

**POVERTY AND PENURY IN PLENTY:
THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENDA**

87th
Inaugural Lecture

Delivered by

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POVERTY AND PENURY IN PLENTY: THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENDA

The Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academics,
Other Principal Officers of the University,
Provost of Colleges and Postgraduate School,
Deans of Faculties,
Heads of Departments,
Other members of Senate,
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Distinguished Colleagues (Academic and Non-Teaching) from
OOU,
Distinguished Colleagues and Friends from Sister Universities
and other Institutions,
Your Excellencies, Royal Majesties and Highnesses,
My Lord Spiritual and Temporal,
Family Members and Friends,
Gentlemen of the Press,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Great NAASITES,
Great OOUITES.

1.0 Preamble

It is my pleasure to stand before you today to deliver the 87th Inaugural Lecture of this great University. May Almighty Allah be praised for this special day of my life and profession. Every genuine practitioner of the Islamic faith is familiar with the Ninety-Nine (99) Beautiful Names of ALLAH. With His first two beautiful attributes being The Beneficent and The Merciful. I thank the Almighty Allah for endowing me with the gift of sound physical and mental health and His continual renewed kindness, which enabled me to run this academic race with great vigor. Divine guidance

and inexhaustible patience derived from the last two of the Ninety-nine (99) Beautiful Attributes of ALLAH- the guide to the right path and the patience saw me through the thorn-filled wilderness of academia. It is significant that today's Lecture is the 14th Inaugural lecture from the College of Agricultural Sciences, the 3rd from the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology and the 2nd to be delivered by an Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Expert. I welcome everyone to this unique occasion and wish you very pleasant time listening to this lecture titled "Poverty and Penury In Plenty: The Agricultural Extension Agenda".

Mr Vice-Chancellor Sir, I am sincerely humbled and grateful for this unique opportunity which you have given me to dance well-robed in the public space today to showcase why I should be counted among the outstanding teacher-scholars of this great academic community; Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, please permit me to provide brief information about poverty. Apart from the dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) now ravaging the World and particularly the African Continent, no other Scourge has had such a devastating impact on both the ancient and modern world as the scourge of poverty. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), poverty wields its destructive influence at any stage of human life from the moment of conception to the grave. It conspires with the most deadly and painful disease to bring a wretched existence to all who suffer from it. The desire to alleviate or if possible, eliminate poverty has engaged the attention of successive governments in Nigeria, both Military and Civilian Administrations. As of today, the world is still in search of a solution to global poverty, which is why the United Nations currently put poverty reduction on top of its agenda, so also is the continual search for ways to achieve poverty alleviation in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to Agriculture, Agricultural Extension and

equitable issues led to the title of this inaugural lecture: Poverty and Penury in plenty: the Agricultural Extension Agenda.

2.0. Incidence of Poverty in Rural Areas in Nigeria.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, poverty is generally equated with indigence i.e. insufficient resources to sustain a person in life, financial disability or lack of means of comfortable subsistence so as not to be in want. It is arguable that insufficiency of means is a relative term. According to Olandoja (2000) poverty goes beyond material deprivation to include insecurity, vulnerability and exposure to risks, shocks and stress. Especially, it includes not having enough to eat, poor drinking water, unfit housing, low life expectancy, poor environmental conditions, low educational opportunities, lack of productive assets and lack of economic infrastructure. Accordingly, there are two basic types of poverty. One is relative poverty, and the other is absolute or real poverty. My concern in this lecture is not with relative poverty, for there is no way this category of poverty can be eradicated. Indeed such eradication is not even desirable particularly in a capitalist society like Nigeria because it is an incident of capitalism. As such a man will always be better off than the other. In other words, one person will always be poorer than or relatively poorer compared to another. Indeed, even between countries, the comparative conditions of a group, a household or individuals will leave one group relatively poor. Thereafter not much can be done about this type of poverty. However, even in such cases, government can and ought to as a deliberate policy, adopt measures to narrow the gap in relative poverty. My concern here is with real or absolute poverty. This is the absence of basic or fundamental human needs and expectations. Under such situation, the condition of a group, a household or an individual is below poverty line. For this group of people, poverty becomes synonymous with lack of a future, lack of progress, lack of prospects, lack of development, and the need for its alleviation becomes very imperative indeed.

Majority of the poor people live in the rural areas, where a large proportion of the people are engaged in one form of farming or another. Oladoja (2000) noted that significant poverty reduction will not be possible without rapid agricultural growth. In Nigeria, the incidence of poverty has been high and upward swinging since 1980. The rising profile of poverty in Nigeria is assuming a worrisome dimension as empirical studies have shown. Nigeria, a sub-Saharan African Country, has at least half of its population living in abject poverty (Oladoja, 2000; Ojo, 2008). Similarly, the publication of the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS, 1996) reveals that poverty has become massive, pervasive and engulfs a large portion of the Nigerian society. Abiola and Olaopa (2008) states that the scourge of poverty in Nigeria is an incontrovertible fact, which results in hunger, ignorance, malnutrition, disease, unemployment, poor access to credit facilities and low life expectancy as well as a general level of human hopelessness. More importantly, as described by Nwaobi (2003), Nigeria presents a paradox. The country is rich but the people are poor. With Per Capita Income (PCI) falling significantly to about \$300 between 1980 and 2000 (well below the sub-Saharan average of \$450), approximately 98 million of Nigeria's 140 million people as at then were living in absolute poverty, on less than one dollar a day (World Bank, 2001).

Over the years, Nigeria is a Country that has experienced a high incidence of poverty and inequality. Nigeria has also not been quite successful in poverty alleviation as available evidences suggest that there are increasing numbers of poor people in Nigeria. Specifically, NBS (2010) indicates that the incidence of poverty increased sharply from 27.2% in 1980 to 46.3% in 1985 and by 1992, National Poverty level was 42.7% before increasing to 65.6% in 1996, the poverty level stood at 74.2% in the year 2000 before declining to 54.4% in 2004. It is indeed sad that twelve years after, poverty has been on the increase among the populace. These have been largely traced to the adverse

macroeconomic performance of the economy that was largely dictated by the effects of negative economic shocks and the adjustment reforms that were initiated in response to these shocks.

In terms of the rural-urban divide, statistics show that poverty is more pronounced in the rural areas than the urban area. Rural poverty level increased from 28.3% in 1980 to 51.4% in 1985 but decreased slightly during the period of 1985-1992. However, it soared between the years 1992-1996 to 65.6% before declining again to 63.3% in 2004 and increased to 68% in 2010 (NBS, 2010). Though the level of poverty in the urban area is lower than that of rural area, poverty in the urban area has been on the increase, in 1980, the level of poverty in urban area was 28.3% and by 1985 it was 51.4% before declining slightly to 46% in 1992.

In 1996, 2004 and 2010, poverty level in urban area was 69.3%, 63.3% and 70% respectively (CBN, 2011). This increase in urban poverty has continued and may be associated to the upsurge of rural-urban migration in search of better living conditions. In all these, the lack of sustainability in the poverty alleviation methods/strategies has been made the culprit. This was mainly because a sharp increase in population growth has not enabled Nigeria to realize large reductions in the number of poor people (National Policy on Poverty Eradication Draft, 2000).

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, The worrisome aspect of this phenomenon is the spatial differences in the incidence of poverty in Nigeria. There are considerable differences between regions in the concentration of the poor and the non-poor in separate communities. There are also large differences between regions in their share of the poor and non-poor communities. Whereas nearly two-thirds of the non-poor communities are in the south, almost half of the poor communities are in the north. In the south, only 18% of the region's population resides in communities that have been classified as poor whereas in the north nearly half of the

population of that region resides in such communities (World Bank, 1996).

The incidence, depth and severity of poverty in Nigeria are revealed by social indicators. According to Zanna (2008) such indicators include illiteracy level, health, nutritional status, housing, water, Sanitation and access to credit. All these indicators are compressed into the so-called Human Development Index (HDI). In this regard, the 1998 UNDP Human Development report ranked Nigeria among the 25th poorest countries in the World and the poorest country among Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Available information from the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) revealed that poverty increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 65.6% in 1996. These showed that 17.7 million Nigerians lived in poverty conditions in 1980 and 67.1 million in 1996 (Table 1)

Table 1: Trends in Poverty Level 1980-1996

Year	Poverty Level (%)	Estimated Population (Million)	Population In Poverty (Million)
1980	28.1	65.0	17.7
1985	46.3	75.0	34.7
1992	42.7	91.5	39.2
1996	65.6	102.3	67.1

Source: Ajayi, 2001.

The worst hit by the poverty phenomenon are rural dwellers and rural environments. With respect to geo-political distribution, although unevenly spread, poverty cuts across all the states of the federation. The severity of poverty among rural farmers in the geo-political zones in Nigeria (Table 2) indicates that about 77% of the farmers are poor, of which more than 48% are extremely poor. There are more poor farmers in the northern region than in the southern region. While the Southwest has the lowest proportion (about 62%) of poor farmers, the northeast has the highest proportion (about 85%). There are however, moderately

poor farmers in the southern region than in the northern region and the reverse is the case for extremely poor. Close to 77% of the male holders are poor, while about 73% of the female holders are poor. The proportion of the extremely poor male holders is also higher than that of their female counterparts, while the moderately poor are more in the female group. The implication of the foregoing for Nigeria is summarized in the assessment of the country by American Secretary of state Ms Suzanne Rice that "Nigeria is too rich to be poor and too poor to be rich."

Table 2 :Poverty Incidence of Farmers by Region and Gender in Nigeria

Zone	Extremely Poor (%)	Moderately Poor (%)	Non-Poor (%)
All the Zones	48.06	28.75	23.19
North East	58.15	27.03	14.82
North West	59.19	24.30	16.51
North Central	47.09	27.23	25.68
South East	36.42	31.78	31.80
South West	27.21	34.66	38.13
South South	38.75	35.57	25.69
Gender			
Male Holder	48.59	28.60	22.81
Female Holder	42.82	30.19	26.99

Source: Ajayi, 2001.

With the in-depth analysis of the incidence of poverty in Nigeria as highlighted above, Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, most of the people in the world are poor, so if we knew the economics of being poor we would know much of the economics that really matters. Most of the world's poor people earn their living from agriculture, so if we knew the economics of agriculture we would know much of the economics of being poor.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir and my distinguished audience, Penury is the state of being poor. Penury was originally defined by the United Nations (1995) as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs including food, safe drinking water,

sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services. Penury is therefore conceptualized in this lecture as an undesirable state and people are deemed to be poor when they lack the basic capacity to meet their existential needs and are found in a condition of lack or impaired access to productive resources, broad deprivation and social and economic helplessness or predicament. In the light of this, poverty may be seen as a reflection of glaring effects in the economy as evidence in mass penury. Given its excruciating effects on human development and its global dimension, penury remains the focus of national and international development programme.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Agricultural Extension is still the most important strategy to reach the farming households in the rural areas of Nigeria and globally. It has been so recognized that there is an increasing private participation and funding of it to the extent that it is almost becoming a demand driven enterprise. The legendary Nigerian Agricultural Extension Specialist, Williams (1989) rightly observed that Agricultural Extension is an out of school system of education for teaching farmers (adults, women and young people) how to raise their standard of living by their own resources by providing them with scientific knowledge to solve their problems. In the same vein, Okoro (2000) defined Agricultural Extension as an informal out of school education services aimed at training and influencing farmers to adopt improved practices in crops and livestock production management, conservation and marketing. As further observed by Research and Extension (2002), agricultural extension is committed to expanding human capacity by delivering educational programmes and technical information that results in improved skills in the areas of communication, group dynamics, conflict resolution, issues analysis and strategic planning that can enhance economic viability and quality of life in rural communities.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in line with the above Oladoja (2004)

provided a related view and defined agricultural extension as a non-formal education programme designed to meet the information, inputs, services and skill requirements of farmers in a way to empower them to be able to continuously provide food for the people. In a nutshell, agricultural extension is a farmer-centred programme of services for building agriculture through building of the farmers. The trend of development in agricultural extension delivery from material technologies packaging to information and knowledge packaging through the electronic media is the possible solution to storage of extension empower in Nigeria to reach rural farmers. Information as a factor of production in the paradigm of development, communication is now a critical input in agricultural extension delivery services to increase production, improve standard of living and sustainability. More importantly, as described by Oladoja (2004), agricultural extension is concerned with information and teaching, functions of technology transfer, providing communication link between users of agricultural technology and the people involved in initiating or directing its development.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, agricultural extension aims at providing farmers the necessary education, skills and innovations to enable them improve their productivity. However, in Nigeria and most other developing countries, the primary focus of agricultural extension had inadvertently been on male farmers with the assumption that once men received the knowledge it automatically trickled down to women. Thus, there was a tendency to neglect and ignore women farmers in the delivery of extension messages for food production. Rather, extension information directed at women concentrated on Home Economics and issues related to women's reproductive and domestic roles.

What are the rich potentials of Nigeria with particular reference to Agriculture? This is critical question that need to be answered to put Nigeria in the right perspective as far as poverty is concerned.

3.0 The Rich potentials of Nigeria with particular reference to Agriculture.

Agriculture is the mainstay of many-economies. All over the world, the development of an enduring economy goes hand in hand with agricultural development. Agriculture is considered a catalyst for the overall development of any nation. It is thus a critical sector that drives the economic development and industrialization of the developing nation, and also holds the ace for reducing unemployment. Thus its development is critically important for ensuring food and nutritional security, income and employment generation, and for stimulating industrialization and overall economic development of the Country. The industrial revolution of the Nineteenth Century which catapulted the agrarian economies of most countries of Europe got the impetus in Agriculture (Ojenagbo, 2011). Indeed, the importance of agriculture in any nation's economy cannot be over emphasized. For instance in United States of America, agriculture contributes about 1.1% of the Country's Gross Domestic product. It is 13% in China, 90% in South Africa, 2.5% in Israel, 12% in Australia, 13.5% in Egypt, 90% in Argentina and in Nigeria it contributes 26.8% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Similarly, agriculture provides major source of employment in most developing countries, accounting for 25% of the work force in Brazil, 32% in Egypt, 3.7% in Israel and 70% in Nigeria.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the above statistics is an indication that the more developed a country is the lower the contribution of Agriculture to Gross Domestic Product. Nigeria has one of the greatest development potentials in Africa given the vastness of her resources and above all her rich human resources endowment. But regardless of these potentials, Nigeria is still among the poorest countries of the world. The economy is mired by multiple difficulties. On the basis of widespread economic crisis, and the recent global economic meltdown, the country is unable to raise the standard of living of its citizen to an appreciable height.

Nigeria like most Africa economies, is still an agrarian nation and has huge agricultural potentials. With an arable potential of 98.3 million ha, only 34.2 million ha (48%) is cultivated while 52% is yet to be exploited. Agriculture employs over 70% of the labour force and was a major driver of growth before the oil era in the 1960s. Nigeria's agriculture contributed significantly to the nation's Gross Domestic Product and played major roles in the global community. It accounted for 42% of the world's export of shelled groundnut in 1961, 27% of the global export of palm oil in 1960 and 18% global export of cocoa in 1961. Nigeria was also the largest exporter of cotton in West Africa. Coupled with the dominance of largely subsistence production, 90% of which is undertaken by tradition-bound small holder farmers, the potentials of the agricultural sector have not been optimally tapped. Yet Agriculture has unique power in reducing poverty. World Bank (2008) noted that GDP originating from agriculture is at least twice as effective in reducing poverty when compared to GDP originating from non-agricultural sectors. This has been the historical experience of China, Latin America, India and recently Ghana. This should encourage an economy like Nigeria with huge agricultural potentials to develop agricultural sector rather than continue to depend largely on monolithic sector characterised by resource depletion and oil shock vulnerabilities. The relevance of Nigerian agriculture to poverty reduction and wealth sustainability is summarized using the diamond policy in Figure 1. The diamond at the centre of Figure 1 guarantees labour mobility and migration resulting in self employment and entrepreneurship to agricultural pursuits, small holder subsistence farming for food security, offer of formal/paid employment in medium to large farm enterprises and engagement in non-farm activities within the rural area. Umo (2012) however noted that the Critical Success Factor (CSF) for the diamond based policies include good governance, sound macro-economic fundamentals and conducive socio-political environment. These critical success factors are essential in Nigeria because of the different constraints facing agriculture in the country.

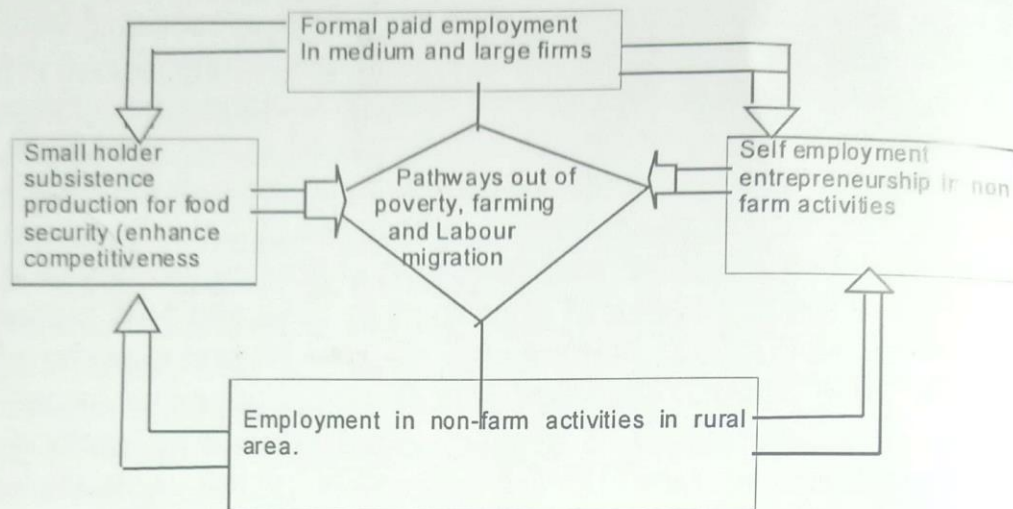


Figure 1: Pathways to exit from poverty in Nigeria offered by agriculture.

Source: World Bank Report, 2008.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, even though Nigeria has a high poverty rate, it still has a higher GDP in comparison to other countries in Africa. Till now Nigeria has been trailing behind western economies. Today, almost sixty years after gaining independence, Nigeria should compete with economies of the world rather than just African economies. The Country is rich in natural resources and has identified the fact that taking appropriate measures can speed economic development. With this foresight, it crafted the vision 20-20-20 programme. This programme aims to make Nigeria one of the twenty largest world economies by the year 2020. The seven points in 20-20-20 programme are power and energy, food security and agriculture, wealth creation and employment, mass transportation, land reforms, security and functional education. At this point in Nigeria's development, the best approach is to focus on the agricultural sector.

Currently, Nigeria has 75% of its land suitable for agriculture, but only 40% is cultivated. This indicates that there is much room for the Country to focus on. This addresses the food security, poverty and agriculture component of their plan along with the focus on employment for all. However, to move forward, the country must increase the low productivity of current agricultural companies, engage competition within the agricultural sector, develop domestic policies and increase funding. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, considering the agriculture potentials of Nigeria resulting from favourable climatic conditions, natural resources, land availability and vibrant labour force, what are the Federal Government efforts towards poverty alleviation in Nigeria?

4.0 Federal Government's Efforts towards Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria.

At independence, Nigeria operated a mixed economy. Her prospect for economic growth was heightened by the dependence on both oil and agriculture. Farming, livestock production, forestry and fishery contributed more than 66% of the country's GDP. At the same period, Nigeria was the world's largest exporter of groundnut and palm produce and the third largest producer and exporter of cocoa. The diversity of these natural resources gave each region a mark of identity for example; palm produce was largely grown in the East, cocoa in the West and groundnut in the North. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, in reaction to the horrendous poverty crises in Nigeria, successive Nigerian governments have over the years formulated policies and adopted strategies and programme supposedly to combat and reduce poverty. Such anti-poverty efforts, whether well thought out or haphazardly planned, whether real and genuine or false, imagined and deceptive, predates the signing of the Millennium Development Goals(MDGs) in September, 2000. Ironically, various governments, contributed through faulty and inappropriate political, economic and social policies mismanagement, corruption and inaction to the poverty status of the country, which

is not only frightening and worrisome, but also structural and endemic. For instance, the Obasanjo military administration (1976-1979) and the Shagari government (1979-1983) launched the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and the Green Revolution Programmes assumedly to improve nutrition, enhance healthy living and reduce poverty through agricultural revolution and productivity. Although the Buhari administration (1983-1985) did not articulate any clear cut and specific poverty alleviation programme; the Babangida government (1985-1993) made some unannounced efforts expectedly meant to alleviate poverty in Nigeria. The critical issue is whether such bold and ambitious efforts and a welter of poverty alleviation programmes which included the people and community Banks that sought to provide loans to prospective entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas (Oladoja, 2000) and without collateral requirements, the directorate of Food, Roads and Rural infrastructure (DFRRI) that was supposed to open up rural areas through the provision of basic social amenities that would turn them into production centres for enhanced national development and the Nigerian Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) which was meant to reduce the prevalence of subsistence agriculture and provide a catalyst for the infusion of large scale commercial farming and the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) that was to design and execute programmes geared towards combating mass unemployment precipitated largely by the Shagari dispensation and the global economic crunch which then had its toll on the country.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the Abacha regime (1993-1998) also midwived the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) probably as a bail-out strategy from the debilitating and excruciating poverty that almost engulfed Nigeria that was then acknowledged as one of the world's 25 poorest nations. It must be noted that apart from the Better Life for rural women and the family support programme introduced and piloted by Mrs. Maryam Babangida and Mrs. Mariam Abacha that were meant to cater for

the needs of the rural women, health care delivery, child welfare youth development and improved nutritional status to families in rural areas. With the birth of democracy and inauguration of Nigeria's fourth republic in 1999 it was estimated that about 70% of Nigerians lived in poverty (Ogwumike, 2001). The poverty Alleviation programme (PAP) came on board as an interim anti-poverty measure (Nwaobi, 2003). As observed by Oladoja, Adeokun and Adisa (2007), the programme was targeted at correcting the deficiencies of the past efforts of alleviating poverty. Despite the introduction of the Poverty Alleviation Programme, poverty incidence in Nigeria remained perpetually high. Following the ineffectiveness of the programme, the Obasanjo civilian administration came up with the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2001 and 2005 respectively. While NAPEP which was designed to cover youth empowerment, rural infrastructure development, social welfare services and natural resource development and conservation, the schemes produced insignificant impact on Nigerians and was not distinguishable from the motley crowd of other previously failed poverty alleviation programmes introduced in the Country. The rather ambitious and supposedly promising NEEDS which was expectedly meant to lay a solid foundation for sustainable poverty reduction, employment generation, wealth creation and value orientation appears to be a bogus poverty reduction strategy despite Soludo's (2005) claim and assertion that NEEDS is a realistic appraisal of what is feasible within the medium and long term framework.

The Civilian administration that started in 2007 under the leadership of late President Umar Musa Yar'Adua proposed a seven point Agenda of development. The agenda later became the policy thrust of the administration. A critical appraisal of the poverty reduction and eradication strategies and programmes adopted and executed so far in Nigeria by various governments

indicate that they have been fraught with deliberate poor and cosmetic plans, lack of political will and genuine commitment, lack-lustre attitude and fraudulent manipulation of the poverty reduction process and efforts. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, as a consequence, Nigeria which was one of the richest 50 countries in the wake of the 1970s, has slide to become one of the 25 poorest countries in the present century. In fact it is ironical to note that Nigeria which is the sixth largest exporter of oil is equally the host of the third largest number of poor people after China and India. Even though the 2004 statistical reports of the National Planning Commission (Federal Office of statistics, 2012) show that poverty using the rate of US\$ 1 day, increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 46.3% in 1985 and declined to 42.7% in 1992 only to increase again to 65.6% and decreased to 54.4%, Nigeria still fare poorly in all development indicators.

Besides, the seemingly increase in economic growth in the last few years has not significantly narrowed the gap between the rich and poor in Nigeria. Although economic growth is a necessity but not a sufficient parameter or condition for poverty reduction. It is obvious that the gains from the so-called peripheral growth has not significantly trickled down to reduce poverty in Nigeria, rather it has resulted in increased inequality. Equally worrisome is the fact that the country has the resources necessary for the attainment of human development targets, yet it is not meeting them, an indication that it is plagued not only with human development effort deficit but that there is a deliberate design to ensure the abysmal failure of such misplaced efforts.

The trend of poverty in Nigeria indicates that poverty is not really reducing. Let alone on the part of eradication. Rural poverty increased from 22% to 68% while urban poverty increased from 17.2% to 55.2%. The poverty situation in Nigeria is precarious not only in income but also in terms of food (Ijaiya, 2011). Similarly, Nigeria's rank in the human development Index remained low,

being the 152 out of 175 countries. This low HDI score reflects the situation with regard to poor access to basic social services in the country (UNDP, 2011). The use of socio-economic indicators like per capita income, life expectancy at birth (year), access to health care services, safewater, education, sanitation facilities and electricity, also depicts the extent of poverty in Nigeria. As indicated in Table 3 below, the rate of poverty in Nigeria has not shown any remarkable reduction when considered from the above indicators.

Table 3: Estimated Total Population and the Rate of Absolute Poverty in Nigeria between 1990 and 2010.

Year	Estimated Population (Million)	Total Absolute No of Poor People (Million)	Percentage (%) of the poor people
1990	86.60	38.00	44.00
1991	88.50	38.50	43.50
1992	91.30	39.00	42.70
1993	93.50	45.80	49.00
1994	96.20	52.60	54.70
1995	98.90	59.30	60.00
1996	102.30	67.10	65.60
1997	104.00	67.40	65.00
1998	106.30	68.00	65.20
1999	109.30	72.30	66.10
2000	111.30	77.00	69.20
2001	114.00	81.00	71.20
2002	116.40	86.00	74.00
2003	119.00	91.00	77.00
2004	121.60	95.00	79.00
2005	124.30	97.00	81.00
2006	125.20	92.10	80.30
2007	126.20	91.70	78.50
2008	126.90	89.60	76.80
2009	127.50	88.40	73.80
2010	128.20	87.50	72.20

Source: Concept Publications (2011)

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the failure and days functionality of the poverty reduction and eradication policies and programmes in Nigeria both before and after the Millennial Development Declaration can therefore be appropriately traced to deliberate poor planning, policy disconnect and discontinuity, pro-rich approach, political design stimulation interference and manipulation, selfish, fraudulent and corruptive motive, poor coordination, ineffective communication with beneficiaries, poor extension contact/services, action dilemma and general lack lustre and lackadaisical attitude by government and its poverty-related institutions and agencies. The above development and experience questions the integrity, purpose and workability of the so called poverty reduction and eradication efforts in Nigeria.

5.0 Identifiable Reasons for Poverty and Penury In Plenty in Nigeria.

Poverty which is a major developmental problem in Africa is caused by a multiplicity of factors, the various factors that explain largely why Nigeria has not succeeded in solving the basic existential livelihood problems. Oladoja (2000) came up with the following problems as shown on Table 4.

Table 4: Problems of Poverty and Penury In Nigeria

S/N	Problems	Percentage
1	Under development	98
2	Unemployment	75
3	Inflation	96
4	Inequality	71.50
5	Low Technological Capacity	86
6	Inadequate Growth rate	72
7	Social Factors	90
8	Capital Inadequacy	93.20
9	Low Human Capital Development	83
10	Corruption, Weak Institution and Poor Governance	98
11	Inadequacy of Social and Welfare Programmes	92
12	Urban Bias and Environmental Degradation	85.60

*Multiple Responses indicated.

Source: Field Survey (Oladoja, 2000).

- i. Underdevelopment:** It was discovered that 98% of respondents in the study indicated that as a result of underdevelopment, a large portion of the population lack the most essential needs of life. This is largely due to the total national income, a possible explanation for the low aggregate consumption level, which is grossly inadequate to cope with the enormous size of the population.
- ii. Unemployment:** A major problem identified by 75% of the respondents interviewed was unemployment, particularly the rising type of unemployment. Galloping unemployment may further compound poverty due to underdevelopment and inequality.
- iii. Inflation:** This is a big problem in Nigerian as 96% of the respondents interviewed indicated that inflationary trend leads to poverty and penury because rising prices alter the purchasing power of the population, especially those that are vulnerable. Thus, inflation engenders impoverishment of the people at the lower rung and those who exist vulnerably in the middle rung of the society.
- iv. Inequality:** Over 71% of the respondents in the study indicated that the extreme inequality is another source of poverty. It is in fact a major factor like underdevelopment and it is characterized by gaps in income and wealth. This brings about low standard of living which is primarily depicted by low level of existential needs.
- v. Low Technological Capacity:** The majority (86%) of respondents in the study also indicated low technological capacity as equally being a contributory factor to poverty and penury. This inadequate capacity explains why the production and manufacturing processes and techniques are far below the acceptable standards of developed economics. Secondly,

such low levels of capacity will not only constrain the functioning and organization of production, financial and marketing units and skills, it will also make per capital productivity level to be consistently low.

- vi. **Inadequate Growth Rate:** The study also revealed that inadequate growth rates, particularly in the face of a high growth in population tend to perpetuate poverty. Although growth does not have an automatic impact on poverty, it is a prerequisite for meaningful poverty reduction. All the same, inadequate growth rates can lead to poverty or aggravate it where it already exists.
- vii. **Social Factors:** Over 93% of the respondents in the study indicated that people are caught up in the vicious circle of poverty as a result of the prevalent social cultural institutions in order to meet their social and cultural obligations; they spend extravagantly even in the face of their low income levels. They are thereafter compelled to resort to borrowing and the high level of indebtedness as both the causes and effect of poverty.
- viii. **Capital Inadequacy:** This is another big problem to poverty which must be solved for the country to be self-sufficient. This inadequacy is as a result of the low level of capital availability and low rate of capital formation. This will definitely negatively affect the quality and standard of living.
- ix. **Low Human Capital Development:** Quite a high percentage (95%) of the respondents indicated low human capital endowment as critical problem facing poverty and penury in Nigeria due to blocked or inadequate access to education, health, sanitation, water and other necessities of life, can bring about poverty. As a consequence, they are not able to live a life that they value and they are disabled from realizing their potentials as human beings.

- x. **Corruption, Weak Institutions and Poor Governance:** A major problem identified by 98% of the respondents in the study is corruption in all shapes, particularly when it has become structural and institutionalized. Weak institutions that are tangled and decayed, characterized by diversion of public funds, poor infrastructural development, poor attention to social welfare programmes and neglect can either create or accentuate and aggravate poverty and penury.
- xi. **Inadequacy of Social and Welfare Programme:** This is another critical problem to poverty and penury which must be solved as claimed by 92% of the respondents in the study. Little or no access to social welfare and assistance programme by the down-trodden who are trapped in transitory poverty such as drought, floods and wars due to lack of proper planning, poor commitment and manipulation of due process by the government and its agencies is arguably another factor that is responsible for poverty and penury.
- xii. **Urban Bias and Environment Degradation:** Over 85% of the respondents in the study indicated that due to inadequate attention to rural development in poor regions and urban bias in the planning and execution of development projects and programmes, poverty can either result or be made worse. Such rural poor people have a propensity for crude exploitation of natural resources, which produces environmental degradation and reduced productivity that also combine to aggravate poverty in the long run. This source of poverty is more policy related.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, in an attempt to solve some of these problems and for poverty and penury to be alleviated, several stakeholders have variously demonstrated efforts towards achieving progress in their poverty alleviation issues. Such stakeholders include governments, rural dwellers, institutions, environmentalists, community development experts, scientists,

Non-governmental organizations, Community Based organizations, policy makers, mass media and others relevant to the process of achieving tremendous progress in poverty reduction. I need to say Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir that my research efforts and contributions over the years touched on almost all areas of involvement of each of the mentioned stake holders. Let me highlight some of my research findings concerning some of them.

6.0 My Research Efforts and contributions to Poverty Alleviation Issues.

(a) Extension strategies for poverty reduction among fisher folks: It is a known fact that fish production in Nigeria is very much in the hands of fisher folks (i.e. fishermen and fisher women) most of who live in the rural areas (Oladoja, 2002). From the findings of Oladoja (2002), it is glaring that participatory extension strategy and community empowerment had the closest margin between the extension agents and the contact fisher folks. Fisher folks indicated strategies. By taking a livelihood and rights approach to reducing poverty, the empowerment of poor people to have the capacity to access new opportunities for wealth creation and cope with their vulnerability moves centre stage. Such empowerment enables poor people to build on their strengths and assets and to engage with local structures and processes. The extension strategies for poverty reduction considered in the study included decentralization of extension, privatization of extension, commercialization of extension, participatory extension strategy, making extension demand driven, making extension market driven, focus on high value enterprises, formation of fishermen enterprises, function of self help groups and community empowerment. Worthy of note Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, is that participatory extension strategy is particularly critical in alleviating rural poverty. The most effective means of reaching the rural poor is through participatory extension strategy (Table 5). This is in line with Swanson (2004) who posited that building of social capital is a

critical element in an overall agricultural development strategy aimed at reducing poverty.

Table 5: Extension Strategies for Poverty Alleviation

S/N	Strategies	Extension Frequency	Agents** Percentage(%)	Contact Fish Frequency	Farmers** Percentage (%)
1	Decentralization of Extension	34	68	46	57.50
2	Community Empowerment	40	80	66	82.50
3	Formation of Self-help Groups	32	64	42	52.50
4	Forms on high value Enterprises	24	48	27	33.75
5	Formation of fisher-farmers Associations	30	60	34	42.50
6	Privatization of Extension.	17	34	40	50.00
7	Making Extension Market Drive	22	44	25	31.25
8	Participatory Extension Strategy	44	88	72	90.00
9	Commercialization of Extension	26	52	18	22.50
10	Making Extension Demand Driven	20	40	36	45.00

** Multiple Responses; Source: Field Survey, Oladoja (2002).

(b) Role of Agricultural Extension in Reducing Poverty Among Fisher Folks: Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, a very crucial stakeholder in poverty reduction efforts is the agricultural extension agents that are supposed to rightly inform the rural farmers especially fish farmers about programmes and policies meant to enhance their fish production. In this regard Oladoja (2002) came to the conclusion that there is a further role for extension outreach to individuals and farm families by providing information and training on family financial planning as well as identifying and developing local hand crafts and products to market and sell, that will help to alleviate poverty. Agricultural Extension also plays a key role in sharing information to further environmental sustainability including limiting deforestation, fostering biodiversity and protecting water. Findings indicate that 90% of the extension agents indicated improved livelihood, while 85% of the contact fish farmers indicated improved livelihood, 81% of the extension agents as well as 64% of the contact fish farmers indicated technology generation, while 76% of both the contact fish farmers and extension agents indicated education of farmers. Also, 21% of the extension agents as well as 18% of the contact fishfarmers indicated attitude change (Table 6). The assertion of

Christopolis (2010) corroborates the position of Oladoja (2002) about the reality of extension and rural advisory services that are crucial to putting farmers' needs at the centre of rural development, ensuring sustainable food security, poverty reduction and dealing with risks and uncertainty. Also of relevance, Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, is the issue of extension outreach to farm families in form of educating for nutrition, developing skills for preparing food and promoting health which would also help mitigate the impact of hunger and nutrition in rural communities.

Table 6: Role of Agricultural Extension in Reducing Poverty.

S/N	Role	Extension Agents** Frequency	Agents** Percentage (%)	Contact Fish Farmers** Frequency	Contact Fish Farmers** Percentage (%)
1.	Attitude Change	10	21	14	18
2.	Increased Production	13	25	24	30
3.	Technology Transfer	12	23	16	20
4.	Technology Generation	41	81	51	64
5.	Education of Farmers	38	76	61	76
6.	Family Support	15	30	28	35
7.	Improved Livelihood	45	90	68	85
8.	Provision of Credit Facilities	16	32	32	40
9.	Coping Strategies	13	25	16	20
10.	Community Development	25	50	28	35

**Multiple Responses; Source: Field Survey, Oladoja (2002)

(c) **Effectiveness of Extension strategies in Poverty Reduction:** Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, effectiveness of the extension strategies is expected to serve as the engine or important mechanism or tool of growth for assisting the rural dwellers in poverty reduction. The finding by Oladoja (2002) showed that 76% of the fish farmers interviewed claimed that the demand driven strategy is fairly effective, while 21% indicated that the demand driven strategy is not effective, 68% indicated that the demand driven strategy is effective and 20% indicated that community empowerment strategy is very effective. In the same study, Oladoja (2002) revealed that 48% indicated that fish

farmer to fish farmer extension is effective, 25% indicated that fish farmer to fish farmer extension is very effective, while 18% indicated that it is not effective. More than 61% indicated that commercialization of extension is fairly effective and 23% indicated that it is effective. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, 49% of the respondents indicated that privatization of extension is fairly effective, 21% indicated that it is effective, while 28% indicated that privatization of extension is not effective, while 65% of the respondents indicated that participatory extension service is effective, while 28% indicated that participatory extension service is fairly effective (Table 7). It is very glaring that fish farmers have been making efficient use of extension strategies. This trend will definitely positively enhance food production in rural areas of Nigeria towards reducing poverty.

Table 7: Distribution of Strategies Based on Effectiveness

S/N	Extension Strategies	Rarely Effective (%)	Fairly Effective (%)	Effective (%)	Very Effective (%)
1	Community Empowerment	8	4	68	20
2	Fisher Farmer to Fisher Farmer Extension	18	09	48	25
3	Privatization of Extension	28	49	21	-
4	Commercialization of Extension	12.6	61.4	23	3
5	Demand Driven	21	76	03	-
6	Participatory of Extension Services	5	28	65	2

Source: Field Survey, Oladoja (2002).

(d) Constraints/Problems in Fish Production: Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, it is a known fact that fish production is widely accepted as an important source of animal protein because of its high nutritive value and fresh aquatic products. In many rural areas, these are high quality substitutes for other sources of protein. Fish has also been identified as a veritable tool for poverty alleviation (Oladoja, 2002). From the findings of Oladoja (2000), it is evident that there are enormous constraints in fish production, resulting in the under-utilization of the local potential of producers

and their further marginalization in the process of poverty reduction. The constraints discovered as shown in Table 8 include lack of capital/inputs availability (79.5%), lack of knowledge for construction of simple gears (82.3%), lack of knowledge for outboard engine repairs (58.1%), low utilization of improved smoking oven (43.7%), lack of effective fish processing and preservation techniques and gadgets (37.2%), lack of net fabrication and maintenance (40.9%) and lack of training on saving credit management and reduction of obnoxious fishing (52.5%). These findings demonstrate terrible effects of constraints in fish production in our rural areas as high percentage of respondents indicated they were bedeviled by those constraints/problems. The implications are that life in the rural areas would be unbearable and unprofitable, which will invariably lead to poverty and penury in plenty among the rural dwellers. This corroborates the assertions of Adeleye (1992) and Saheed (1997) that scarcity and high cost of fishing input, constraint experienced on credit management and reduction of obnoxious fishing practices have forced fishermen and fisher women to adopt unwholesome and obnoxious fishing practices that are detrimental to the conservation of fisheries resources within the vicinity and that the fishermen and fisherwomen need to be continually educated through extension messages, group discussion and fishing demonstration.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents According to Constraints in Fishing Production (n=215).

S/N	Constraints/Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)**
1	Lack of Capital/Inputs Availability	171	79.5
2	Lack of Knowledge of Simple Gears	177	82.3
3	Lack of Knowledge of Out Board Engine Repairs	125	58.1
4	Lack of Improved Smoking Oven Use	94	43.7
5	Lack of Effective Fish Processing and Preservation Techniques/Gadgets	80	37.2
6	Lack of Training on Saving/Credit Management	88	40.9
7	Reduction of Obnoxious Fishing Practices	113	52.5

**Multiple Responses, Source:

Field Survey, Oladoja (2000).

(e) Management Practices Employed By Snail Farmers:

The Snailery Sub-sector involves goal-oriented management practices. Such practices include types of snails, types of feeds, sources of breeding stock, housing system, feeding periods, watering of snail, mulching materials for snails and changing of soil. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, it will interest this distinguished audience that from the study conducted by Oladoja and Adedoyin (2005), it was found that snail rearing could be undertaken by adults, children (able and disabled) because of less energy extortion and ease of handling and that most of the respondents operate their snailery as an urban agricultural practice using different types of caging systems. Findings indicate that different breeds are reared separately and are not mixed, the respondents confirmed that they do not do well when mixed. The only housing system of rearing utilized is the intensive system in which majority (80%) of the respondents use the concrete cage and wire netting. The enclosure is covered as much as possible to make them dark because snails are nocturnal and permanent darkness can induce them to feed during daylight and thus achieve rapid growth.

The implication here is that caring and feeding of snails is cheap because their feed is based on vegetables rather than animal protein. The practice deserves to be encouraged for its profitability and conservation of natural resources. This will encourage sustainable large scale snail farming and increase protein intake of the inhabitants. This is therefore important for the economic empowerment of the respondents as it has potential to take them out of the bracket of poverty and penury in plenty (Table 9). The study further reveal that 70% feed on unripe pawpaw fruits and leaves to snails. This finding agrees with that of Phillips (1992) who noted that in order to achieve efficient feed conversion, green pawpaw fruits and leaves rank best while other feeds like fermented corn shaft, aside from domestic food materials are provided. They must be devoid of salt and oily materials. The farmers reported that oily materials can attract soldier ants which are serious pests to snails.

Table 9: Management Practices Employed By Snail Farmers.

S/N	Management Practices	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Types of Snails.		
	Archachatina Marginata Archachatina	60	100
	Maritime	36	60
	Both	50	83
2	Types of Feeds		
	Processed Feed	10	16.67
	Leaves (cassava, Cocoyam, Pawpaw)	42	70
	Others/Supplements	8	13
3	Housing Systems		
	Tents	7	12
	Buildings	5	8
	Intensive System	48	80
4	Feeding Period		
	Evening (once a day)	24	40
	Morning and Evening (twice daily)	36	60
5	Watering of Soil		
	Once a day (Rainy Season)	48	80
	Twice a day (Dry Season)	52	86.67%
6	Mulching Materials for Snails		
	Banana leaves	20	33.33
	Plantain Leaves	31	51.67
	Cocoyam Leaves	9	15.00
7	Changing of Soil		
	Once a Month	35	58.33
	Twice a Month	20	33.33
	Once in Two Months	5	8.34

Source: Field Survey, Oladoja and Adedoyin (2005)

(f) Indigenous Farm Practices:

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Nigeria's agriculture still remains labour intensive and in the hands of rural people using crude traditional and local machines which according to Adeokun and Adekunle

(2001) are not efficient enough to support commercial production. As a result, Adeokun and Oladoja (2001) advocated that researchers should come up with appropriate technologies to enhance agricultural production especially at the grass root. But sadly Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the National Centre for Agricultural Mechanization (NCAM) (2013) claimed that a number of designs and prototypes of technologies whose developments were funded by the nation's tax payers money have been identified by foreign investors, taken out of the Country and produced in Commercial qualities before exporting same back to the Country to be paid for in Foreign exchange. The current practice of farm mechanization by machinery importation has not achieved the desired results. This is the bane of poverty reduction and penury in plenty in the rural areas of Nigeria. NCAM (2013) supporting the views of Adeokun and Oladoja (2001), indicated that the realization of the need for the development of indigenous and appropriate mechanization/technology that is compatible with the farming system in Nigeria. It is in line with this that Oladoja, Adisa and Adeokun (2001) recommended intensification of the use of indigenous knowledge which farmers are already used to but only needed to be improved upon (Table 10)

Table 10: Distribution of respondents' use of indigenous agricultural practices

S/N	Indigenous Agricultural Practices	Frequency	Percentage (%)**
1	Bush Fallowing	24	15.79
2	Slash and Burn Practices	48	31.58
3	Preparation of Seed Beds	52	34.20
4	Planting of Local Varieties	10	6.56
5	Seed Planting and Broadcasting Method	40	26.32
6	Mixed Cropping Practice	140	92.11
7	Organic Manure and Land Fallow	20	13.16
8	Insect Pest and Disease Control by Weed Clearing	130	85.60
9	Cutting of Rice Heads using Sickle	135	88.82
10	Beating of Rice Heads to obtain grains	115	75.66
11	Removing Husks from Paddy Rice by Pounding in Mortar	20	13.16
12	Winnowing by Throwing the Rice to air	25	16.45

**Multiple Responses indicated;

Source: Field survey Oladoja, Adisa and Adeokun(2005).

(g) Gender Issues in Poverty Alleviation Programmes.
Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Oladoja, Adisa and Adekun (2005) indicated that poverty is more acute in the rural areas of Nigeria among women because of gender based discrimination. Findings indicate that the leading gender based problems of the poor are inadequate medical care and the resulting illness and health hazard, unequal sharing of food, loss of employment or lower productivity due to illness which forces the poor to sell their meager belonging and low access to land or property, particularly among a large percentage of female headed families. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir. It is also note worthy that measures have been proposed to remedy these problems, divert women to non-agricultural pursuits outside the women oriented areas, shift emphasis from cash to food crops, provide improved technologies and train women in their use, provide credit facilities and extension services, establish cooperatives and marketing outlets and develop Cottage industries. Oladoja et al (2005) further noted that women are not getting their full benefits because their needs and views are not considered. Hence the sustainability of the poverty alleviation programmes could be greatly improved if the field experience of women were made known, if their needs and views were ascertained and if they were given greater control over such programmes. This trend will definitely enhance women's influence and make them really benefit from these poverty alleviation programmes.

(h) Empowerment Needs of Women:

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, it is often taken as a paradox to reveal the injustice of a situation. Such a stark paradox is that of the relationship of women with food security. As indicated by Oladoja and Adekun (2013), rural women account for the production of half of world's food and up to 80% of processing and production in most developing countries, an estimated 7 to 10 of the world's hungry individuals are women and girls. This assertion is further supported by Oladoja, Adekun and Adisa (2011). While Oladoja

(2000) claimed in a study that less than 80% of women grow, process, store and market agricultural products for their own farms and for that of their husbands. Related to this, Oladoja and Adeokun (2013) established that women provide about 40% of labour inputs in farming alone. Their contribution however rises to 70-80% when post harvest activities are considered. Such activities include preservation, processing, storage and marketing. Specifically, Oladoja and Adeokun (2013) revealed that women are responsible for selecting, collecting and storing seeds that will be used to plant the following season. The summary of all these findings is that women are important managers of land and water resources because of the knowledge of the systems. There is no doubt that women are responsible for feeding livestock, cooking and using forests in case of emergence droughts. It is in line with this that Oladoja and Adeokun (2013) recommended that the major empowerment requirements needed by the women are extension services, modern processing equipment and gadgets, storage facilities, input subsidy, constant power supply, good transportation system, product improvement and an association of women. Actualization of all these will lead to the much desired empowerment, thereby increasing their standard of living and socio-economic status while reducing poverty in the rural areas of Nigeria.

(I) Rural Infrastructure Development:

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the need to develop rural communities in the face of dwindling natural resources call for use of self-help to develop infrastructures in rural communities through the joint efforts of all, including the youth, according to Akinibile, Ashimolowo and Oladoja (2006). The Rural Physical Infrastructural facilities in which youths participated in the study included building of schools, construction of health centres, building of town hall, road construction, building of postal agency and market construction (Table 11).

Table 11: Distribution of Rural Youths by Their Participation in Infrastructural Development Project n=120.

S/N	Infrastructures	Never Participate Frequency	Never Participate Percentage (%)**	Sometimes Participate Frequency	Sometimes Participate Percentage (%)**	Always Participate Frequency	Always Participate Percentage (%)**
1.	Building of Schools	13	10.8	17	14.20	90	75
	Materials	5	4.2	19	15.80	96	80
	Labour	4	3.3	24	20.00	92	76.7
	Ideas	8	6.7	28	23.30	84	70
2	Motivating others	8	6.7	28	23.30	84	70
	Constructions of Health Centre	8	6.70	32	26.6	80	66.70
	Materials	15	12.50	25	20.8	80	66.70
	Labour	12	10.00	32	26.70	76	63.30
	Ideas	15	12.50	28	23.30	77	64.20
3	Motivating others	15	12.50	28	23.30	77	64.20
	Building of Town Hall	4	3.30	32	27.70	84	70.00
	Materials	12	10.00	15	12.50	93	77.50
	Labour	8	6.79	24	20.00	88	73.30
	Ideas	20	16.70	21	17.50	79	65.80
4	Motivating Others	20	16.70	21	17.50	79	65.80
	Road Construction	4	3.30	32	26.70	84	70.00
	Materials	12	10.00	15	12.50	93	77.50
	Labour	8	6.70	24	20.00	88	73.30
	Ideas	20	16.70	21	17.50	79	65.00
5	Motivating Others	20	16.70	21	17.50	79	65.00
	Building of Postal Agency	4	3.30	28	23.40	88	73.30
	Materials	10	8.30	26	21.70	84	70.00
	Labour	16	13.30	20	16.70	70	58.00
	Ideas	22	18.30	48	40.00	50	41.70
6	Motivating Others	22	18.30	48	40.00	50	41.70
	Market Construction	-	-	44	36.70	76	63.30
	Materials	8	6.70	16	13.30	96	80.00
	Labour	18	15.00	34	28.30	68	56.70
	Ideas	12	10.00	20	16.70	88	73.30
	Motivating Others						

***Multiple Responses. Source: Field Survey, Akinbile, Ashimolowo and Oladoja (2006).

From the findings of Akinbile, Ashimolowo and Oladoja (2006), youths participate more in the area of making their labour available in building of schools (80%), construction of health centre (66.7%), building of town hall (70%), road construction (73.3%), building of postal agency (70%) and construction of markets (80%). Anyanwu (1992) supporting the view of Akinbile, Ashimolowo and Oladoja (2006), indicated that the youth are more involved in facilities that aid their development. These findings by Akinbile et

al (2006) demonstrated the important factors that motivate youth to participate in infrastructural development which arose out of desires to develop their communities and the need to boost income generation and for skill acquisition. Research findings indicate that it is therefore important that the youths are encouraged and assisted through motivation and provision of technical expertise in the areas of capacity building and provision of needed materials so that effective rural development can be achieved. This will help boost agricultural production and improve rural life that is compatible with the reduction of poverty and penury in plenty.

(j) **FADAMA Development Programmes:** It is a known fact that Agriculture in Nigeria has untapped potentials to create jobs both directly and indirectly (Oladoja, 2000). Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, in order to attract young people, agriculture will need to be more dynamic and appealing than it is now, and young people will need to view the sector more positively than they do now (Institute of Development Studies, 2012). Until recently, little attention has been given to Fadama development programmes. As further observed by Oladoja, Adisa and Adeokun (2008), one way of harnessing the agricultural potential of the country is by exploiting the Fadama which is small scale farmer based privatized irrigation system for crop production especially during the dry season. Hence, it substitutes large scale irrigation system of production which failed to meet the food self-sufficiency and food security of the country. In like manner, Dauda, Oladoja and Aderinto (2014) advocated that food security is not only a function of increased production but also of the ability of a large number of people to have access to food through an enhanced purchasing power where challenges revolving round the household poverty alleviation that have necessitated the need to involve every member of the household in the various food security activities. Findings by Oladoja *et al.*, (2008) indicated that the Fadama farming activities are preparation of land, planting of the fadama

crops, watering of the Fadama crops, application of agrochemicals, fertilizer application, weeding of the Fadama plots, adoption of improved varieties, recommended spacing, harvesting and marketing of the Fadama crops. Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, I need to say that these findings by Oladoja *et al.* (2008) demonstrated that about 75% indicated high involvement in planting of Fadama crops, application of herbicides and pesticides (81.67%), adoption of improved varieties (90%), application of recommended spacing and other practices (91.67%) and marketing of the Fadama produces (81.67%) and others. (Table 12).

Table 12: Distribution of Respondents According to Involvement in Fadama Farming Activities Towards Household Food Security n=120*

S/N	Farming Activities	Highly Involved Frequency Percentage (%)**	Moderately Involved Frequency Percentage (%)**	Slightly Involved Frequency Percentage (%)**
1	Preparation of Land	50	30	40
2	Planting of Fadama Crops	90	25	5
3	Watering of Fadama Crops	10	45	65
4	Application of Herbicide and Pesticide.	98	15	7
5	Application of Fertilizer	16	24	80
6	Weeding of the Fadama plots	4	23	93
7	Adoption of Improved Varieties	108	10	2
8	Application of Recommended spacing and other Practices.	110	8	2
9	Harvesting of Fadama Crops	14	26	80
10	Marketing of the Fadama Produces	98	14	8

**Multiple Responses; Source: Field survey, Oladoja, Adisa and Adeokun (2008)

Also of relevance, Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, is the issue of benefits derived from Fadama development intervention. From the findings of Dauda, Oladoja and Aderinto (2014), it was shown that they derived benefit to a large extent on extension advisory services (88.9%), followed by provision/leasing of land for farm activities (86.7%), access to farm credit (53.3%) and supply of farm inputs (48.9%), (Table 13). This finding gives credence to the assertion that most empowerment programmes on agriculture especially for youths need to have extension component (Oladoja and Adeokun, 2013).

Table 13: Distribution of Respondents extent of Benefits Derived from Fadama Intervention n=45

S/N	Benefits	To a Large Extent	To a Lesser Extent	Not at All
1	Supply of farm inputs	22 (48.9)	22 (48.9)	1 (2.2)
2	Access to farm credit	3 (6.7)	24 (53.3)	18 (40.00)
3	Extension Delivery Services	40 (88.9)	5 (11.10)	
4	Transfer of Relevant Technologies	31 (68.9)	4 (8.9)	10 (22.20)
5	Access to Markets	26 (57.8)	19 (42.20)	
6	Provision/leasing of land for farm activities	39 (86.7)	3 (6.7)	3 (6.7)

Source: Field Survey: Dauda, Oladoja and Aderinto (2014).

The implications of the findings are that the profitability and sustainability of the enterprise need to be further explored; more still has to be done on the part of the youths to produce more and increase their level of income. To boost their level of expenditure pattern, incentives should be made available to encourage youths to improve household food security and raise their living standard.

(k) Private Feed Formulation and Production as a tool for Poverty Alleviation: Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Oladoja and Olusanya (2009) indicated that as the world population continues to increase, one of the major problems being faced by the developing countries is their ability to feed their people adequately. Protein, most especially those from animal sources is one of the essential nutrients of human diets and it is greatly lacking in the diets of the inhabitants of developing countries. Hence livestock

production is not only important in the provision of good quality protein, it has also been identified as a tool for poverty alleviation (Okummadewa, 1999). Oladoja and Olusanya (2009) further noted that private feed production allows the farmers to make use of some of the locally available, unconventional feed resources, which are relatively cheap and in addition save costs. In this regard however, inefficient resource use and utilization can seriously jeopardize production output and can lead to poverty on the part of the farmers. Oladoja and Adeokun (2009), supporting the views of Oladoja and Olusanya (2009), viewing poverty from productive perspective, posited that poverty derives from long and protracted inability to generate productive resources for the purposes of generating a desired level of output in order to enhance the realization of an applicable income which is the main aim of any farmer in business. The study showed that assurance of feed availability and quality ranked first, followed by increased production output, increased profit, cost reduction, better planning and time saving respectively (Table 14). It is in line with this that it was recommended that research institutes in collaboration with extension agencies should conduct training and workshops for poultry farmers to build and increase their capacities, knowledge and skills to actively participate in private feed formulation and production so that their prolonged stay in the poverty bracket that has become the burden of majority of the poultry farmers can be a thing of the past.

Table 14: Distribution of Responses on Impact of Private Feed Formulation and Productionn=94**

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
1	Cost Reduction	72	76.6	5 th
2	Increased Production OutPut	80	85.1	3 rd
3	Assurance of Feed Quality	94	100	1 st
4	Better Planning	63	67	6 th
5	Reduced Mortality	60	63.8	7 th
6	Increased Profit	79	84	4 th
7	Assurance of Feed Availability	94	100	1 st
8	Saves Time	60	63.8	7 th

***Multiple Responses, Source: Field Survey, Oladoja and Olusanya (2009)

(I) **Extension Education and Training:** Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Oladoja (2008) established that extension education is an on-going process of getting useful information to people and assisting those people to acquire the necessary knowledge, skill and attitude to utilize effectively the information technology. Extension has been playing a major role in productivity improvement and increment. Apart from innovation introduction, it has endowed many farmers and their households with education and improved standard of living. From the findings of Oladoja, Olusanya and Adedeji (2009); it was shown that the Fulani pastoralists derive their income mainly from cattle and other small ruminants. The assertion of Ajala (2000) in actual fact corroborates the position of Oladoja et al (2009) that their main source of wealth is the cattle. In the same study, the constraints faced by these pastor lists in the course of cattle production were revealed and these include lack of adequate extension education services (93.85%), lack of capital, pests and diseases (98.1%), high cost of animals (96.2%), grazing land problems and conflicts (85.7%), herd size management (75.20%), fear of attack (68.6%), expertise on cattle rearing (68.6%) as well as cattle rustling (26.7%) (Table 15). As further observed by Oladoja et al (2009), all these problems could be solved through extension contacts and education through regular training or seminars for farmers on cattle production practices. Worthy of note Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, that these Fulani Pastoralists, even though have been the major suppliers of meat to the tables of many homes, have been left unattended to by the government as well as extension organizations. It is recommended that innovations on fodder crops, cultivation and storage, crop-residues processing and storage, water conservation and treatment, strategic use of concentrates within extensive system, organic manure use and storage, crop and livestock integration systems and cattle breeding principles and management be extended to them. Government should provide Fulani pastoralists with grazing reserves with full complimentary facilities. Its efforts in this direction towards Fulani pastoralists

may lead to increased agricultural yield which would translate to increased farming income and ultimately reduce poverty.

Table 15: Distribution of Respondents According to Constraints of Cattle Production n = 105*

S/N	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Lack of adequate extension education/services	99	93.85
2	Lack of Capital	105	100
3	Pests and diseases	103	98.1
4	High cost of animals	101	96.2
5	Grazing land problems/conflict	90	95.7
6	Herd size management	79	75.2
7	Fear of attack	72	68.6
8	Expertise of cattle rearing (scientific)	72	68.6
9	Rustling of Cattle	28	26.7

*Multiple Responses; Source: Field Survey, Oladoja, Olusanya and Adedeji (2009).

(m) Children-In Agriculture Strategy for Food Security: It is a known fact that the future development of any nation in all areas depend on the vibrancy of its children. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, as far as agricultural practice is concerned in Nigeria, findings indicated that today's children view agriculture as an undesirable profession. It is seen as not being progressive and denotes a low social status, with the advent of the information technology, where media can penetrate previously unreachable areas in the countryside. Children in the rural areas are bombarded with the glamour of the metropolis. The willingness to venture into a career in agriculture has now become a rare initiative (Oladoja, Adeokun and Adisa, 2004; Oladoja and Adeokun, 2005), I need to say it here that one of the prevalent circumstances leading to involvement of children in food security activities is the concept of basic needs and poverty. Findings indicate that the level of involvement of children in various selected activities in agriculture include land clearing and planting (60%), weeding (80%), application of fertilizer and herbicides (60%), harvesting (85%), processing (10%) and marketing of farm produce (12%)(Table 16). It is evident

that involvement of children in agricultural activities is an essential aspect in their upbringing in Nigeria of today as it was in the past and it must not however be done in a manner that will appear punitive, while level of involvement must be reasonable and adequate.

Table 16: Distribution of Children according to their involvement in Agricultural Activities n=120

S/N	Activities	Low Involvement		Medjum Involvement		High Involvement	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Land clearing and planting	30	25	18	15	72	60
2	Weeding in the Farm	10	8	14	12	96	80
3	Application of Fertilizer and Herbicides	18	15	30	25	72	60
4	Harvesting of the Farm Produce	6	5	12	10	102	85
5	Processing of the Forum Produce	108	90	—	—	12	10
6	Marketing of the Farm Produce	84	70	22	18	14	12

Source : Field Survey, Oladoja, Adeokun and Adis (2004)

(n) Nigeria's Threatened Environment: Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the rising concern with environmental issue can be attributed to an increasing realization of the dangers posed to human life and prosperity by unabated degradation of Nigeria's basic natural resources. (Adisa, Adeokun and Oladoja, 2005; Adisa, Oladoja and Adeokun, 2004; Agbeja, 2002). In a predominantly agricultural country, the most important natural resources are land (soil and water), vegetation and animals (wildlife and domestic livestock). Oladoja, Akinbile and Adisa (2006) emphasized that human activities depend on these resources, which determine the living standard of the vast majority of the population subject to all other externalities. Findings indicate that the decline and loss of biodiversity, loss of soil fertility and forest, contamination of fresh water supplies, erosion, deforestation, desert encroachment, pollution from toxic and hazardous substance continue to threaten

the environment. These results in poverty while rapid human population increase further aggravate these environmental problems. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, despite the various steps taken to reverse the impact of human activities and the subsequent depletion of biological resources, these resources continue to experience a continuous reduction in quality and quantity, thereby threatening human existence and survival and its implications on eradicating rural poverty in Nigeria. It is in line with this that Oladoja, Akinbile and Adisa (2006) recommended that these resources have to be managed responsibly, conserved carefully and used wisely and most importantly recognized and respected as the foundations upon which Nigeria economy and nationhood are built.

(o) Involvement in Forest Exploitation as Income Generating Activities: The forest has been the major source of livelihood for most Nigerians. As ascertained by Oladoja, Adeokun and Olaleye (2010), the forestry sector is one of the main pivots on which the nation's welfare are built. The forest is not only important for materials, goods, but also as a valuable ecological and cultural resource. It is noted Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, that the forestry sub-sector has over the years contributed immensely to the socio-economic development in the country. It ranks among one of the highest revenue and employment generating sectors. It also serves as a resource based for mainly forest industries. However, forest resources have been known to be of great importance not only for their high economic value but most especially for how they are intimately associated with the culture and continuing existence of the society. The activities considered in the study Oladoja et al. (2010) include farming (47.3%), petty trading (50%), basket weaving (9%), firewood cutting (19%), charcoal making (3%), timber felling (21%), firewood gathering (30%) and charcoal marketing (20%) (Table 17.). The findings demonstrate terrible shortage of involvement in income generating activities in our rural areas as high percentages of the

respondents indicated they did not involve in forest related income generating activities. The implications are that life in the rural areas could be unbearable and unpalatable and it is still very glaring that the ruralites have not been making efficient use of the forest related income generating activities. This trend will definitely have adverse effect on the level of poverty reduction in rural areas.

Table 17: Distribution of respondents' Involvement in the Forest Related Income generating activities n=110

S/N	Income Generating Activities	Involvement			
		Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Farming	53	48	57	52
2	Petty Trading	55	50	55	50
3	Basket Weaving	10	9	100	91
4	Firewood Cutting	21	19	89	81
5	Charcoal Making	4	3	106	92
6	Timber Felling	23	21	87	79
7	Firewood Gathering	33	30	77	70
8	Charcoal Marketing	2	20	88	80

Source:. Field Survey: Oladoja Adeokun and Olaleye (2010)

7.0 The Agricultural Extension Agenda.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the solution to our problems of poverty and penury in Nigeria is for people to get up-to-date, correct, relevant and adequate information in all areas of their endeavor. The only way this can be achieved is through an effective and vibrant agricultural extension agenda. To this end Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the World Development Report (World Bank, 2007) emphasize agricultural extension as an important development intervention for increasing the growth potential of the agricultural sector in the light of rising demand and supply side pressures and for promoting sustainable, inclusive and pro-poor agricultural and hence economic development. Agricultural Extension, therefore is one of the main institutional components of agriculture as it promotes the transfer and exchange of information that can be converted into functional knowledge. It is better to say that

Agricultural Extension is the instrument which is helpful in developing enterprises that promote productivity and generate income in the present scenario of change which can ultimately reduce poverty in developing as well as developed countries.

Most Agricultural-extension leaders are still operating on the basis of the 20th century agricultural development strategy when food security was the national priority. In the past, agriculture was the mainstay of Nigerian economy, a period when the sector was taken as a matter of importance, just as the nation was blessed with abundant natural resources. However, the situation has changed since the advent of oil boom era in the early seventies, which has made the country to shift her attention away from agriculture. Consequently, it is now becoming increasingly difficult to get food on the table of the common man.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the reduction of poverty is the most difficult challenge facing any country in the developing world where on the average, majority of the population is considered poor. Evidences in Nigeria show that the number of those in poverty has continued to increase. Without immediate assistance from public research and extension, small scale farmers will be increasingly marginalized by globalization and will soon lose access to even their traditional domestic market hence constituting poverty. Although most countries are now self-sufficient in basic food staples, many nations are still struggling with the problem of large number of malnourished people. It is abundantly clear that achieving food security does not eliminate hunger or, to put it most succinctly, hunger is a money problem, not a food problem. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, if agricultural extension is properly structured and focused, it can organize and train small scale farmers or producers to utilize local resources to first serve urban consumers in domestic markets and possibly, high end consumers in international markets. It is recognized that this approach will not be a permanent solution, but it will enhance the

skills, knowledge and attitude of rural people, especially the youths, so that they are better equipped to eventually take up farm jobs and escape rural poverty.

7.1 Role Expectation of Agricultural Extension In Poverty Alleviation

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, the existence of the identified problems and the determination of the Federal Government to transform Nigeria's economy through solid Agricultural development policies, imply that the agricultural sector must assume greater importance. In order to develop an agriculture that will meet complex demand patterns, reduce poverty and preserve ecological resources, agricultural extension has an important role to play some of these roles are;

- (a) Educating Rural Farmers through well designed Farmer Field School (FFS) approach. The FFS is an extension effort aimed to increase farmers knowledge and improve their productivity. It is a group based agricultural extension programme, and a process of learning and sharing experience in order to build the capacity of farmers to decide and develop suitable and effective production methods that suit their needs and conditions. The learning takes place on site during the crop season: by teaching through illustration, On the job training and interactive exchanges in small groups in the field. The farmer field school has attracted and encouraged the participation of rural dwellers.
- (b) Providing linkages between NGOs, farmers and researchers: as a result of the poor funding of the public extension system and its acclaimed ineffectiveness, many NGOs have taken over the challenge of effective extension delivery in the country. However, NGOs, farmers and Agricultural Research Institutions have very different knowledge systems and approaches to agriculture. In

Nigeria and many other developing countries, the link between NGOs, farmers and researchers is traditionally weak. Under the current dispensation in Nigeria (democratic and deregulated economy), there should be greater collaboration between the three agricultural development stakeholders in order to bring about poverty reduction.

- (c) Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, one of the major roles of Agricultural extension should be a co-ordination role. A glance at the rural sector in Nigeria shows that there are many agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, ADPs, Ministry of Agriculture, HIV/AIDS Eradication Agency, other NGOs, and Donors) disseminating environmental improvement information to the same farm-families. In order to effectively utilize the limited available resources, duplication of efforts and unnecessary rivalry and conflicts should be avoided to make the beneficiaries less confused and readily participate without actually aggravating their poverty level.
- (d) Integrating Young Farmers Clubs Programme (YFCP) into Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs) for effective technology transfer and use. The situations found in many of our state-wide ADPs call for timely integration of Young Farmers Clubs Programme for sustainability and as a poverty alleviation strategy. This calls for the reformation of Young Farmers Clubs in primary, secondary as well as tertiary institutions. It is believed that many members of the young farmers clubs will demonstrate and transfer the skill and knowledge gained to their colleagues at schools and parents at home. Besides, agricultural development information will be spread to a large number of households and in the long run, acting as a poverty alleviation strategy to the rural poor.

- (e) Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, another important role expectation of agricultural extension under a democratic and deregulated economy is making the farm families benefit substantially from biotechnology and information technology. Today about 85% of Nigeria's population live in poverty and suffer from hunger. More than 70% of these individuals are farmers, mainly in tropical environment that are increasingly prone to drought, flood and bushfires. Crop yields are stagnant and epidemic of pests and weeds often ruin crops. Livestock suffer from parasitic disease, some of which also affect humans. Inputs such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides are expensive and the latter can affect the health of farm families, destroy wildlife and contaminate water courses when used in excess. The only way families can grow more food and have surplus for sale seems to be to clear more forest. As these detrimental social and environmental changes are occurring in the developing world, a revolution in biotechnology and associated information technology is improving the health, well being and lifestyle of the privileged and creating more wealth in a few rich countries. To bring about successful application of modern biotechnology to the problems that cause under nourishment and poverty (called a biosolution), agricultural extension as an agency should be deeply involved.

8.0 Conclusion

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, in the course of this lecture, I have attempted to present before you the account of 17 years of my stewardship as a teacher-scholar of this great academic community, the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. It is worth remembering that there is an African saying "That once the problem of food is addressed in the life of a poor fellow, the poverty level has been substantially solved". The researchers hold the view that there is a direct relationship between the level of poverty in Nigeria and the development of agriculture. This goes without saying that any policy thrust that addresses poverty, would inevitably focus on agriculture, by increasing rural opportunities that could generate agricultural induced development. Hence the development of agriculture is antidote to poverty reduction. So far, Nigeria has formulated and adopted a multiplicity of poverty reduction policies and programmes and has embarked on a journey with the appropriate road map, but without genuine commitment to their sustainability on the part of successive governments. For instance, instead of a short term piecemeal approach to poverty reduction in Nigeria, the design, packaging, execution, monitoring and evaluation of poverty should transcend the realm of short term relief and the satisfaction of basic human needs and incorporate the development of strategies for increasing the long term productive capacity and potential and as a result the incomes of the rural poor. Thus, it is absolutely necessary to synthesize and integrate agricultural extension policies, sound programmes and project interventions with an eye to achieve the long term goal. Moreover, considering the current poverty incidence in the country, one can say that poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria have not yielded the desired results of alleviating poverty because they were only declarative without concrete and concerted efforts and lacked the required political will among several other causes/problems.

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, conclusively this lecture has been able to point out that the agricultural extension system if well positioned can contribute meaningfully to agriculture and national development via poverty alleviation and food security which would have a multiplier effect on human capital development, because, it is often said that a "hungry man is an angry man". Therefore, emphasis should be made on agricultural extension education so as to equip the people with the necessary information they need to move out of poverty.

9.0 Recommendations

Mr. Vice chancellor Sir, I wish to make some suggestions and recommendations.

- (i) **Restructure the Agricultural Extension Budget towards Poverty Reduction:** Amendments should be made for competitive selection of agricultural extension projects so that a portion of the national agricultural extension budget is assigned to agricultural extension for livelihood projects. There should be structural and institutional reforms that will permeate all the sectors of the Nigerian society for effective conception, planning, coordination and appropriate delivery of pro-poor programmes and measures to the actual targeted groups, particularly the rather forsaken and abandoned rural poor. This will create a climate that is genial for the reactivation, functionality, operationality and workability of the agricultural extension system and processes, which will engineer a new regime of a systematic, coherent and strategic approach to poverty reduction and subsequent poverty eradication in Nigeria. At the heart of the expected climate is the agricultural extension agenda and genuine commitment of the Nigerian government and its leadership.

- (ii) **Reforms of Agricultural Extension Model Replication Policy:** A corollary of the above recommendation is the detailed instructions on evaluation criteria for evaluation of demonstration models and replicable advanced production examples should be produced. Focus should be given to the evaluation of effectiveness, process and approach, replication conditions and channels, and providing support measures for the replication of model in the rural communities. The budget for replication of models should be expanded , going beyond information, communication, advertisement, field workshop to providing partial funding and material support for the replication of models and providing assistance to production linkages and other

channels of communication in the community, from farmers to farmers, supporting access to funding and to the market.

(iii) **For any Government Policy to have Desirable Impact:** The government must adopt a pragmatic approach that will facilitate poverty reduction in rural and urban areas and this will require facilities that can enhance the people's livelihood, productivity and incomes. Such inputs and facilities will include materials, human resource, equipments, machines and input in different productive and entrepreneurial sectors, credit facilities, human and skill development programmes, development sustainability, economic growth inventions and innovations incubating different ideas and other significant social welfare schemes that can upgrade the agricultural extension system.

(iv) **Agricultural Extension should be Decentralized:** So that the government, private firms, Non-Governmental Organizations and other bodies provide extension services. There should be the desirability and inevitability of effective and coordinated partnership that will engender public and private sector participation, which will rid the country of and emancipate its rural and urban poor from poverty of all shades and manifestation. To this end, the government must as a matter of urgency abandon its haphazard and reactive strategies, so as to be able to provide the necessary drive and focus that will both stimulate and direct the partnership. At the same time, government must still have the conscious realization of and pragmatic attitude towards its primary responsibility for the human and infrastructural development in Nigeria that will energize, propel and facilitate the galvanization of other processes and activities that are germane for the envisaged effective conception, planning, coordination, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the pro poor bottom up poverty reduction and eradication strategies and programmes. The bottom up approach will of course, enable the integration of the view and perceptions of the actual poor into the developmental agricultural extension

efforts of the country that will squarely address the genuine needs of the poor and make development, planning and management sensitive and pro poor. This also underscores the imperative of a balanced, well coordinated and decentralized approach that will adequately and effectively address the poverty reduction and eradication concern at the various levels of governance.

(v) **Ensure Agricultural Extension Services Development:**

Agricultural extension needs to address vulnerability as well as productivity and to offer new options from which poor households can choose according to their circumstances. The design of agricultural extension strategies must take account of differing degree of market integration which determines the degree to which the poor can take advantage of market opportunities. The need for agricultural extension system for encouraging, strengthening, harnessing and exploiting community based development organizations and associations so as to enable them build social capital, pull resources together and obtain loans and credits easily from financial institutions, through relevant sensitization and practical result oriented seminars and workshops that will engender their effective participation in poverty reduction and eradication programmes. This grassroots approach and arrangement will require the active involvement of various governments and other stakeholders in the conception, formation and execution of relevant, workable and attainable rural poverty reduction and eradication policies and programmes.

(vi) **Participatory Agricultural Extension Services should be practiced:**

Access to quality service of extension out of political influence in a manner of professional dimension and service access, extension strategies need to differentiate between highly and weakly integrated areas and acknowledge the need to take difficult decisions between supporting production strategies, on one hand, and broader

based livelihood extension on the other. This should be practiced in a way to enable farmers determine and agree to change. When farmers determine change, they agree to it, and actively partake in it. The change should be such that is geared towards improving their livelihood and incomes. Emphasis should be made on education so as to equip the people with the necessary information they need to move out of poverty.

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Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, distinguished Ladies and Gentleman, I thank you sincerely for your attention. I wish you all a safe trip back to your various destinations.

Professor Mohammed Afolabi OLADOJA.

Professor of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development

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