES & PERIODICALS	562,150	527,473	This amounts to N10,810 every week. Ridiculously over-bloated. Reduce by 70%
PRINTING OF NON SECURITY DOCUMENTS	6,745,800	6,329,671	Should be reduced to at least 2015 value in the light of the dwindling resources.
PRINTING OF SECURITY DOCUMENTS	2,248,600	2,109,890	Same as above
DRUGS & MEDICAL SUPPLIES	1,124,300	1,054,945	This should be reduced by 80% (just to accommodate for first aid treatment) or expunged completely as the Ministry has social contribution for staff under NHIS scheme.
UNIFORMS & OTHER CLOTHING	191,131	179,341	This should be expunged as uniforms cannot be procured every year especially given dwindling revenues. In any case, whose uniforms are these?
MAINTENANCE OF MOTOR VEHICLE / TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT	21,642,778	20,307,698	This should be reduced to at least 2015 value in the light of the dwindling resources.
MAINTENANCE OF OFFICE FURNITURE	3,935,050	3,692,308	This should be expunged as office furniture such as tables and chairs need not be maintained every year during this revenue falls.
MAINTENANCE OF OFFICE BUILDING / RESIDENTIAL QTRS	3,372,900	3,164,836	Does office maintenance such as painting need be done every year? Which Residential building when already monetised. Please expunge.
MAINTENANCE OF OFFICE / IT EQUIPMENTS	1,405,375	1,318,682	Yearly maintenance? Expunge or at least reduce by 80%
MAINTENANCE OF PLANTS/GENERATORS	3,935,050	3,692,308	With budgets provided for electricity charges, generators will require minimal usage and maintenance. Reduce by 70%
OTHER MAINTENANCE SERVICES	2,248,600	2,109,890	What does this mean when vehicles, office furniture, office building and generators are already budgeted for? Expunge
LOCAL TRAINING	12,426,721	11,660,152	2016 value should be lower than 2015's because revenues are lower and FMARD needs more time for implementing KPPPs in the TA or other capital projects.
SECURITY SERVICES	7,589,026	7,120,881	Different from the regular security personnel? NASS should consider this as part of line items for particular oversight.
CLEANING & FUMIGATION SERVICES	3,091,825	2,901,099	Different from the cleaners? NASS to consider this as part of line items for particular oversight.
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSULTING	3,935,050	3,692,308	This should be reduced in the light of dwindling revenue. Moreover, IT equipment have been procured.

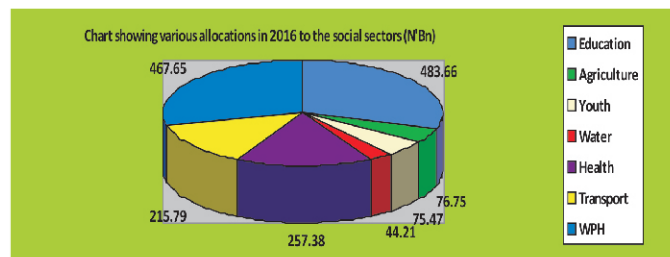
L E G A L SERVICES	2,529,675	2,373,627	NASS oversight required and the budget needs trimming in line with revenue generation realities
M O T O R VEHICLE FUEL COST	12,367,302	11,604,399	This could be reduced in the spirit of efficiency which is required in the dwindling revenue regime.
P L A N T / GENERATOR FUEL COST	4,497,200	4,219,78	Same as above
REFRESHMENT & MEALS	2,529,675	2,373,627	NASS to review critically as this is constitutionally contentious
HONORARIUM & SITTING ALLOWANCE	2,529,675	2,373,627	The same amount is proposed for this as Refreshment & Meals which raises an issue of how they are arrived at even if we assume that the latter is tenable constitutionally
PUBLICITY & ADVERTISEMENTS	2,557,783	2,400,000	This should be reduced in the light of dwindling revenue
M E D I C A L EXPENSES	4,216,126	3,956,046	When there is NHIS, Drugs and Medical Supplies, why is there justification for this? Meanwhile there was also drugs and medical supplies line item above. Please expunge
POSTAGES & COURIER SERVICES	1,124,300	1,054,945	Given the technological advancement the society has attained, the FMARD does not need this for postages. NASS to reduce by 50% and oversee it as well
W E L F A R E PACKAGES	24,734,604	20,887,918	NASS to review critically as this is constitutionally contentious
SUBSCRIPTION TO PROFESSIONAL BODIES	281,075	263,736	Which professional body does FMARD belong to that it needs this amount to subscribe annually?
S P O R T I N G ACTIVITIES	2,248,600	2,109,890	Apart from frivolity, what business does FMARD has with sporting that it spends scarce public resources on?

The observations and recommendations made above with respect to the budget of the FMARD are also transferable to other MDAs in the sector and indeed to the whole budget. Savings made from implementing the recommendations can be channelled to the social sectors resulting in greater resource availability for capital projects which will lead ultimately to socio-economic development as envisioned in the Transformation Agenda.

The allocations for 2015 could have led potentially to a greater achievement of the Transformation Agenda but to the extent that an evaluation has not been conducted to establish level of achievement of the TA, it is difficult to also say what impact the 2016 budget as proposed may make on the TA targets. However, a fuller level of budget implementation will guarantee the achievement of higher level of results, ceteris paribus.

5.1. 2016 Agriculture Budget Compared with Other Social Sector Budgets

Chart 5: Chart showing various allocations in 2016 to the social sectors



From the chart above, it can be deduced that of all the social sectors, Agriculture occupies the fifth position, greater only than Youth and Water Resources. While not downplaying the importance of the others, since agriculture drives the economy as food security, employment and industrial raw material provider, it should have been given priority. This is quite strategic as the sector is now going to be the mainstay of the economy given the fall of oil. If Nigerian government is insisting that the sector is key to its national survival, then allocations should identify and signify such.

Indeed, while the other sectors need not suffer, perhaps, all that may be required is to trim the budget of all the MDAs as suggested in the previous sections above and the savings be rechannelled to agriculture and the sector will be empowered to play the role of economy driver.

6.0. GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE BUDGET

When viewed with the gender lens, the 2016 agriculture budget though itemises some projects that could impact youths, women and small scale farmers at large. However, they constitute only 1% of the total capital budget of the sector and the implication as it were is that gender may not be seen as a priority concern to the sector officials.

Judging from the titles of the projects, there is no capital project tailored to meet the specific needs of ONLY women neither is there any exclusives for SSFs. All the ones that may impact these groups are found in cross cutting projects which may impact each of them only tangentially.



Closing gender equality in women farmers and improving childcare could bolster food security Nigeria

6.1. Youth related projects

Below itemizes some youth related projects/allocation in the 2016 proposed budget for agriculture:

Table 6: Youth related projects in the 2016 agric budget

Item	Implementing MDA	Amount
MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT OF FARMERS AND UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS IN TWO GEOPOLITICAL ZONES	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF PRODUCE INSPECTION AND STORED PRODUCTS TECHNOLOGY, KANO	8,681,460
VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN MODERN AGRICULTURE FOR 500 UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE-AKURE	10,000,000
CAPACITY BUILDING AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF FRESH WATER FISHERIES TECHNOLOGY-NEWBUSSA	37,263,900

6.2. Cross-cutting (SSFs, Women and Youths)

Table 7: showing gender related projects in the 2016 budget of FMARD

ITEM	IMPLEMENTING MDA	AMOUNT
• TRAINING AND EMPOWERMENT OF FARMERS, WOMEN & YOUTH ON AGRIBUSINESS & MARKETING MANAGEMENT & VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT (VCD)	AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (ARMTI) – ILORIN	332,859,975
• TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) AND EMPOWERMENT OF AGRIC AND AGRIC RELATED GRADUATES AND VILLAGE ALIVE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (VADI) IN FOUR (4) NEW STATES/COMMUNITIES AND	FEDERAL COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE-IS HIAGU	20,000,000
• TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARCN) EXTENSION SERVICES FOR VCD DEVELOPMENT		
• ZONAL TRAINING FOR EXTENSION MANAGERS IN FEDERAL/STATES AND OTHER AGENCIES/ INSTITUTIONS) AND		
• TRAINING OF YOUTH AND WOMEN ON CASSAVA PROCESSING IN 9 AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES, EZI-UKWU, ABI STATE AND		
• AGRIBUSINESS AND OUTREACH ON VCD IN KOGI STATE AND		
• OUTREACH TRAINING ON ORANGE FLESH POTATOS AS MEANS OF EMPLOYMENT GENERATION, AND		
• POLICY AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND		
• REVIEW SEMINAR-TRAINING OF 350 UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS, FARMERS AND WOMEN		
• TRAINING 150 GRADUATE, YOUTH AND WOMEN	NIGERIA INSTITUTE OF OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE RESEARCH	64,106,500

The implication of gender blind budgets is that it leaves the needs of SSFs, out of which about 65% are women, who produce 80% of the food needs of the

nation, not provided for. This may have been as a result of unwitting omission of breaking down the projects into specific activities tailored to address challenges of the various groups such as women and youths. Even when these constituencies are meant to benefit from the lumped projects, other factors such as lack of political influence, poor education, lack of capacity to access and interpret budgets; inadequate networking skills; and inability to organize into Farmer Groups, etc. may hinder them from accessing the budgetary provisions. They are then left at the discretion and interpretation of the sector officials.

Having stated the implications of gender gaps in agriculture budgeting, it is imperative that budget crafters need to start identifying specific projects that will be designed that impact positively on the groups. For example, it could have capital projects such as “Construction of cassava processing machines for women farmers in ‘WAZOBIA’ Community”; subsidized inputs such as seeds, cuttings, agro-chemicals to SSFs Farmer organisations; and provisions of soft loans to youth farmers. These are very specific and cannot easily be swallowed up by the interpretation of any government official. Secondly, such clear and unambiguous allocations become easily ‘eye-marked’ and monitored by the actors themselves.

7.0. SOME BUDGET RELATED CHALLENGES FACING NIGERIA’S AGRICULTURE

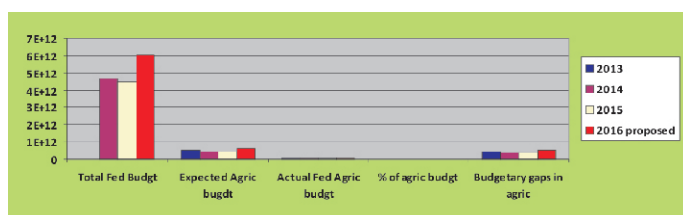
Beyond the traditional (usual) and well known challenges facing agriculture, there is need to identify pertinent issues that relate to the budget and which may hinder the agricultural sector from being the driver of the economy as envisioned in the Transformation Agenda⁷.

7.1. Dwindling Percentage Allocation to Agriculture Budgets

Table 8: showing budgetary allocations trend to the agriculture sector for a period of 4 years

Year	Total Federal Budget (A)	Expected Agriculture Budget in line with Maputo Benchmark (B) (10% of A)	Actual Federal Agriculture Budget (C)	Percentage of (A) that is (C)	Budgetary gaps in agriculture (B-C)
2013	4,987,220,425,601	498,722,042,560.1	83,366,615,730	1.67%	415,355,426,830.1
2014	4,695,190,000,000	469,519,000,000	66,644,675,939	1.42%	402,874,324,061
2015	4,493,363,957,158	449,336,395,715.8	40,659,020,717	0.90%	408,677,374,998.8
2016 proposal	6,077,680,000,000	607,768,000,000	76,753,672,273	1.26%	531,014,327,727

Chart 5: Budgetary gaps for agriculture 2013 - 2016



It can be observed from table above that in the last four years, percentage allocation to the sector dwindled from 1.67% in 2013 to 0.90% in 2015 suggesting that the Maputo Benchmark was observed in the opposite as it retrogressed. The percentage increased from the 2015 value to 1.26% in the proposed 2016 budget which though is a commendable renaissance to the path of progress, has the largest funding gap in absolute terms.

The following observations may be made of the trend. First, given that it is the first for the present administration, it seems as a good beginning and demonstration of greater commitment to the sector by allocating a percentage higher than the previous year's. Second, it leaves a lot to be desired for a government that is experiencing loss of expected revenue from its erstwhile chief revenue earner (crude oil). Given that agriculture arguably is the most sustainable alternative for building the economy in the face of the global fall in oil prices, the sector needed massive investment of resources and a declaration of state of emergency to prepare the nation for a full switch to an agro-led economy as it was in the early 60s and 70s.

7.2. Poor Absorption Capacity on Agriculture Budget Implementation

It has been observed that for a plethora of reasons, the agriculture sector has continued to struggle without success attempting to completely utilize its appropriated capital budgets. For example in 2013 and 2014 the amount of money budgeted for capital projects for the sector were 50.65bn and 35.55bn respectively; but out of these, the percentage of the budget that was eventually utilized was 49.18% and 29.99% respectively.

Table 9: showing the utilization of agriculture capital budgets for 2013 ad 2014

Year	Agricultural capital Budget (N)	Financing process		Level of utilization (%)			
		Amount released (N)billion	Amount cash backed (N)billion	Utilization of cash backed funds (N)billion	%age of capital budget	%age of cash backed amounts	%age of total releas es
2013	50,647,871,4	24,992,961,7	24,992,961,7	24,909,327,5	49.18	100	100
2014	28 00	00	00	95	29.99	83.19	83.19
2015	35,551,172,5	12,814,678,0	12,814,678,0	10,661,753,2	NA	NA	NA
	83 05	05	11				
		NA	NA	NA			

⁷At the present, there is no clear strategic framework upon which the current administration's development vision is anchored, hence the mention of the Transformation Agenda, at least for now.

Upon further analyses, the reasons for less than full utilization of the budgeted capital funds include challenges associated with the release of the funds and consequent cash-backing as evident from the table above. In 2013 all funds released were cash-backed but utilization did not match more than 49.18% of the budgeted figure. In 2014, not all cash-backed sums were utilized, suggesting challenges with capacity of implementers, inadequate time for project implementation or unfavourable operational environment as possible reasons.

However, whatever the reasons are, it does make the point that the sector needs not be receiving capital budget allocations that it cannot access and utilize within a fiscal period. While, not defeating one of the core recommendations of this work (which is the advocacy focused on increasing budgetary allocation to agriculture to 10% of the total budget in line with international commitments), it needs to be argued that the sector must imperatively find solutions to the reasons for poor utilization of their capital budgets.

7.3. Lack of Synergy between the Budget and SSFs



Small Scale Farmers needs training on Communication Skills, networking and craft new advocacy strategies for the future Budgets

There is disconnect between the annual budget allocations and small scale farming in the country though the last administration tried to reform some malpractices. About 66% of the population is engaged in different types of farming activities with a further 90% of them engaged at small scale levels. About 80% of food produced locally in the country is also produced through farming at the small holder farms but despite these, small scale farmers in rural communities hardly feel the impact of the annual budgets. As SSFs are mostly illiterate, they are neither able to comprehend budget technicalities nor demand any interventions. They are thus left at the mercy of market forces and competition over farming inputs with the fewer, richer, more educated and powerful 'political farmers' taking greater advantage of any agricultural improvement interventionist policies. If agriculture is to play the role of GDP growth driver through contributing 36% of the GDP in 2015 and by extension 2016, the inputs required by producers of 80% of the food consumed by Nigerians and Nigerian industries must not be left to sheer market forces.

Every economic, social and physical barrier to small scale famers' access to farm inputs such as fertilizers

and improved varieties of propagation materials must be dismantled and this implies conscious efforts on the part of FMARD and relevant MDAs in the sector and all tiers of government to subsidize the cost of critical inputs such as fertilizer and make sure that they always get to the small scale farmers on time.

7.4. Long Procurement Processes

Budget release, cash-backing processes as well as the implementation capacity of the FMARD and related departments and agencies is critical for success. From the preceding section on performance, it is obvious that in none of the years did the agriculture MDAs utilize their capital budget 100%. The reasons imagined by this paper which could be further caused by the time consuming procurement process that the various projects and programmes undergo before being funded. While following due process in procurement has led to savings of public funds, its impact of delay in timely execution of project seems to cancel out the benefit. The FMARD and other sector MDAs should find ways of ensuring due process and yet timely project execution of capital projects. Beyond the issue of due process and timing, knowing what to do and how to do them (technical capacity) is equally important. Given the huge gaps between capital budget allocations and utilization rates, the budget implementers (MDAs) need to step up their capacities. This they are adequately positioned to do especially as the budgets provide for different forms of trainings (local and international). In all of these, what is further baffling is that while the MDAs possess the capacity to expend their overheads and personnel cost, these same MDAs lack the capacity to expend their capital budgets.

7.5. Poor Budget Monitoring

Finally, there is a budget for monitoring and evaluation of the capital projects (N265,000,000) for the Ministry. It is our view that the issue of monitoring and evaluation should not be only for capital budget but also for the recurrent, otherwise the huge amounts budgeted for personnel and overheads would be mismanaged by some MDAs. In addition, since external monitoring and evaluation is an imperative for a truly accountable and efficient system, budget implementation monitoring and evaluation may not be left to the MDAs such as FMARD alone but also to the NASS, and Non State Actors such as the civil society organisations. Such robust participation in budget monitoring and evaluation will certainly increase value for money to Nigerians. The challenge though is whether the MDAs will make budget implementation information and their cash flows available to external monitors and evaluators? The Freedom of Information Act may help in this regard.

7.6. Poor Budgeting Process to Address/Balance the Nigeria vs Maputo Concern

Although there are general statements and serious concerns that may have directly indicted Nigeria for her incessant inability to reach the Maputo benchmark, however, a thorough look at the budget of Nigeria shows that apart from the agric sector budget, there are agric-related investments scattered around several other sectors/Ministries (MDAs) within the same overall budget. What this analysis has attempted to do is a step further towards collating such agric related allocations with a view to showing that Nigeria could after all be heading towards increased allocation to agriculture beyond the 1.26%. Below are some of the collations from the various MDAs:

Table 10: Allocations related to agriculture collated from other MDAs budget

Agric. Related Allocations In Other MDAs	Total	Comments
Ministry of Science And Technology (Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency)	5,500,000	Soil preparation and raising of nursery/engagement of 15 farmhands (5 Jesse Minna). Procurement of farm equipment.
National Biotechnological Development Agency	176,555,543	All germplasm research on various crops, cassava fermentation, dissemination of improved seeds, procurement of chemical for drought tolerant tree etc. Construction of food mill and fruits crops mass propagation.
Bio-resource Development Centre Odi, Bayelsa State	125,000,000	Construction/provision of agricultural facilities.
National Centre For Genetic Research and Biotechnology, Ibadan	64789904	Allocations for research in agricultural biotechnology and field trials.
Federal Ministry Of Water Resources	3,429,793,296	Dams and Irrigation projects in the Ministry.
Anambra/Imo RBDA	157,150,000	Dams and irrigation projects in the two states, Completion of 250 tons silo complex at Ozu Abam, Arochuku L.G.A, Imo state
Benin/Owena Rbda	210,000,000	New and ongoing irrigation project, multi-purpose dam irrigation project, feasibility survey for transfer of water from river Ngadda flood plains in Jere bowl to the northern outfall drain of the south chad irrigation (scip).
Cross River Rbda	683,340,000	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Hadejia-Jaama Are Rbda	261,381,268	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Lower Benue Rbda	551,714,000	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Lower Niger Rbda	824,875,644	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Niger Delta Rbda	100,000,000	Isiokolo irrigation project, delta state, sugarcane irrigation project, Bayelsa State
Ogun/Osun Rbda	355,896,276	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Sokoto Rima Rbda	200,855,015	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Upper Benue Rbda	476,846,458	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment
Upper Niger Rbda	205,100,000	Funding relates to irrigation projects in the state, flood control projects and dam establishment

National Water Resources Institute- Kaduna	40,874,640	Assessment of viability of irrigation schemes programme development of demonstration and research irrigation schemes
Gurara Water Management Authority	100,872,940	Allocations relates to maintenance of irrigation facilities in the pilot scheme and rehabilitation and maintenance of the farm center
Federal Ministry Of Environment Headquarters	281,635,980	The allocations relates to procurement of seedlings of forest and road side planting in some northern States. Planting of fruits/vegetables in season for their consumption, construction of shelterbelts, maintenance of woodlot, procurements of farm inputs and fertilizer, construction of farm offices/clinics and procurement of equipment, provision of plant seedling and animal drinking trough, land preparation

Further inferences that can be deduced herein above are as follows:

- i. With the collation of allocations related to agriculture which are scattered all over other MDAs, a total sum of NGN8,252,180,964 was gathered. If this is added to the original allocation to agric sector (NGN76, 753,672,273), it would amount to NGN85,005,853,237 which would have moved the total allocation to the agric sector from 1.26% to approximately 1.4%.
- ii. It is interesting to note that all of the agric related allocations collated from other MDAs are for capital projects. What this means is that if added, there is still significant increase in the capital budget of agric sector from the original NGN47,001,125,634 to NGN55,253,306,598, and this shows a percentage increase capital to Agriculture total budget from 61.23% to 64.99% which is a further commendation to the agric capital budget allocation.
- iii. It is important that different MDAs must stick to their responsibilities. A situation where a particular Ministry takes up a role and budget on a project that naturally belongs to another does not in any way portray or showcase seriousness and integrity, but rather makes a mockery of the process and monitoring thereof. Therefore every MDA should stick to budgeting on subjects and responsibilities belonging to her for efficiency, effective planning and calculation/measurement of outcomes/results.

8.0. BUDGETING PROCESSES AND ENTRY POINTS FOR CSOS AND FARMER ORGANIZATIONS



Budgeting process helps farmers to determine the drivers, challenges or opportunities that may facilitate or hinder production

The subject of budget and budgeting process in this part of the world (especially in Nigeria and other African countries) have always been seen as a sacred piece of document meant only for government officials and the Parliament and must therefore be shrouded with utmost secrecy. Indeed, budget should be seen by all citizens as the most important governance instrument after the Constitution. Although the Constitution empowers the Executive to prepare and forward the budget proposal to the Parliament for appropriation, however, Non State Actors should see the budget as one of the major tools for governance, and therefore seek to be involved and make inputs accordingly for good governance of the state.

Without the participation or engagement of the NSAs, there could be the possibility of a conspiracy between the executive and legislature in using the budget to syphon the nation's resources into private sources or misallocate the common wealth of the citizens or even unwittingly execute projects that are not priorities of the people. The budget must therefore be seen as a veritable tool for good governance, hence the imperatives of inputs from the watch dog of the society.

NSAs including farmer organizations, trade unions, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations etc. must therefore seek to engage budget processes in order to add the voices of their followers and members in the allocation of resources for collective governance. However, many NSAs have expressed concerns on how and where to engage the budgeting process. As a response to this, in addition to the analysis on the various sector budget proposals, NANTS has designed and provided the following template to assist stakeholders identify entry points in engaging the system and the budget processes.

Table 11: Budgeting process and possible entry points for CSOs (The 18 Advocacy Stations)

Budget Process	Entry points for CSOs /Farmer Organizations	Strategies for influencing MDAs/Key Players	Potential challenges with MDAs Engagement	Mitigation strategies for challenges with MDAs	Strategies for Influencing NASS, Its Committees/key Players	Potential challenges with CSOs engagement with NASS/key players	Mitigation strategies for CSO challenges with NASS, committees and key players
MTSS formulation	X	Advocacy meetings	Unwillingness of MDAs to take CSOs view on board	Developing healthy semi-formal relations with officials	Evidence-based facts		
MTEF preparation		Analytical inputs					
MTEF endorsement by FEC							
MTEF Approval by NASS							
Issuance of call circular							

MDAs prepare estimates	X	Drawing attention to gaps between policy and estimates	Poor Technical capacity	Capacity Building			
MDAs defend estimates at MoF							
MoF presents budget estimates to President through FEC							
FEC approves							
President sends to NASS							
NASS commences initial debates on the budget principles							
NASS sends budget proposal to Committees							
Opens discussion on budgets/public hearings	X	Look out for frivolous estimates that need to be cut and resources mopped up for reallocation to social sector capital projects	Untimely publication of materials for CSO intervention	Advocating for timely release of budget information	Advocacy visits Lobbying Memos at Budget Estimate Defence Special meetings with relevant committees	Only few CSOs are invited to budget review sessions NASS not bound to take CSO inputs NASS members are sometimes evasive of CSOs	Send memo with analytical recommendations Use media to present your positions Cultivate good relationships with relevant committees over time
Budget defence organised by NASS for MDAs							
NASS Approval							
Presidential Assent							
Budget implementation by MDAs							
Budget monitoring	X	Field visits to project sites/desktop reviews of budgets	CSO poor access to information despite the FOI Act	Persistent use of the FOI Act			

9.0. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Conclusion on Findings

In line with the change agenda of the present administration, 2016 budget is supposed to be significantly different from previous years' budget in terms of content of line items and size of allocation to key sectors meant to drive the economy in the face of dwindling oil resources. After a critical review of the proposed 2016 budget with particular focus on that of agriculture, it was observed that though capital budget increased in absolute and percentage terms from that of 2015, the budget still maintained the weakness of featuring some frivolous, over-bloated, spurious items.

In addition, the review also identified that though the 2016 proposals for agriculture increased from that of 2015, it still fell short of the Maputo/CAADP benchmarks of investing 10% of public spending on agriculture. Of the social sectors budgets considered, agriculture ranked among the lowest, and this suggests that Nigeria as a nation suffers from misdirection of funds from specific priority areas.

The budget as proposed also shows a gap between requirement for funding policy - the Transformation Agenda and what was provided for projects related to the TA targets. It is our opinion that with political will, funds could be saved from the frivolous, spurious and over-bloated line items to bridge the gap and lead to agriculture being on renaissance as the mainstay of the nation's economy.

Beyond budgeting, certain challenges hinder the full impact of the budget including disconnect between SSFs and budgets; poor release of appropriated sums; inadequate technical capacity to spend capital budgets (poor absorption capacity); lower budgets than the Maputo benchmark; spurious, over-bloated, ambiguous, and repetitive capital and overhead items; lack of prioritisation of the KPPPs; lack of time to implement specific programmes and projects for delivering the TA targets; and inadequate capacity and commitment of sector officials.

The review also observed that 2016 agriculture budget as proposed did not have gender sensitivity enough as it only had 1% of its projects and funds targeted at youths, women and SSFs more as a collective than as specific groups which potentially can result in none of the groups accessing the budget as planned.

Reviewing the budget process at the federal level shows that about 18 distinct processes exist in the course of a budgeting cycle and that CSOs and farmer organizations can intervene especially at the public hearing stages in the National Assembly.

In summary, the proposed 2016 agriculture sector budget is not pro-poor and does not favor smallholder farmers, especially smallholder women farmers that

produce the nation's food. Although the proportion of capital expenditure allocation is higher than the recurrent expenditure allocation, how most of it will be spent is not explicitly clearly, thus, could not be said to have prioritized smallholder farmers. Therefore, we conclude that the proposed 2016 agriculture budget is not pro-smallholder farmers, especially the smallholder women farmers.

9.2. Recommendations

In view of the above findings, the following are hereby recommended in addition to many that have already been highlighted during the broad discourse above:

1. Complete Revision of the 2016 Agric Budget

A comprehensive revision of the proposed 2016 agriculture budget to significantly support the growth of the smallholder farmers is recommended. The budget should be explicitly clear as how it promotes smallholder farmers productivity and growth, through direct budget line items that target specifics such as farm inputs, agriculture credit, extension services, labor saving technologies, etc.

2. Demonstrate Commitment to Maputo/Malabo Declarations

Government should demonstrate commitment to the Maputo/Malabo Declaration by significantly increasing the overall allocations towards 10 percent of the total 2016 national budget to agriculture. The government must act in a way that shows that the agriculture sector has the potential to contribute significantly to its aim of diversifying the economy and creating jobs.

3. Unpack the capital expenditure allocation and re-allocate the funds to Parastatals

There is need to unpack the capital expenditure allocation and re-allocate the funds to implementing agencies and institutions under the agric Ministry, while the main Ministry of Agriculture assumes its normal supervisory role of coordinating, directing and regulating the policy and implementing environment.

4. We Insist on the Return or Continuation of the GESS



President Muhammadu Buhari at the Anchor Borrowers' Program

Farmers, civil society and other Non-State Actors are of the common voice that the Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GESS) should be continued and made visible in the budget especially since it has demonstrated effectiveness in providing smallholder farmers basic farm inputs at affordable cost. Evidences abound that it significantly reduced corrupt practices that were common with farm inputs subsidy. The proposed 2016 agriculture budget is silent on farm inputs for smallholder farmers, a continuation of an improved GESS will ensure that smallholder farmers benefit from this budget.

5. Nigeria's Agric Budget must target Reviving the Extension Service Delivery

With minimal allocation to Extension Services in the 2016 budget proposal, the services should also be strengthened by recruiting new extension agents, building their capacity, and providing them with incentives and facilities necessary for their effectiveness in the field. The extension sub-sector of our agriculture must be revived if we want smallholder farmers' productivity to improve at a faster rate.

6. Women and Youth SSFs must be given priority in the Budget

We re-echo the need for a space that allows smallholder farmers, especially smallholder women farmers, and other critical stakeholders to participate in prioritizing government agriculture initiatives that will eventually be funded through budgetary allocation. A forum should be created by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) for the participation of smallholder farmers especially women and Civil Society Organizations in the budgetary processes for ownership and in order to also inform articulate priorities.

7. The need to deal with Release versus cash backing Obstacle

Ministry of Finance and the Office of the Accountant General should identify bottlenecks associated with release and cash-backing and create convenient strategies to enhance Agriculture sector MDAs access to budgeted funds. In this regard, timely release of funds becomes very significant especially given also that agriculture thrives on a seasonal basis, and efforts must be made to ensure that funds/budget could be made to be effective in addressing the needs of farmers.

8. Improving MDAs Implementation Capacity

Similarly, Agriculture MDAs must strengthen their capacity to implement budgets. In this regard, political will, trainings and supervision become very fundamental tools. MDAs officials with responsibility to implement but fail after providing the above, should be sanctioned for denying the nation the opportunity of developing socio-economically. Such

negligence or deliberate acts must be treated like or penalized as economic sabotage.

9. Agriculture Should Gain Serious Budgetary Attention

Given that oil revenue has dwindled, we call for a 'declaration of emergency' on the agriculture sector, meaning that greater government attention should be placed on the sector. That attention starts from evaluating the Agricultural Transformation Agenda and probably developing a follow-up strategy, committing budgetary resources to the sector in line with the regional benchmark and monitoring the sector projects to ensure track with the sector vision.

10. Refocus Allocations for Research to target SSFs

The huge amount allocated for research and development should focus more on improving the productivity of smallholder farmers. Instead of discouraging smallholder farmers, efforts should be on developing affordable and appropriate technologies suitable to their size of farm and financial resources. Countries like India, China and Philippines offer good examples of where smallholder farmers are thriving.



Increased research in agriculture equals to improved crop varieties

11. Imperative of Reviewing Overhead Budget

NASS should review the overhead budget of MDAs, trim down or expunge all illegal, frivolous, spurious or over-bloated budget line items as well as some capital project budgets. They should channel the savings to capital budget of agriculture as the re-emerging mainstay of the economy.

12. Effective Budget Monitoring

The monitoring and evaluation of agricultural capital projects should be made more robust by involving CSOs to conduct independent evaluations. Such CSOs involvement will give critical perspectives that will complement internal evaluation done by the FMARD that will lead to improvement in the sector.

13. Remember the Ruling Party's (APC) Manifesto's Commitment to Agriculture

It is important that the ruling party sees her written commitment to agriculture as a creed to hold tenaciously onto as an anchor. The APC Manifesto spells as follows:

The APC Manifesto

ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY, APC will:

- Modernize the sector and change Nigeria from being a country of self-subsistence farmers to that of a medium/commercial scale farming nation/producer;
- Create a nationwide food inspectorate division with a view to improving nutrition and eliminating food borne hazards;
- Inject extra N30bn to the Agricultural sector to create more agro-allied jobs by way of loans at nominal interest rates for capital investment on medium and commercial scale cash crops;
- Guarantee a minimum price for selected crops and facilitate storage of agricultural products as and when necessary

RECENT NEWS ON AGRICULTURE

Cattle Rustling: Gen Adeniyi Vows To Crush The Menace The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 1 Division, Kaduna, Major General Adeniyi Oyeade has led a team of senior ranking military officers to Zamfara State on what he called "uncompromising mission" to crush the cattle rustling syndicate in the state. <http://leadership.ng/news/508494/cattle-rustling-gen-adeniyi-vows-crush-menace>

Customs Is Succeeding In Curtailing Smuggled Frozen Poultry'



The Nigerian Institute of Animal Science (NIAS) has said the Nigerian Customs Service is succeeding in curtailing the importation of poultry products through land borders, making Nigeria's animal feed number 40 in the world...<http://leadership.ng/news/508331/customs-succeeding-curtailing-smuggled-frozen-poultry>

Farmers Urge Govt To Distribute Fertiliser Via Text Messages



Some farmers in Hadejia, Jigawa have called on Jigawa government to distribute fertilizers using the Short Message Service (SMS), to guard against diversion of the

Increase Food Production 100% or Risk Hunger



With an agenda to ensure a hunger free nation, the federal government has urged Nigerians to increase food production by 100% in order to meet the needs of citizens or risk hunger when the population increases.

<http://leadership.ng/news/508330/increase-food-production-100-risk-hunger>

Leverage On Growing Population To Grow More Food – Ogbeh



The minister of agriculture and rural development, Chief Audu Ogbeh, has said that the country could put the growing population into good use by increasing local production of food crops.<http://leadership.ng/news/50671/leverage-growing-population-grow-food-ogbeh>

PMB Flags Off Dry Season Farming, Launches N20bn CBN Loan In Kebbi State

True to his statement that he would revive agriculture by building on the policies of the past administration, President Muhammadu Buhari

commodities.<http://leadership.ng/news/506175/farmers-urge-govt-distribute-fertiliser-via-text-messages>

AfSIS Phase II To Promote New Methods In Agriculture, Soil Mgt



Recently, stakeholders met to review the African Soil Information System/Nigerian Soil Information System (AfSIS/NiSIS) work plan in pursuance of the AfSIS Phase II in which Nigeria alongside Ghana, Tanzania and Ethiopia are participants.

<http://leadership.ng/news/506383/afsis-phase-ii-promote-new-methods-agriculture-soil-mgt>

Niger Rice Irrigation Farming Seeks To Improve Production



As Nigeria seeks to improve local production of rice, some rice farmers in Niger state are learning how they can increase productivity through improved farming practices, a better business model and enhanced infrastructure.

<http://www.nta.ng/agriculture/niger-rice-irrigation-farming-seeks-to-improve-production/2016/03/10/>

Agatu Massacre: Ogbeh Assures Communities of Measures Stop Invasion By Herdsmen



The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Audu Ogbeh, has assured Agatu people of Benue State that the government is working to put measures in place to stop the invasion of communities by herdsmen.

<http://www.nta.ng/agriculture/agatu-massacre-ogbeh-assures-communities-of-measures-stop-invasion-by-herdsmen/2016/03/03/>

CBN agrees 5% lending rate to farmers-Ogbeh



The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh, said the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) had agreed to five per cent interest on lending rate to farmers in the country.

<http://www.pnnewsnigeria.com/2016/02/02/cbn-agrees-5-lending-rate-to-farmers-ogbeh/>

USAID and Africa Lead initiate agricultural internship programme



United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with Africa Lead has initiated an internship partnership network namely Entrepreneurial for Opportunity Actualization (EOpAct)

<http://www.africanfarming.net/crops/agriculture/usaaid-and-africa-lead-initiate-agricultural-internship-programme>

initiate-agricultural-internship-programme



demonstrated the Federal Government's commitment to agriculture by officially flagging off dry season rice and wheat farming in Kebbi state...<http://fmard.com.ng/pmb-flags-off-dry-season-farming-launches-n20bn-cbn-loan-in-kebbi-state/>

FG To Plant 3m Seedlings Of Improved Cashew Yearly – FG

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is to plant three million seedlings of improved cashew every year for the next four years. The minister of agriculture and rural development, Chief Audu Ogbe disclosed this during the flag off of the 2016 Cashew Festival and National Cashew Season in Ilorin, Kwara state.

<http://leadership.ng/news/505735/fg-plant-3m-seedlings-improved-cashew-yearly-fg>

Incessant Clashes Between Herdsmen And Farmers, Government, Stakeholders Proffer Solutions



Lives and property worth billions of Naira have been lost in clashes between Herdsmen and Farmers in Nigeria. The clashes have taken place in various parts of the country but have occurred recently repeatedly in parts of Benue state.

<http://www.nta.ng/agriculture/incessant-clashes-between-herdsmen-and-farmers-government-stakeholders-proffer-solutions/2016/03/09/>

NIMET Predicts Delayed Onset Of Rainfall, Dry Spells In The North



There are indications that most part of Nigeria may experience delayed onset of rainfall, early cessation and less than normal rainfall in 2016. Presenting the year's seasonal rainfall prediction, the Director General and Chief Executive officer Nigeria meteorological Agency NIMET, Dr

Anuforom said the northern parts of the country will also experience dry spells. <http://www.nta.ng/agriculture/nimet-predicts-delayed-onset-of-rainfall-dry-spells-in-the-north/2016/03/10/>

African farmers can boost food security by attracting bees, says FAO study



The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) released a new study that for the first time shows the positive impact bees have on crop yields as they move from flower to flower to fertilize plants

<http://www.africanfarming.net/crops/agriculture/african-farmers-can-boost-food-security-by-attracting-bees-says-fao-study>

UN: 34 countries don't have enough food for their people

The UN agriculture agency has reported that 34 countries around the world, nearly all of them in Africa, do not have enough food to feed their people and need help. The number has risen since December's report with the addition of Switzerland.

Read more on: Daily Trust, Friday, March 11, 2016

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