

The Impact of Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) on Food Security in Plateau State since 1987

Peter Wilfred Naankiel

Department of History and International Studies, Federal University Lafia, Lafia, Nasarawa State

ABSTRACT: *Agriculture has for a long period remained the cardinal means of the survival of humanity. As a result, it has gained utmost attention amongst the priority of nations in terms of food security. Nigeria has since independence had its economy based on agriculture and was the major foreign earner for the country. Shortly after independence, the oil boom negatively reversed the agricultural fortunes of the country to the extent the Nigerian economy became a mono-economy dependent on crude oil. In a bid to reverse this trend, the country adopted Agricultural Development Programmes across the federation. In view of this initiative, the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) became established to boost the agricultural fortunes of the state. Hence, this study examines the establishment, objectives and impacts of the PADP in Plateau State since inception. Besides, the study also analyses some of the challenges bedeviling the PADP in the state. Findings show amongst others that the PADP is not well funded and is lacking in manpower and technical competence amongst others. The study finally suggests the need for prompt funding by government at all levels, employment of more staff and purchase of modern equipments amongst others for the PADP.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture has since the pre-colonial period been very important in the survival of the economy of societies within the Nigeria nation. Since the colonial period, its importance as the mainstay of the Nigeria economy has become visible and all important. Agriculture provided both food and cash crops that helped various societies in Nigeria sustain socio-economic interaction and relations. Cash crops such as groundnuts, cocoa, palm oil, cotton and benniseed amongst others were grown in the various regions that made up the country. The importance of cash crop production to the economy of Nigeria was such that; ‘the volume of cocoa trade accounted for about 20% value of Nigeria’s total export from 1950’s-1960’s.’¹

However, cash crop production led to the abandonment of food crop production and this led to food insecurity. Mike O. Odey in emphasising this point opined that; ‘The initial problem of cocoa peasant farmers was how to cope with domestic supply of food as farmers abandoned food crop for cash crop production.’² Odey further argues that the abandonment of food crop production is one of the main reasons for the nations agrarian crisis of food insecurity.³

The discovery of crude oil subsequently aggravated the crisis in the agricultural sector as the country abandoned the production of cash crops for export and started to export crude oil. Nigeria especially from the 1970s solely relied on crude oil sales thereby becoming a mono-economy. The fall in oil prices in the international market led to severe strain on the nation’s economy especially in the 1980s. It is against this background that the nation introduced Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP’s) aimed at cushioning the effect of the agrarian crisis which the nation faced. Hence, the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) became established in Plateau State to serve this purpose. This study therefore examines the cardinal objectives of the PADP with regards to mitigating the challenges of the agrarian crisis. Besides, the study also analyses the impact of the PADP in the implementation of its set out aims and objectives in the agricultural sector of Plateau State. Most significantly, the achievements and challenges of the PADP are discussed. In the end, the study would make viable suggestions which if implemented will go a long way to improve agriculture on the Plateau and nation at large.

II. The Establishment And Aims Of Plateau Agricultural Development Agency (PADP)

The Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) is an Integrated Rural Development outfit with its headquarters situated at Dogon Dutse, Jos. Initially in 1977, the Agricultural Development Project began as a project known as the Lafia Agricultural Development Project (LADP).⁴ The Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) is one of the multi-state Agricultural Development Projects (MS-ADP 1) which became established under a 1987 Edict by the Plateau State Government following the success of the Lafia Agricultural Development Project (LADP).⁵ Funding for the PADP is such that the Federal government contributes 20%, the Plateau State government 4% while the World Bank contributes 66%. The programme

covers an area of 54,000 km² with a size of 365,584 farm families.⁶ Clearly, the bulk of funding indicates that government at both the federal and state levels only contributes 24% and the World Bank contributes 66% respectively.

The Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) has a mandate to achieve the following objectives;

- i. To improve the standard of living through infrastructural development and ensure national food security by increasing food crop production and income of small scale farmers in Plateau State.
- ii. To fashion out a flexible phased approach to development with initial emphasis on implementing well proven components geared towards the agricultural potentials and within the financial and managerial capacity of the state, while embarking on an intensified programme of On-Farm Adaptive Research.
- iii. To assist the state in rationalizing current agricultural activities through a move to recognize commercial inputs distribution and develop a small but effective extension services.
- iv. To prepare for a transfer of a greater share of the responsibility of project appraisal and supervision of state institution.⁷

As has been shown above, the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) was aimed at enhancing infrastructural development and food security, commercializing inputs distribution and providing a robust base extension service amongst others. In spite of all these noble ideals as set out by the Plateau State government for the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP), the question is have they been able to achieve these over the years? This is definitely the concern of the study in subsequent sections of the discourse. On the whole, the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) is saddled with the responsibility of efficient information dissemination, proven and acceptable technologies to farmers, the supply of quality farm inputs to farmers and the construction of rural roads and water supply etc.⁸

III. Departmental And Administrative Set-Up Of Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP)

The Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) functions in such a manner that it has the Agricultural Development Programme Executive Committee (ADPEC) as its highest policy making body. The Agricultural Development Programme Executive Committee (ADPEC) being the highest policy making body of the programme comprises of the Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as the Chairman representing the State Governor while the Programme Manager is the Secretary. Other members of the Agricultural Development Programme Executive Committee (ADPEC) include the following;

- i. Commissioner of Finance
- ii. Commissioner of Water Resources
- iii. Commissioner of Works
- iv. Secretary to the State Government
- v. Managing Director, Lower Benue River Basin Development Authority
- vi. Director, Federal Department of Agriculture
- vii. Regional Head, National Food Reserve Agency(NFRA)⁹

However, under what is termed the Programme Management Unit (PMU), the PADP has at its head a Programme Manager (PM) and it operates with Seven (7) Departments and Three (3) Zonal offices. The departments are further categorized into two (2) namely Core Departments and Supporting Departments thus;

A. CORE DEPARTMENTS

1. Extension Services
2. Technical Services
3. Engineering Services

B. SUPPORTING DEPARTMENTS

1. Personnel and Human Resources Development
2. Rural Institutional Development
3. Finance and Accounts
4. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation¹⁰

These Seven Departments are headed by Directors. Furthermore, for administrative conveniences, the Programme is divided into Three (3) Zones thus;

1. Northern Zone
2. Central Zone
3. Southern Zone

The Northern Zone which comprises Barkin Ladi LGA, Jos South LGA, Jos North LGA, Jos East and Riyom LGA's has its headquarters in Bukuru. The Central Zone comprising Mangu, Bokkos, Pankshin, Kanke and Kanam LGA's is headquartered at Mangu while the Southern Zone made up of Langtang North, Langtang South, Mikang, Quan Pan, Shendam and Wase LGA's has its headquarters at Shendam. Each of these zones is

headed by a Zonal Programme Manager. The Management Team of the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) which comprises the Programme Manager, Departmental Directors and Zonal Managers is headed by the Programme Manager, while the Director of Personnel and Human Resource Development is the Secretary.¹¹ It would be stated at this point that the study in the next section focuses on an elaborate mention of the core objectives of the PADP with a view to shedding more light on its establishment by government in Plateau State. Being a core department which comprises three Units namely extension services, technical services and engineering services, the bulk of activities of the programme revolves around them and this gives fecundity to its importance.

IV. Core Department Objectives Of The PADP

1. EXTENSION SERVICES; Its main objective includes the implementation of cost effective Unified Extension Services(crop, livestock, Women In Agriculture, Agro-forestry, etc through the principle of training and visit (T & V) system of extension aimed at increasing productivity and income of farmers. This is to be achieved thus;
 - i. To encourage farmers to adopt new technologies through the establishment of Small Plot Adoption Technology (SPAT)
 - ii. To encourage farmers adoption of improved technologies through the establishment of Management Training Plot (MTP)
 - iii. Other Ad Hoc extension activities as may be required for proper dissemination of information.¹²
2. TECHNICAL SERVICES; Its core objective is to increase crop production and income of small scale farmers through the adoption of suitable and affordable techniques especially those that will increase production, utilization of farm produce and reduce crop losses. The Departments specific objectives includes;
 - i. To provide quality improved seeds e.g. maize, rice, and groundnuts etc to farmers that can substantially increase crop yield or quality.
 - ii. To encourage the production of improved varieties of root and tuber crops, carry out market surveys to ascertain prices of root and tuber crops as well as link farmers with market outlets, processors with fabricators and also farmers with credit facilities.
 - iii. Agro-Processing designed to teach and train farmers on how to preserve their farm produce, storage and how to use processing equipment to add value to their products etc.
 - iv. Agro-forestry aimed at demonstrating to farmers erosion control methods, establishment of orchards, and bee keeping methods etc.
 - v. Fisheries aimed at demonstrating improve fisheries techniques to farmers such as propagation of fingerlings, pond construction and fish feeding etc.
 - vi. Women in Agriculture aimed at demonstrating to women improved methods on gender specific activities especially income generating activities and to also encourage women develop interest in backyard garden etc.
 - vii. To demonstrate to livestock farmers improved technologies on livestock production/management and adopt routine animal health vaccination.
 - viii. With respect to Adaptive Research it is aimed to conduct On-Farm Adaptive Research (OFAR) with farmers by comparing farming technologies with improved technologies.
 - ix. To conduct Monthly Technology Review Meeting(MTRM) vis-à-vis linkages with Research Institutes, Universities, Private Seed Companies etc.¹³
3. ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT; The Department is saddled with the responsibility of providing rural infrastructure to the rural populace as well as institutions and individuals. These infrastructures include rural road construction, maintenance and rehabilitation, land preparation, bush clearing, bridge and culvert construction. It also constructs earth dams, undertakes geophysical investigation, borehole construction, wash bore construction for Fadama irrigation and of course hand pump or motorized pump(submersible) installation.¹⁴

The Engineering Services Department also constructs buildings/drainage, renovation of building/furniture, repairs of electrical fault/plumbing works as well as preparation of building estimates. The mechanical workshop is involved in the general maintenance and repairs of plants, equipment and vehicles.¹⁵ It is important to state here that the Engineering Department operates under four sections namely, roads, water development, building, and mechanical workshop with each having a sectional head.

V. An Assessment Of The Activities Of Plateau Agricultural Development Programme Since Establishment

The study at this point brings to the fore activities undertaken by the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) since its establishment. The study uses tables in certain instances to give an overview of what the Programme has been able to achieve over some years now. The presentation of these activities are going to be aimed at seeing if they are able to meet specific objectives of each department and whether or not this has translated to food security and the reduction of hunger. The study would however, use themes to categories and analyses activities of the PADP under its mandate.

1. **DISTRIBUTION OF FARM INPUTS;** The distribution of farm inputs in Plateau State includes fertilizers, seedlings, and farm implements/equipments. Even though all these are very crucial to enhancing the realization of bumper harvests, the role of fertilizer has over the years taken prominence due to the continued depletion of nutrient in the soil which has continued to necessitate an increasing use of fertilizer. This view is aptly captured thus;

Our farm lands have overtime continuously diminished in terms of soil nutrients. This is evident with poor harvest of crops such as maize, yam and guinea corn amongst others. Hence, the only way to maintain steady bumper harvest is the reliance on fertilizer every year and failure to apply fertilizer to crops ultimately leads to diminishing returns.¹⁶

While further emphasizing the cardinal role of fertilizer and its impact on farming activities on the Plateau Mr Gojim Pikatda from Kanke LGA of the Central Zone of PADP’s operation maintain that because of prolonged use of fertilizer on farmlands, the soil has gotten used to it, hence, failure to apply it on one’s farm leads to poor yield and harvest.¹⁷ He however, further emphasized that government especially through its agencies like the PADP has failed to meet the fertilizer needs of its teeming farmers especially those in the rural areas.¹⁸

The sale and distribution of fertilizer has over the years been fraught with corruption and outright nepotism to the extent it either does not get to the farmers at all or it gets to them late. In fact, Table 1.1 below shows the distribution of farm inputs;

TABLE 1.1: DETAILS OF FARM INPUTS PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION BY THE PADP

S/No.	YEAR	FARM INPUTS			
		FERTILIZERS	AGRO-CHEMICALS	SEEDLINGS	IMPLEMENTS
1	2004	150 mt,	67.5 lts, 60kg and 300 sachets	2.04mt, 1948 sachets	40 Sprayers & 360 matchets
2	2005	29.9 mt	7.942mt	3122 sachets of cereals, legumes & vegetables	279 matchets, 43 sprayers, 20 water pumps, 33 ox-drawn ridgers, 22 grinding machines & 28 Agro-process machines
3	2006	124.857 mt	1808.20 lts, 160kg, & 112600 sachets	4.735 mt & 2000 sachets of maize, rice, soya beans, G/nut and vegetables.	104 sprayers, 17 water pump, 10 agro-processing machine, 2 rice reaper, 1 horsekit and matchets
4	2007		234 lts, 20kg, 67 tubes of assorted agro-chemicals	1.8mt & 2757 sachets of seeds	12 sprayers 2 water pumps & 1 Amuda milling & destoning machine
5	2009		76 lts & 150 sachets of agro-chem	0.12 mt & 193 sachets of cereals and vegetables	18 Sprayers & 1 water pump & milling machine to each farmer(No specific No of farmers given)
6	2011		342 lts of agro-	1.9 mt & 4	40 sprayers & 15

			chem	sachets of seeds	water pumps
7	2012		2146 lts, 13,307 kg of assorted agro-chem from an annual target of 3,500 lts & 25,120 kg respectively	1.63 mt(1630 kg) seeds & 14 sachets of seeds	125 sprayers and 4 water pumps, 2 iron lances and 1 cassava grater.
8	2014				
9	2015				

Source: PADP ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE YEARS 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2015

The distribution of fertilizer to state farmers as shown in table 1.1 above indicates that there have been fluctuations in the quantity provided by the PADP. For instance, in the year 2004 150 metric tons of fertilizer was distributed, in 2005 farmers got 29.9 metric tons from the PADP, and in 2007 the PADP distributed 124.857 metric tons. However, farmers never got any fertilizer supply from the PADP for 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015. The impact on agriculture of these five years of not providing fertilizer to farmers of Plateau State can only be imagined especially as the reports were glaringly silent about it. Besides, the PADP has not been able to adequately predict precisely the quantity of fertilizer needed by the farmers in the state. Most importantly, a farmer has maintained that they rarely get fertilizer from the PADP as these are often diverted to the open markets where they end up buying at exorbitant prices.¹⁹

The supply of other farm inputs to farmers by the PADP such as agro-chemicals, seedlings, and farming implements fluctuated from 2004-2015. A precise quantity of these farm inputs needed by the farmers is not stated by the PADP except for 2012 when they had a target of 3500 lts and 25,120 kg of assorted agro-chemicals but were only able to meet 2146 lts and 13,307 kg representing between 50%-55% respectively of achieved result.

2. **FUNDING FOR THE PADP;** The PADP being a government agency and one expected to enhance development within the agricultural sector solely relies on government funding to carry out its functions especially the realization of its core mandates as enshrined in the Edict establishing it.

According to the 2005 PADP Annual Report cumulative funding for the organization stood at N113,404, 433.20.²⁰ This includes overhead cost, staff salaries and the procurement of farm inputs etc. During the cropping year 2007, PADP received a cumulative sum of N86,656,575.17 which comprises of wages (N18,301,429.74), workers leave transport grant (N10, 849, 219.10), counterpart fund for special programme for food security (N42,000,000.00), counterpart fund for coffee production(N2,460,600.00), counterpart fund for RTEP (N9,963,231.33), overhead cost (N900,000.00), Reimbursement of statement of expenditures (N2,182,096.00).²¹

For 2009, the PADP received from the Plateau State Government and the Root and Tuber Expansion Programme Management Unit (RTEP-MU) the total sum of N244,201,854.90.²² In 2011, the PADP received the sum of N312, 614,840.60 to cater for salaries of staff members, Fadama III and Farm Inputs(counterpart funds) and overheads.²³ The Plateau State government in 2012 funded the PADP to the tune of N358, 469,823.21²⁴ strictly meant for the payment of staff salaries and allowances from January-December 2012.

Even though funding for the PADP indicates a tripartite nature where the Federal and State governments alongside the World Bank are expected to take part in budgeting funds for the organization, there has been no effort to indicate this as attested to from yearly reports and interview conducted with a few PADP staff. Only the State government which from the edict establishing is supposed to contribute only 4% to its finances has continued to do so. In fact, a Director at the PADP Yakubu Baleri adumbrated the challenge of lack of funds facing the organization thus;

‘the PADP has as its major challenge the issue of funding which has over the years significantly hampered its activities and to a large extent stalled the realization of its activities in the state. The dilapidated nature of our headquarter buildings and outdated nature of some of the equipments at the Engineering and Technical Departments are a clear evidence in this respect.’²⁵

Other informants at the PADP headquarters corroborated the challenge of lack of funds thus; ‘the major challenge facing the PADP is funding its activities by government.’²⁶ Besides, the PADP has not made efforts

by the management to seek for alternative means of generating funds for itself especially from entrepreneurial farming activities or the private sector. Table 1.2 below summarizes funding for PADP thus;

Table 1.2: Summary Of Funding For The Plateau Agricultural Development Programme

S/No	YEAR	AMOUNT	FUNDING OUTFIT	PURPOSE
1	2005	N113,404, 433.20	Plateau State Government	overhead cost, staff salaries and the procurement of farm inputs etc
2	2007	N86,656,575.17	Plateau State Government	Workers entitlements, counterpart fund for special programme for food security, counterpart fund for coffee production, counterpart fund for RTEP, overhead cost, Reimbursement of statement of expenditures
3	2009	N244,201,854.90	Plateau State Government and the Root and Tuber Expansion Programme Management Unit (RTEP-MU)	For Salaries and other activities
4	2011	N312, 614,840.60	Plateau State Government	Salaries of staff members, Fadama III and Farm Inputs (counterpart funds) and overheads.
5	2012	N358, 469,823.21	Plateau State Government	Staff Salaries only

Source; PADP Annual Reports for 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2012

3. **ROADS AND EARTH DAMS CONSTRUCTED FROM 1978-2016 IN 17 L.G.A's OF PLATEAU STATE;** The PADP has according to it constructed 1451.4 Km of roads across the 17 LGAs from 1978 to 2016. It constructed in 2014 and 2015 the Jos-Mazah road and Gorah bridge in Jos East LGA. The Sha-Mundat 6 km road in Bokkos LGA was constructed in 2012 making the area accessible for the first time while the Rim Jol 6.30 km road which commenced in 2013 became completed in 2014. Similarly, it constructed three earth dams in Langtang South LGA.²⁷ The PADP successfully constructed 896 bore holes from 1987-2013.²⁸ It would be emphasized here that these were majorly rural feeder roads aimed at opening the rural areas.

4. **STAFF DISPOSITION;** Staff members of the PADP who have reached the mandatory number of years in service have continued to retire. Hence, as at 26th October 2015, the staff strength of the PADP stood at 374²⁹ a situation that has continued to threaten manpower requirement of the agency. While emphasizing the magnitude of diminishing manpower requirement of the agency Yakubu Baleri indicated this is hampering efficient provision of service delivery to the farmers and thus worsening food security.³⁰

V. CONCLUSION

The study has brought to the fore the establishment and mandate of the Plateau Agricultural Development Programme (PADP) as encapsulated in the Edict establishing it. Besides, the study specifically highlighted the objectives of the programme under its core and supporting departments respectively. Furthermore, the study has been able with the aid of statistics and tables assessed some of the activities undertaken by the PADP since inception in 1987.

Hence, the study has observed that the PADP experiences certain challenges in the execution and actualization of its mandate. For instance, the PADP has challenges of adequate funding which is targeted at farm input procurement and as a result, obligations such as yearly procurement and distribution of fertilizer,

agro-chemicals, seedlings and farm implements have continued to fluctuate and in certain years are not provided to farmers. The study has also observed that a large chunk of allocations to the PADP is meant for servicing staff remuneration as against its core mandate of improving agriculture and food security. It has also been observed that the distribution of fertilizer by the agency is fraught with corruption as the fertilizer meant for distribution to farmers is diverted by political appointees and sold in the open markets. Besides, due to inadequate funding, not much has been achieved in the aspect of roads and dams provision to the rural farmers of the state. Most importantly, the PADP lacks adequate manpower needed for the actualization of its objectives especially as staff members of the organization are retiring from service on a yearly basis and no replacements are made for them. The PADPs Works and Technical Department has obsolete and difficult to service equipments e.g. bulldozers, water tankers, tippers, drilling rigs etc. It has also been observed that in spite of the World Bank expected to contribute 66% of funding for the PADP, data from the PADP has not indicated amounts of funding given by the World Bank for each year. Worst still, the World Bank has no representation of a member on the Agricultural Development Programme Executive Committee (ADPEC).

As a result of the observations made by the study, it is suggested that there is the need for prompt funding by government at all levels and the development partner i.e. World Bank, employment of more qualified staff and purchase of modern equipments. Most importantly, the World Bank needs to be represented on the Agricultural Development Programme Executive Committee (ADPEC). So also, corruption in the area of farm input distribution needs to be totally eradicated by the state government and the World Bank through the establishment of a special anti-corruption unit at the headquarters of PADP consisting of people with integrity. Most importantly, the edict establishing the PADP needs to be amended to ensure it becomes more economically viable thereby attracting and generating funds for its operations through collaboration with tertiary research institutions and private sector synergy.

END NOTES

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