

Youth, Agriculture and Food Security in Nigeria

By

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Outline of Presentation

- ❑ Relevance of Food Security to a Nation
- ❑ Role of Agriculture in Food Security Attainment
- ❑ Enhancing Food Security through Youth Participation in Agriculture
- ❑ Way Forward

Relevance of Food Security to Nation's Building

Food security is a major developmental objective of any nation as self sufficiency in food production is the primary concern.

The overall food security status of a nation determines

- its people welfare,
- human and economic development
- prerequisite for wider social change and improved health.

United Nation (2012), observation

- global population is increasing
- envisaged to be 9.1 billion by 2050 and food production must increase by 50-70% , therefore the need for food security.

Relevance of Food Security Cont.

Some Definition of Food Security

Food security exist when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active, productive and healthy life (Idachaba,2006).

Food security is a condition which all people obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision-making Hamm and Bellows (2003)

Relevance of Food Security Cont.

Four dimensions of food security encompasses:

- Food availability,
- Food access,
- Food utilization and
- Food stability

Need for Food Security

About 240 million people in Sub Sahara Africa lack adequate food for a healthy and active lifestyle (Population Reference Bureau, 2012).

About 70% of Nigerians are food insecure (Obayelu 2010; Orewa and Iyanbe 2009) .

Relevance of Food Security Cont.

Reasons include

- Decline in agricultural labour as a result of ageing population
- Poor agricultural output and widespread poverty
- Rural urban migration of youth from the rural farming communities because of infrastructural problems

The effects

- Decreased energy level for active workforce,
- Decrease in the productive capacity of the citizens,
- Negative impact of high importation bills in the foreign reserve base,

Role of Agriculture in Food Security

- High risk to vulnerable diseases and infections and reduced life expectancy,
- High rate of unemployment

Agriculture VS Food Security

- is central to livelihoods
- main source of food production
- is a premise on which food security stands/ or it determines the food security status of a nation
- is a primary source of economic prosperity, human health and social well being.
- important in stimulating economic growth, reducing poverty and creating employment opportunity.

Role of Agriculture in Food Security Cont.

Agriculture's contribution to food security can be framed by two key criteria:

- Increasing the availability of food at prices the poor can afford and
- providing jobs through youth empowerment and incomes that will give poor people the means to access food

Despite the economic importance of the sector, in Nigeria for instance

- Drastic decline in the sector linked with the discovery of oil (Ojo and Adebayo, 2012)
- Food production growth rates estimated to be 3.7 percent, has not meet up with growth rate of food demand at 6.5 percent (Liverpool-Tasie, Kuku, and Ajibola 2011).

Role of Agriculture in Food Security Cont.

- Rising cost of food items, especially staple foods
- Inconsistent agricultural policies (particularly implementation strategies)
- Incidence of increased youth unemployment can be traced to the neglect of agriculture as agricultural sector had more employment opportunities (Olokundun et al., 2014).

Increased and sustained investment in agriculture

- ensures food availability
- contributes immensely to the health and well-being of the people
- Reduces unemployment rate as it engages youth in different stages of value chain

Enhancing better Youth participation in Agric.

Youths are stakeholder in the development process especially for sustaining agricultural productivity, an important sector for the development.

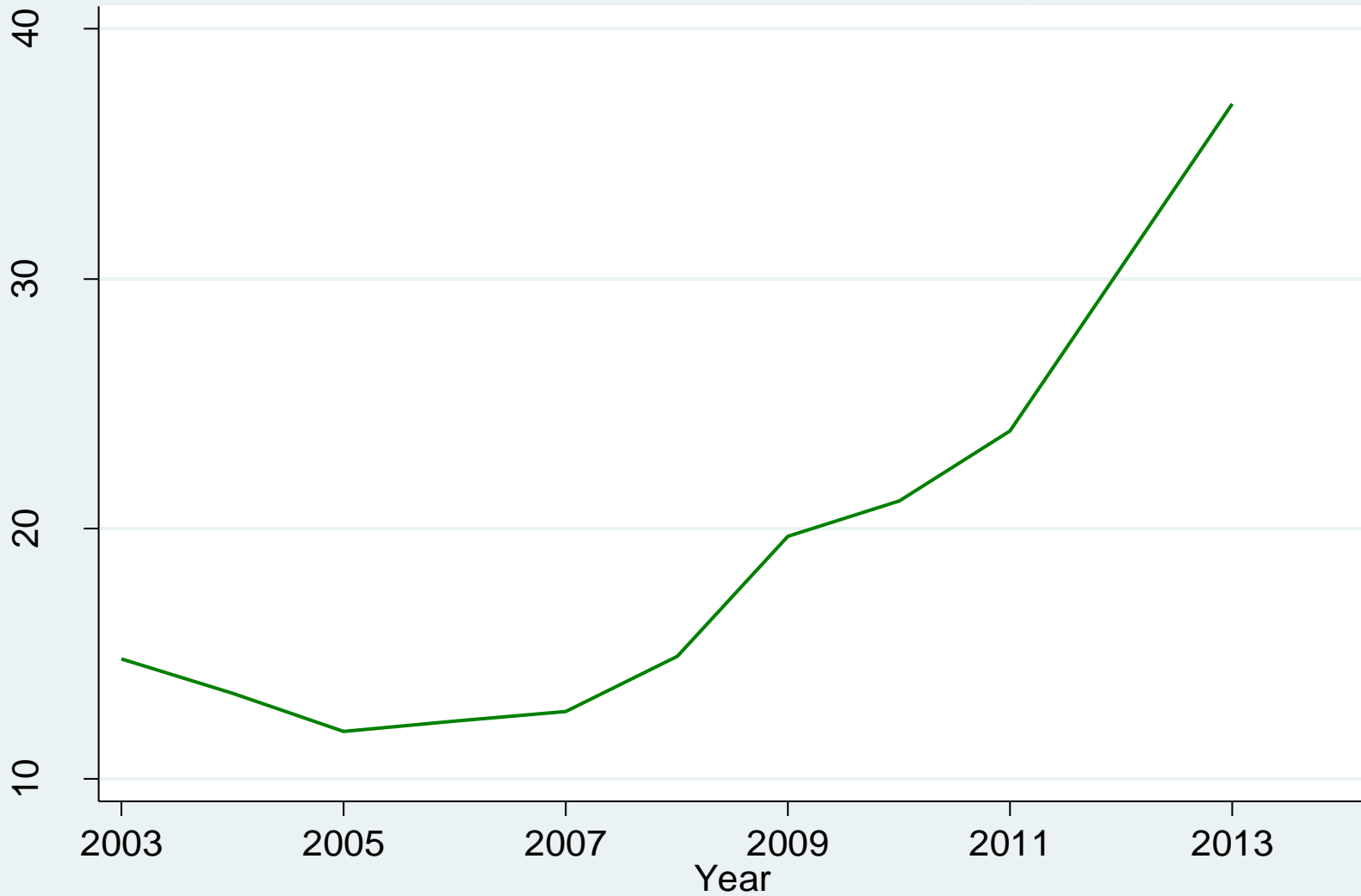
In Nigeria, age bracket 15-35 years olds account for close to 60% of the Nigeria's population and 30% of the work force.

Globally, youth unemployment rate is 12.7% (ILO, 2012). In Nigeria, 54% of youth are unemployed in 2012 and 50% in 2011.

Some Africa countries unemployment rate:

- South Africa's unemployment rate 24.9% in 2012 and 25.2% in 2013;
- Ghana about 14% in 2010 and 11% in 2012,
- Kenya was 40% in 2011
- Nigeria is around 37% in 2013 (Asaju et.al.,2014).

Unemployment Statistics in Nigeria



Enhancing better Youth participation in Agric.

Constraints to Youth participation in agriculture:

- Perception of youths: agriculture is drudgery operation, it lacks competitive market low farm returns, lacks Buy Back Scheme (BBC) from the Government
- Poor educational and informal training programs, which could integrate them to the market that have strong value chains to work within.
- Poor exposure to available operational agricultural facilities that could inspire youths to take up the challenge of becoming future farmers
- Poor/non existence of infrastructure in the rural area to engage the youths and reduce rural urban migration.

Enhancing better Youth participation Cont.

Other constraints to youth participation in agriculture:

- Economic factors such as inadequate credit facilities, low farming profit margins, lack of competitive market for agricultural products, lack of agricultural insurance, initial capital and production inputs.
- Social factors such as public perception about farming and parental influence to move out of agriculture.
- Environmental issues such as inadequate land, continuous poor harvests, and soil degradation (Akpan, 2010).

Way Forward

Youth participation in agricultural sector

- reduces the problems of the ageing farm population,
 - increase food production capacity thereby ensuring food security sustainability.
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- ✓ Private sector participation with programs that specially targets the youth
 - ✓ Farm settlement scheme should be revisited as it reduces rural urban migration
 - ✓ Deliberate shift in policy, training that will integrate them to the market and provide strong value chains to work within (e.g ATA).

Way forward Cont.

Some success stories involving youth participation in ensuring food security in other Countries

- Niger, Farmers for Future program, enables youth market- oriented farming with new technologies which has resulted in considerable increase in food security (Feighery et al., 2011).
- Uganda, Youth involvement in agriculture by applying business practices to the agricultural sector results in profit maximization (IFDA, 2010).
- Egyptian gov.t in partnership with international Fund for Agricultural Development provide 40,000 college graduates with a million acres of reclaimed desert, agricultural education, training on use of irrigation drip system.This program ensures household food security and increase imports food to the urban areas

Way forward Cont.

- Kwara state of Nigeria, Agro Business Scheme focused on youth empowerment programs which resulted in enormous employment opportunities (Olokundun, 2014).
- Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES' O) in some states in Nigeria. the scheme employed young graduates in skill acquisition especially in Agriculture. Cassava farms are established with training on cassava production and bread making. Etc.

However more needs to be done!!!!!!

Thanks for your Attention