



VOICES FOR FOOD SECURITY (VFS)



Voices for Food Security (VFS) Campaign and Association of Small-Scale Agro Producers in Nigeria (ASSAPIN)

June 2010

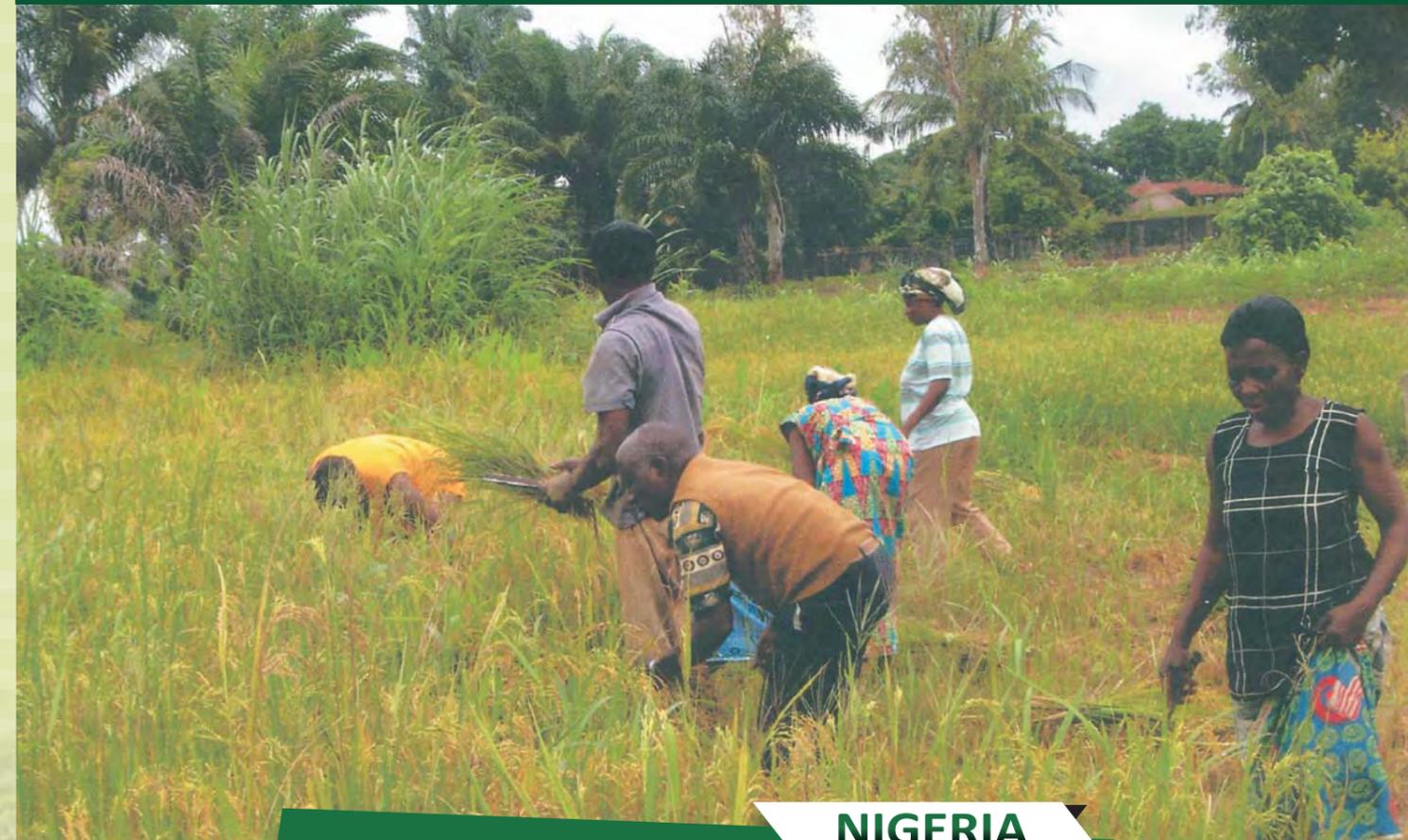
The VSF Campaign and the Small-Scale Farmers platform (ASSAPIN) are supported by:



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Nigeria



NIGERIA

FARMERS'

MANIFESTO:

**'EMPOWERING
SMALL-SCALE FARMERS FOR
A HUNGER-FREE AND STRONGER NATION'**

NIGERIA FARMERS' MANIFESTO:

'Empowering Small Scale Farmers for a Hunger-Free and Stronger Nation'

VFS and ASSAPIN Charter of Demands:

TO GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS IN NIGERIA;

Greater public investment in agriculture in favor of small-scale farmers with commitments in the 2003 AU Maputo Declaration of a minimum of 10% of national budgets for agriculture, as the irreducible benchmark. This commitment has been reaffirmed in the Abuja Declaration of 2010, which sets a new timeline of 2015 for all countries in Africa to meet this benchmark consistently. Accordingly, we demand as follows:

- i Nigeria to develop with the participation of all stakeholders, and in accordance with the ECOWAS Agriculture Policy and Common Africa Agricultural Development Plan (CADEP), its National Agriculture Investment Plan, showing how and at what rate it intends to grow investment in agriculture in order to meet its projected 9.5% annual agriculture growth, which is a pre-requisite for halving poverty by 2015.
- ii Sixty percent of the agriculture investments in budgets as well as in any intervention facilities at federal and state levels to be earmarked for SSFs and small-scale agriculture.
- iii Marginalized groups particularly women - should be given special consideration in any new agricultural policy and sustainable economic development and investment plans; given the central role of women in agricultural production in most African countries in general, and in Nigeria in particular.
- iv Considering that securing land rights for

women and empowering women farmers would mark a major step forward; the Land Use Act be reviewed and amended to grant easy access to land for small-scale farmers in general and women small scale farmers in particular.

- v Government to set up a national agency for small-scale agricultural development which should immediately undertake a national survey of smallscale agric, capacity assessment of smallscale farmers and accordingly design a national response strategy and development plan.
- vi This specialized agency for small-scale agriculture development should be established as a form of affirmative action to address decades of disempowerment, neglect and marginalization of small-scale farmers with a special consideration to women This agency should be replicated at state levels.
- vii National and state assemblies committees of agriculture to establish gender sensitive sub committees on small-scale agriculture.
- viii National and state plans of action that clearly indicate how improved and increased support to enable access to inputs, credits, extension services, climate change impact, adaptation and mitigation support, and market access for small-scale farmers will be achieved.
- ix Prioritise dealing with the root causes of food insecurity and crisis, and organise urgent response to the food crisis in the Sahel parts of the country covering relief, recovery and rehabilitation.

To International Donors and Development Partners:

Live up to their commitments to poor African farmers in terms of investment and enabling policy framework, rather than one which forces liberalization of local markets and support for large-scale agricultural projects instead of supporting small- scale community farmers, which have undermined African agriculture.

Greater investment and action to overcome climate change, which is becoming one of the biggest long term challenges facing Africa, with desertification, drought and erosion devastating many rural areas resulting in degradation of farm lands.

Focus attention on and devote greater investment on measures to deal with root and structural causes of food crisis and food insecurity.

THE IMPERATIVE FOR A MOVEMENT OF SMALL-SCALE FARMERS



**As a result of ...
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being addressed**

Although Small-scale farmers are the overwhelming majority of farmers in the country, accounting for over 90%, but because they are scattered and isolated, they have faced marginalization, exclusion and disempowerment over time.

As a result of this marginalization, exclusion and disempowerment, the voices of small-scale farmers are not being heard, and their issues are not being taken into account nor are their specific concerns being addressed in any conscious and systematically sustainable manner. The result is the neglect of the sector and the current incidence of food insecurity in the country.

Given this history of neglect and disempowerment, against the backdrop of recent renewed global and national interest in small-scale agriculture and small-scale farmers, the time has come for small-scale farmers from across the country to get organised and link up in a national platform which can enhance their voice and increase their capacity to influence policies in the agriculture sector.

It is in light of this that we have come together under the platforms of Association of Small-Scale Agro Producers in Nigeria (ASSAPIN) and Voices for Food Security (VFS) campaign to organize and mobilize for actions to hold government accountable to their obligations to Nigerian farmers. We therefore call on all fellow small-scale farmers across the country to join hands with us to establish, build and strengthen these national platforms of small-scale farmers and civil society organizations as well as development partners to enable us engage actively and pro-actively with all stakeholders in the agriculture sector. Specifically, our objectives include but not limited to the following:

To reinforce the institutional capacity of small-scale farmers' organizations in Nigeria to engage in policy processes

To improve the quantity and quality of public investment to support small-scale farmers.

To create an enabling environment for food security in Nigeria

To increase women's participation and representation in decision-making at all levels of agricultural governance and production

Situation Analysis Of Small-Scale Farmers And Small-Scale Agriculture In Nigeria:



The various peoples who make up present day Nigeria organized into many different states and empires in pre-colonial times established through agriculture-based economies. This continued into the colonial period during which agriculture further provided the basis for trade, commerce and

emerging industries both in Nigeria, the colonized country and in the UK, the colonizing country.

During this period, particularly in the colonial and immediate post-independence period, the country was not only self-sufficient in food production; it was also a net exporter of cash crops which formed the

basis of a buoyant and thriving national economy. In fact, cash crops such as palm fruits/oil, cocoa and groundnuts emerged as the leading foreign exchange earners to the regions that produced them and it was from the proceeds of these crops that infrastructures were built in major emerging cities across the country.

This could not have been possible without the continuous tilling of the soil by small-scale farmers that are scattered in clusters across all the nook and cranny of Nigeria, mostly rural areas. It is largely from the sweat and labour of these small-scale producers that Nigeria as a nation was sustained economically and politically before independence in 1960, and in the early years of independence. In fact agriculture's contribution to the country's total wealth and well being [GDP] in the late 1960s hovered around 67%. Even now with the huge neglect of the sector for the last four decades in favour of the tremendous investment in Oil and gas

exploration and production activities, the agriculture sector's contribution remains sustained and so strong, standing at 42% of national GDP.

Indeed, with the discovery of oil in large commercial quantity for exploration and exportation, government's focus shifted from agriculture to oil, which now became the main foreign exchange earner, and main sustenance of the economy. As a result the incentives and support hitherto given to agriculture and by extension the SSFs over the years nose-dived. For example, the annual agricultural budget which hitherto stood at aboutOf the total budget declined to about between 2

to 3 percent.

The woes of the sector and the plight of the small-scale farmers was compounded and aggravated with the promulgation of the Land Use Act in the in the late 70s by the military regime. Coupled with this, the economic policies adopted by another military government in the 80s, in particular the Structural Adjustment Program [SAP] where government withdrew the little incentives and support that was given to the sector and liberalised importation of competitive products from well-established and subsidized markets from abroad, became the last straw that broke the camel's back. The years of SAP saw the erosion of public investment in and government support for agriculture: agriculture extension services centers became run down, extension workers were made redundant, and the system of providing affordable inputs, fertilizers and credits to farmers collapsed.

Furthermore SSFs were left on their own, helpless and powerless, to proffer solutions for themselves in the midst of economic hardship. The government's feeble interventions through the Agriculture Development Programs [ADPs] and other schemes initiated to provide stimulus and incentives to this sector failed due to government's concurrent wholesale

adoption of the received wisdom from the International Financial Institutions [IFIs], which required governments to stop providing services, and encouraged privatization of services and the economy. Other factors included inconsistency in government policies, instability in government and, in several other cases, corrupt practices by government officials and lack of requisite capacity in relevant government Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] to deliver on planned interventions/programs, and or inability to translate laudable policies to practical projects for meaningful development in the sector. Consequently the dominant trend has been a major shift from agricultural activities to other jobs due to its neglect by government. This has led to obvious challenges such as lack of basic support

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infrastructures, education & health facilities, incentives, inputs supply, affordable and accessible credit, and lack of requisite capacity and skill on the part of SSFs to improve productivity, overcome the myriad of challenges, or even influence decision making and implementation processes by policy makers that affect their lives.

Worse still the younger generation no longer see agriculture as a sustainable means of livelihood and have become passive to the sector. The urban-rural drift which began in the 70s with youths in search of white-collar jobs, viewed as more lucrative than tilling the land, have continued

with even greater intensity, leading to further decline and dwindle in the fortunes of the agric sector. The result is that Nigeria now finds itself at the risk of being engulfed in a serious, possibly catastrophic situation of severe food insecurity, widespread hunger, disease and malnutrition, as the older generation of small-scale farmers dies off.

Gender inequality in agriculture

Although the bulk of farm labour is small scale agriculture is provided by women and their children, the conditions under which small-scale agriculture is undertaken is almost completely blind to the

needs and issues of concern of women in small scale agriculture, and women small-scale farmers. Over 80% of women living in rural Nigeria make a living from small-scale agriculture, yet no policies, legislation, or institutional intervention of governments have specifically addressed the plight of women in the sector.

Gender disparity in economic activities as revealed in the Nigeria Human Development report 2008-2009 shows an imbalance between men and women in terms of access to facilities and ownership of assets in agriculture.

Table of gender disparity in agriculture

S. No.	Issues	Female %	Male %
1	Farmland	35.9	64.3
2	Agricultural inputs	26.7	73.3
3	Agricultural extension services	22.8	77.2
4	Storage facilities	26	74
5	Labour	38.7	61.3
6	Own land	15.8	84.2

Source: NBS, CWIQ 2006 in OGB Monitoring Review Report April 2010

The government's feeble interventions through the Agriculture Development Programs [ADPs] and other schemes initiated to provide stimulus and incentives to this sector failed due to government's concurrent wholesale adoption of the received wisdom from the International Financial Institutions [IFIs] which required governments to stop providing services, and encouraged privatization of services and the economy.

If small-scale farmers in general have restricted access to inputs, extension services, information, improved seeds, appropriate technology, credits, land, etc, access is even more restricted or very nearly non-existent for women small-scale farmers. Whereas women are key to food security, and investing equitably in women's needs and building their capacity to productively engage in agriculture ought to be at the forefront any solution to improve agricultural growth and reduce poverty.

RECENT TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE IN NIGERIA



In 2006 the Canadian International Development Agency [CIDA] provided funds to support an Agriculture Policy Support Framework [APSF] program, which was facilitated by the International Food Policy Research Institute [IFPRI], in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources [FMAWR]. In February 2010, the APSF presented its research findings titled 'Moving Nigeria's agriculture sector forward: Evidence from policy research'. The research provides some interesting and important insights into the significance of agriculture to the Nigerian economy, and to the efforts aimed at reducing poverty and meeting the MDGs.

Agriculture contributes 42% of national GDP, accounts for 38% of non-oil foreign exchange earnings, employs about 70% of the country's labour force¹. With about 80% of agricultural producers being small-scale farmers, and over 80% of women living in rural areas engaged in agriculture livelihoods. What is even more significant is the fact that over 80% of the food consumed in the country is produced by small-scale farmers.

Additionally, between 1990 and 2006, agriculture accounted for 47% of national growth. It has also been recognized that in order to reduce national poverty rate by 31% over the next 7 years to meet MDG 1 target [that is with the federal government's assertion that it can meet MDG by 2017, 2 years after the 2015 target], annual agriculture and gross domestic product [GDP] growth rates of 9.5% and 8% respectively have to be attained.

¹ Moving Nigeria's Agriculture Sector Forward: Evidence from policy Research. Agriculture Policy support framework [APSF] program, supported by CIDA fund provided in 2006. Research report presented in early 2010

According to the analysis contained in the APSF research report, agriculture investment needs to be increased by an average of 24% annually to sustain the target annual growth agriculture growth rate of 9.5%.

Conversely, the trend in Nigeria until recently has been that of dwindling and sharp decline in public investment in agriculture, itself leading to a situation of very little and or insignificant private sector investment in agriculture by the organized private sector.

At the beginning of 2009, as part of a response to both the global food and financial crises, the federal government announced a series of intervention facilities in the form of stimulus packages targeting agriculture and food production. The total package including other support from the World Bank in the national fadama III program is in excess of 600 billion Naira. This stimulus package is exclusive of the agriculture's share of the 2009 federal budget, which for the first time overshot the Maputo Declaration target at over 12% of the budget and which amounted to over 120 billion Naira.

However the focus of the stimulus packages have been commercial agriculture, by which government through its criteria for accessing this facility means large-scale commercial farms/agriculture. This way of defining commercial agriculture as large scale agriculture is repeating the mistakes of the past decades of neglect, and has not taken into cognizance the lessons that have been learnt expressed in the most recent reports of relevant international agencies and inter-governmental platforms.

What is important to note is that the level of public investment in agriculture has been quite inconsistent. For example, whereas prior to 2009 budget, the highest level of public investment in agriculture as a percentage of annual budget was achieved in 2007 at 7%, and even though this rose to nearly 13% in 2009, it again dropped to 3.7% in the 2010 appropriation bill.

In addition to this, the sector has also been plagued by the problems associated with inadequate institutional/systemic capacity, and low levels of capacity utilization. The level of performance of the budget usually averages below 50%, according to the National Assembly [NASS] findings in the course of the performance of its oversight responsibilities. This is also reflected in the level of disbursement of the stimulus package. Of the 206 proposals from large-scale commercial farmers received in relation to the 200 billion commercial agriculture credit facility to be disbursed by First Bank and UBA, only 9 projects were approved, and one year since the release of the stimulus package, no actual disbursement has been made. The non-performance of this stimulus facility is now the subject of a probe by the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture..

From the foregoing it is clear that government and other stakeholders need to increase substantially both the quantity [percentages and actual amount of funds invested] and the quality [addressing institutional capacities; levels of performance, disbursement and utilization; and improving targeting to focus on small scale agriculture/small scale farmers] of investment in agriculture, and that this investment should be primarily targeted at small-scale agriculture and small scale farmers, recognizing that Small-scale agro-producers are the basis of the agriculture value chain.

Another major emerging challenge faced by small-scale farmers and small-scale agriculture is that presented by the impact of climate change on the environment and on agriculture. SSFs manage some of the most degraded and fragile lands. However, despite the challenges of desertification and drought devastating many rural areas, farmers have been left to their own meagre and inadequate resources and devices to cope with, adapt to, and mitigate the impact of climate change on agriculture.

RECENT TRENDS AT GLOBAL LEVEL

Quotes

"International donors have also failed to live up to their commitments to poor African farmers. Just over \$1 billion of the \$12 billion that donors committed in 2008 to help poor countries cope with the global food crisis had so far reached the ground in 2009. Bad donor policies, such as forced liberalisation of local markets and support for large-scale agricultural projects instead of small-scale community farmers, have also undermined African agriculture".

Over the last two years or so, in particular since the start of the global food and financial crises [in 2007 & 2008 respectively], most stakeholders have come to accept the fact that increasing global food production and productivity, increasing access to the food produced, and ensuring food security for the more than a billion food insecure people across the world requires renewed focus and improved and increased quantity and quality of investment in agriculture which targets small scale agriculture in general, and small scale farmers in particular. African leaders gathered in Maputo in 2003 recognised and affirmed this in the Maputo declaration where they committed to increasing public investment as a percentage of annual national budgets to 10% by 2008. Alas only 7 countries met that target by 2008, although some like Nigeria have met and surpassed the target in the 2009 budget.

To underscore the significance of the Maputo declaration, recognise the implications of the failure to meet up with it, and reaffirm their commitment to meeting this target, African leaders gathered in Abuja for the African Agro Business Summit in March 2010 adopted the Abuja Declaration, which essentially reaffirmed the Maputo declaration and called on African governments to meet the 10% of annual budget benchmark by 2015. It is instructive to note that the Maputo declaration clearly made reference to prioritization of investment in small-scale agriculture.

On its part, the World Bank in its 2008 report have also endorsed and accepted this position after decades of prompting and inducing governments to stop and reverse the trend in public investment in agriculture. The G8 under the leadership of the new US administration has also at its summit in March 2009 made a clear case for increased investment in agriculture and food production, and a shift in focus to small-scale agriculture as the principal means to achieve this. These positions have been equally endorsed by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture organization [FAO] in its late 2009 report and at the November 2009 world food summit coordinated by it.

At another level, the problem is aggravated by the attitude and failings of the international community. International donors have also failed to live up to their commitments to poor African farmers. Just over \$1 billion of the \$12 billion that donors committed in 2008 to help poor countries cope with the global food crisis had so far reached the ground in 2009. Bad donor policies, such as forced liberalisation of local markets and support for large-scale agricultural projects instead of small-scale community farmers, have also undermined African agriculture. While spending on agriculture in poor countries has decreased over the past twenty years, the US spent \$41 billion and the EU \$130 billion on its domestic agricultural markets in 2007².

²"Investing in Poor Farmers Pays: Rethinking How to Invest in Agriculture". Oxfam, 2009

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SMALL SCALE AGRICULTURE TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Small scale agriculture accounts for about 94% of total agriculture output in the country, 81% of total cultivated land area, employing more than 70% of productive labour nationally, contributes over 40% to national GDP, more than 5% of total export and provides 88% of non-oil earnings³.

If Nigeria is to achieve industrial revolution, meet the raw material needs of industry, generate employment, reduce poverty and increase per capita income across the board, it is important that its national development policy, program and plan of action not only prioritise improved quantity and quality of investment in agriculture, but that this would need to target small scale farmers and agro-

producers in general.

This will involve development of a comprehensive agriculture development and investment plan which will include priority focus on the following areas among others; improved targeting to ensure that vulnerable, small scale farmers and women farmers are provided adequate support; enabled access to inputs, including technical, improved seeds, credits, non destructive fertiliser (organic fertiliser), extension services, etc, as well as, enabled access to markets and end users; capacity building programs for small scale farmers and extension services providers; discouraging use of detrimental and destructive inputs including chemicals and technologies; promotion

of organic agriculture practices; improved climate change adaptation and mitigation support; enabled access to land; discouraging of landgrabbing etc among other areas of focus.

To be able to develop such a plan, a comprehensive census and survey of agriculture needs to be carried out to assess the capacity needs and gaps in small-scale agriculture and assess the cost of filling those gaps.

This is why the demand for a National Agency for Small Scale Agriculture Development to coordinate all interventions targeted at small scale farmers, carry out the needed assessment, develop and implement the necessary response plan is so urgent.

CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

This lesson to be learnt is that the sustainable path towards guaranteed food security and increased food production and increased access to food by the most vulnerable and food insecure, is through a focus on small-scale agriculture, and small-scale farmers. Furthermore, small-scale agriculture can also be made commercially viable and profitable with the right kind of investment and information support.

It is in light of this that we call on all small-scale farmers across the country to join hands with us to establish, build and strengthen a national platform of small-scale farmers to enable us engage actively and pro-actively with all stakeholders in the agriculture sector.

We call upon farmers groups across the country to come out enemas and be part of the farmers movement under the auspices of Association Of Small Scale Agro-Producers In Nigeria [ASSAPIN] and Voices for Food Security (VFS) to demand for food security and sovereignty, predicated on greater government support to the SSFs in Nigeria. We urge all, especially farmers, to engage in policy dialogue and actively participate in decisions making and implementation processes that affect their lives and livelihoods.

We also note that public support for the small-scale farmers is an imperative to national growth, development and prosperity, particularly when the nation's growth, development and aspirations to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020 is tied to and dependent on the development of the agriculture sector.

As Nigeria looks to the next rounds of elections, we implore all Nigerian citizens to engage with political parties and political office seekers/holders on the basis of their general principles in relation to disposition to good governance; and in particular, specific attitude and concrete plans in response to this NIGERIAN FARMER'S MANIFESTO.

Finally, we challenge all political parties and political office seekers/holders to publicly declare and document for the hearing and access of the Nigerian populace, their views and plans for Nigeria's Agriculture sector in general, and small-scale agriculture sub-sector in particular. We challenge them to actively engage with this Nigerian Farmers' Manifesto, by either endorsing, rejecting or proffering alternatives to the propositions herein.

No Farmers, No Nation!

**IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF
SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE IN NIGERIA!**

**SUPPORT NIGERIA'S SMALL-SCALE FARMERS! ENDORSE
THIS FARMERS' MANIFESTO!!**

**JOIN THE ASSOCIATION OF SMALL SCALE
AGRO-PRODUCERS IN NIGERIA [ASSAPIN]!!!**

BE A PART OF THE VOICES FOR FOOD SECURITY [VFS] CAMPAIGN!!!!

JUNE 2010

³ Ajayi 2009

ABOUT ASSOCIATION OF SMALL-SCALE AGRO PRODUCERS OF NIGERIA (ASSAPIN)



Association of Small-Scale Agro Producers in Nigeria (ASSAPIN), a coalition of organisations of small-scale farmers across Nigeria. ASSAPIN's vision is that of *A hunger free, wealthy and strong nation!*, The organization is devoted to the promotion and protection of the interests of its members nation-wide, and mobilising them for the nation's efforts to overcome poverty and suffering, achieve food and livelihood security as well as sustainable development for Nigeria through enhancing members' capacity for improved agricultural productivity and linkages to financial and input support.

ABOUT VOICES FOR FOOD SECURITY (VFS) CAMPAIGN



VOICES FOR FOOD SECURITY (VFS)

The **Voices for Food Security (VFS) Campaign** is a collective effort by small-scale farmers and civil society organisations across Nigeria to campaign for strengthening of the Nigerian agriculture and food sector. Its main objectives are:

- * *To reinforce the institutional capacity of small-scale farmers' organisations in Nigeria to engage in policy processes*
- * *To improve the quantity and quality of public investment to support small-scale farmers.*
- * *To create an enabling environment for food security in Nigeria*
- * *To increase women's participation and representation in decision-making at all levels of agricultural governance and production*

Cutting across each of these objectives and central to their realisation are two cross cutting issues. These are the urgent need to enhance and raise the voice of small scale farmers in local and national discuss; and the utmost necessity of addressing the special needs of young farmers in order to ensure that agricultural labour process can be reproduced in a sustainable manner.

The campaign consortium is composed of: CBD-NGO Forum, Civil Society Coalition on Poverty Eradication (CISCOPE), Farm Infrastructures Foundation (FIF), Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS), Middle-Belt Small Scale Farmers Network (MIBSSFANET), *Strengthening the Livelihoods of Small-Scale Farmers in Nigeria* (SLISSFAN), and the United Movement of Small-Scale Farmers (UMSSF). The campaign is being presently supported by Oxfam International and ActionAid Nigeria.

Other organisations endorsing the campaign are: ActionAid PAP (Partnership Against Poverty) and Activista Partners, Trade Network Initiative (TNI), Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA), COCIN Church Development Program (CCDP), Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN), Project Agape (PROAGAPE), Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), Women in Agriculture Association (WIAA), HEDA, Agriculture and Allied Employees Union of Nigeria (AAEUN), an affiliate of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)], Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), International Centre for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC) and its small scale input dealers partners.