Chapter 17
Evaluating Gains of Friendly Policy Environment in India

Benjamin Chijioke Asogwa
University of Agriculture, Nigeria

Joseph Chinedu Umeh
University of Agriculture, Nigeria

Simon Terhemba Penda
University of Agriculture, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the gains of friendly policy environment in the cassava sub-sector among cassava farmers in Nigeria using farm-level data collected from randomly sampled 360 cassava farmers in Benue State. The study showed that the policy intervention, which opened up a lot of marketing opportunities for increased income in the cassava industry, encouraged the cassava farmers to diversify into value addition in their cassava business for increased income generation. It also encouraged increased adoption of improved processing machines/equipment at the farm level and increased accessibility to markets. Policies that would guarantee provision of adequate modern production resources to the cassava farmers are strongly advocated. Policies that would ensure that adequate farm and market information are made available to the rural farmers to make them abreast of current agricultural innovations and have access to much better market opportunities should be sufficiently reinforced.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this article is to provide empirical evidence that will assist the reader develop a thorough understanding of the gains of friendly policy environment in the cassava sub-sector among cassava farmers in Nigeria. To accomplish this objective an attempt has been made to present the subject in a manner that will be beneficial to agricultural development policy makers and other stakeholders in agricultural development.

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the gains of friendly policy environment in the cassava sub-sector among cassava farmers in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:
1. Assess the availability of cassava production resources among the respondents;
2. Analyse the extent of cassava processing among the respondents;
3. Examine the access to cassava markets among the respondents;
4. Identify the sources of farm information on cassava production among the respondents; and
5. Identify the cassava production constraints among the respondents.

BACKGROUND

According to FAO (2005), prior to the discovery of oil in the 1970s, agriculture was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy, accounting for about two-thirds of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). With the oil boom, agriculture’s contribution to GDP declined to 25 percent by 1980 and Nigeria moved from being a large exporter to a major importer of agricultural products. Since the mid-1980s, as a result of a decline in oil revenue and policy measures implemented under a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), agriculture’s contribution to GDP has risen to about 40 percent.

FAO (2005) pointed out that the socio-economic importance of cassava and the accidental introduction of cassava mealybug which ravaged most cassava fields in the major producing areas led to the Government’s direct intervention in the subsector, in the implementation of the IFAD-assisted Cassava Multiplication Project (CMP) between 1987 and 1996. In the early 1980s, Nigerian cassava production fell drastically due to the combined effects of pests (mealybug and green spider mite) and diseases (mosaic virus and cassava bacterial blight), thereby posing a threat to national food security. In response, IFAD initiated the CMP as a parallel-financed part of the World Bank-assisted MSADP-L The overall objective of the CMP was to multiply, promote and distribute improved varieties to farmers so as to improve productivity and income (FAO, 2005). Subsequently, Root and Tuber Expansion Programme (RTEP) was initiated by IFAD with the overall objective of increasing smallholder production of cassava and yam, as well as their end-products, and thus enhance national food self-sufficiency and improve rural household food security and income (IFAD, 1999).

Among other factors which could explain increasing trend in cassava production, according to FAO (2005), included: availability of improved varieties of cassava, relatively well-developed market access infrastructure, existence of improved processing technology, participation of middleperson in cassava marketing; and other market-related factors.

FAO (2005) noted that in terms of food security and food production incentives there has been no policy consistency. Initially, the availability of oil revenue made it possible for the Government to respond, to food shortages with large-scale importation. The petroleum income also raised a demand for food as well as encouraging rural-urban migration which resulted in farm labour shortage.

There is, thus, evidence of a lack of synergy between macroeconomic and sectorial policies; the macroeconomic policies have not been able to secure macroeconomic stability, an external balance or a diversified economic base (FAO, 2005). Consequently, there is a serious inconsistency giving conflicting signals to the farmers. In view of the growing favourable policy intervention of government in the cassava sub-sector, this study is therefore designed to evaluate the gains of friendly policy environment in the cassava sub-sector among cassava farmers in Nigeria.
Related Content

How [Not] to Caffeinate a Political Group: Parent Post Influence on Conversational Network Structure
Alison N. Novak, Christopher Mascaro, Sean P. Goggins and Emmanuel Koku (2014). Handbook of Research on Political Activism in the Information Age (pp. 425-442).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/not-caffeinate-political-group/110692?camid=4v1a

E-Government Politics as a Networking Phenomenon: Applying a Multidimensional Approach
www.igi-global.com/chapter/e-government-politics-as-a-networking-phenomenon/220233?camid=4v1a

Public Perception Spatial Data From the PPGIS Jaguarão Experiment
www.igi-global.com/chapter/public-perception-spatial-data-from-the-ppgis-jaguarao-experiment/220207?camid=4v1a

What Kind of Trade Integration Would the SCO’s Further FTA Be?
www.igi-global.com/chapter/what-kind-of-trade-integration-would-the-scos-further-fta-be/94317?camid=4v1a