Agricultural Diplomacy and Sustainable Citizen Agricultural Policy: A Case for the Nigerian Media

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Abstract
With emerging participatory trends in governance and sustainable development, African countries are systematically adopting agricultural reforms as part of their national development agenda better than before. Nigeria is not left out in this new found love for agriculture as an international relations tool for private partnership for international financial and technical support. However, it is worrisome that many of this so called cooperation on development programmes have not yielded tangible long term results. In many instances, they have increased the indicators of underdevelopment like food insecurity, poor infrastructure, low productivity, and high death rate, lack of modern and functional health facilities, abandoned development projects and inconsistent transformational policies among others. Where these indicators are in the positive, (few developing African countries), the level is usually non- progressive considering the socio-economic need of the continent to stand on the same pedestal with the developed nations. Nigeria is one of the few African countries whose infrastructure and economy are developing in the opposite of the population growth and world emerging sustainable development requirements of the United Nations (UN) and other regional development arrangements including that of the African Union (AU). This paper, therefore, takes a critical look at the place of agriculture as a diplomatic tool for achieving the most desirable results in the implementation of the Nigerian development initiatives. The paper also challenges the Nigerian media to report agricultural activities beyond national government development initiatives which are usually tenure fixed. In this way, the media can promote citizen diplomacy to help Nigeria develop sustainable agricultural development plans with international potentials.

Key Words: diplomacy, agriculture, sustainable, policy, governance and citizen.

Introduction
Conceptualizing Agriculture as a Diplomatic Tool
Diplomacy (from Latin word 'diploma', an official document), is the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of groups or states. Sometimes, it refers to, as in international diplomacy, the conduct of international relations through the intercession of professional diplomats with regards to issues on peace-making, trade, war, economics, culture, environment and human rights (Britannica.com). In the informal or social sense, diplomacy would mean the employment of tact to gain strategic advantage or to find mutually acceptable solution to a common challenge. One set of tools used in this wise is the phrasing of statements and or operational procedures (policy) in a non-confrontational manner. It is important to understand some salient words and phrases in the above definition in order to accurately place agriculture as one of its numerous tools for easy conceptualization and analysis.

If diplomacy is an art of negotiation and the conduct of relations on issues on trade, economics, environment etc., then by proxy, agriculture forms part of the trade, economics, and environmental matters via diplomacy since agriculture is an integral part of the itemized issues. Logically too, agriculture has been a common challenge to the entire human race for centuries. From time immemorial, nations have explored one another to satisfy their food, water and probably animal needs (which are basically sets in the chains of agriculture). The Atlantic Slave Trade became a global phenomenon partly because the Americans, the Brazilians, and the Europeans needed to boost and sustain their farm produce (especially the sugarcanes) for commercial purposes and to indirectly drive and internationalize their economy. It therefore concretized our proposition that agriculture is a common heritage that has influenced and is still influencing the development of the human race in many forms. In retrospection, agriculture was the main inter/ intra communal relationships prevalent on the African continent before 1100s.

Before the 1100s, agriculture was practiced in much of south-central Africa, except in the interior of southern Angola. This was tropical woodland and savannah where bananas, yams and sugar cane were grown. Beans, groundnuts, sorghum and millets were cultivated in areas of savannah. The people augmented their food production by hunting, fishing, gathering grubs and by raising chickens, pigs and, in a few places, cattle (Britannica.com).

In West Africa, trade was giving rise to towns. The old Ghana Empire, as described by Leo Africanus (1526) was well policed and inhabited by wealthy merchants who traded in gold and other goods. Food stuff such as melon, bread and wheat were plentiful as were wells of fresh water. Leo Africanus (1526 in (Paul Brians et al 1998) also said one of the cities of the empire had its surroundings decked in rich pastoral lands including sheep and cattle, making meat plentiful. All of which, he concluded, were exchanged for payments of gold dust or cowries. People living at Great Zimbabwe also practiced agriculture and cattle herding, although historians believe that this became a problem after a while but there were presence of broken China wares as evidence of international trade between these people and other regions as far as China, Persia, and Syria (African kingdom.com (2012).

The gold trade was a source of wealth for Mali, and so too was trade in food: sorghum, millet and rice. Regarding trade, Mali dominated the town of Timbuktu for many decades through trade in agricultural products (African kingdom.com (2012)). By the 1300s, Mali's kings had converted to Islam, which gave them advantages of good-will in diplomacy and in commerce. These enunciations were necessary to show the importance of agriculture as diplomatic tool in the development of kingdoms even before the modern nations were formed. It is not uncommon however to read or hear African leaders bale the rest of the world for many economic, social and political woes ravaging the continent. But Nana Adu-Pipim (2008) was of the opinion that the time for Africa to initiate its industrial and economic development through the efforts and initiatives of African states and citizens has dawned. Africa and Nigeria in particular should entrench sustainable agricultural transformation diplomacy in its national agricultural development policy in order to build-up citizen diplomacy that will allow the media to persistently disseminate agricultural information beyond the political campaign of the government agricultural development policy.

Why Agricultural Diplomacy? According to Agosto (2011), the rising concern over global food price volatility has put agriculture at the centre of international diplomacy. This is in contradiction with what obtained in the1950s when food aid was a major tool in international

relations, modern states are now interacting based on trade and knowledge transfer. A new field — agricultural diplomacy i.e. Agro-diplomacy— is emerging as countries learn more about their shared ecological experiences and agricultural trade interests. This new focus on agriculture is coming at a time when African countries are revising their foreign policies to focus on economic diplomacy.

Article 55 of the world largest diplomatic organization - United Nations Charter states that "with a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote: Higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development; solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems; and international cultural and educational cooperation; and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. With respect to Paragraph B of the Article, food security through agriculture would be regarded as one of the 'related problems' which demands international solutions through collaborations through unalloyed information. Apart from making the solutions to human problems a universal thing, the Charter in Paragraph 1 Article 52 also provides for regional arrangements for solving 'peculiar' regional headaches. Furthermore, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), has the mandate to achieve food security for all by ensuring that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to live active and healthy existence. The organization is equally given the mandate to help raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy.

Agriculture has overtly found its place in international and national discussions on the effects of climate change on human development in the recent time. The impact of climate change is already being experienced across the globe according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2001). While climate change would affect everyone, those living in poverty in developing countries would feel the disproportionate impact. The majority of the affected developing countries are in tropical and sub-tropical regions where Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Small Island States (for example Mauritius) have all been identified as regions of concern. Livelihoods are highly dependent on climate-sensitive resources: agriculture in Sub-SaharanAfrica, of which up to 90% is rain-fed, accounts for 70% of regional employment and 35% of gross national product (PostNote 2006).

There is no doubt that these regions and countries need strong diplomatic activities with other regions and countries where climate change may not be posing serious problems, probably due to their regional advantage of level of technology to handle climate change - so to speak. Agricultural diplomacy will further harness expertise to help developing countries like Nigeria address their rural development challenges. Considering the submission of Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe(2012) that historically, the most common and effective extensive adjustment in agricultural production in Nigeria has been to increase the area of land planted; therefore Nigerian agricultural/rural institutions are at a crossroad because agriculture is growing but the growth is unsustainable. Agriculture is becoming increasingly information sensitive (Padre *et al,* 2003). Access to information has become a pre-requisite and a valuable resource for agricultural development. In this context, information is needed to exploit opportunities in time, raise

awareness about the potential negative impact of current choices and to get to know about opportunities of other farmers, in order to search for better opportunities and sustainable solutions (LEISA, 2002).

Success in food production, income growth and job opportunities for ensuring that agricultural sub-sectors perform their manifest functions of rural and overall national development depend largely on the strength of the communication system and degree of information available from various agricultural development programmes. This definitely requires 'development journalism'. Wimmer and Wolf (2005) suggest the following definition of development journalism; 'the reporting of ideas, programmes, activities and events, which are related to an improvement of the living standard, mainly in the rural regions'. Meanwhile, development journalism can be seen in more general and ideological terms, implying that the role of the media is to contribute to overall socio-economic development by assuming an active participatory role. The media should collaborate with the larger development team as one of many agents; it is no longer sufficient to report about development, it should also be reported in a certain way that [shows diplomatic essence] (Nyamnjoh, 2005).While agricultural policy is a statement of action and a fundamental tool employed in achieving agricultural development (FBN, 1997): agricultural diplomacy will draw upon developed nations' expertise in areas such as: agricultural research; agribusiness and value chain development; bio-security, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary systems; and agricultural education and training. In this way, agricultural diplomacy flagship will support agricultural growth and development in Africa by increasing African countries' access to relevant international agricultural expertise. It is generally accepted that Nigerian agriculture has suffered as a result of the discovery of the crude oil and inappropriate policies and institutions. This has created dysfunctional and disconnected benefit to the poor masses. Persisted failures of agricultural programmes in Nigeria have revealed the basic weakness of agricultural policies in Nigeria and the inability of the several administrations in Nigeria to solve the basic and fundamental problems of agricultural development (Amalu, 1998). Many authors like Amalu (1998), Ayoola (2001) and Madukwe (2008) have equally pointed out that the failure of Nigerian agricultural development has been the absence of responsive agricultural policies. Many of these policies were not designed with the contribution of the focal people who have the full grasp of how agriculture works in the rural areas. Towards this end, agro-diplomacy with citizen agricultural development policy will help increase and sustain linkages between agricultural agencies, organizations and agribusiness in Nigeria and the rest of the world.

Objectives

The broad objective of this article/study is to advocate the integration ofcitizen diplomacy into media reportage of agricultural activities in Nigeriawhile the specific objectives are to;

(i) Conceptualise agriculture as modern tool of diplomacy;
(ii) Argue for its internalization for agricultural development through theengagement of the local people from a citizen diplomacy approach inNigeria;
(iii) Establish the importance of local people's contributions to sustainableagricultural development policy through strong media reportage ofagriculture;
(iv) Advocate for pragmatic media reportage on agriculture to promotecitizen diplomacy which will eventually promote citizen orientedagricultural development policy in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

The research method adopted is qualitative research that utilized the Grounded Theory Method (GTM); according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), to generate a descriptive and explanatory theory of agriculture as diplomatic and international relations tool. These research techniques are needed to captureholistic real-world answers to real world problems and provide a fresh slant on existing knowledge (Neuman, 1991). In Grounded Theory (GT), concepts are derived from empirical data, linked and, if necessary, modified through constant comparison with other literature. Therefore, the method incorporates induction, deduction and verification in the same process based on the analysis in the data that have been gathered and inductively reaching conclusions from these data. Grounded theory which is inductively derived from the phenomena represents, and must satisfy four central criteria: fit, understanding, generality and control (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This approach was adopted in this study for three reasons: There is a lack of theoretical foundation; it presents a single, unified, systematic method of analysis and it allows a degree of flexibility in both the selection of instances for inclusion in the sample and the analysis of the information.

Agriculture, World Economy and International Relations

Many African countries after independence relied on agriculture as their major economic driver. National Development Policies were formulated around agriculture but due to lack of consistency and regional/adequate international co-operations these policies have drawn the continent into abyss. In Nigeria, in the years after independence, industry and manufacturing sectors had positive growth rates except for the period 1980-1988. According to Ekpo and Umoh (2011), the growth of agriculture for the periods 1960-70 and 1970-78 was unsatisfactory. The agricultural sector in Nigeria has suffered low commodity prices because of the oil boom which has negatively impacted on the growth of agriculture since 1970. Invariably, the contribution of agriculture to GDP has drastically declined due to the neglect of the agricultural sector. It was therefore not surprising that Nigeria's economy today is a net importer of basic food items. In response to this unfortunate situation, over thirty five development programmes have been introduced by successive government in Nigeria. These ranges from General Yakubu Gowon's National Accelerated Food Production, and the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank Programmes of 1972, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution, the Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructures (DFFRI), the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), People's Bank Of Nigeria, Vision 2010, Better Life For Rural Women Programme, to the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), among others (Maduagwu, 2005; Ajakaiye and Adeyeye, 2001; Eze, 2007). Incidentally, dearth of reliable information, persistent falsification of reports, high level politics, corruption, lack of direction, wrongimplementation strategy and ethno-religious conflicts have been cited by many as reasons for the collapse of agriculture in Nigeria (Eze et al., 2000). As such, in 2008, the Federal Government indicated seven areas (including the attainment of a modern technologically enabled agricultural sector to fully exploit the vast agricultural resources of the country, ensure national food security and contributes significantly to foreign exchange earnings agriculture) as areas to be vigorously fortified in its quest to achieve the Vision 20:20:20.

Surprisingly, the fortification of Nigeria's foreign policy in terms of agriculture was obviously missing in this list. Meanwhile, in a news report by The Punch of Friday 28th of February 2013, experts in international relations gathered at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos to find a realistic foreign policy thrust for the country after many years of failure with the 1960

'Africa first' foreign policy trust. During the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007) it could be said that there was a dramatic turnaround in the country's economic fortunes. The GDP growth rate which was just 1.9% in 1999 rose to 6.23% by 2005 (1990 constant prices) with contributions from the non-oil sector increasing from 4.37% in 1999 to 8.21% in 2005 (Economic Confidential, 2007). The report went further to say that in 2006, there was a GDP growth rate of at least 7.6%. Annual growth rates in various non-oil sectors improved between 1999 and 2005; agriculture improved from 5.28% to 6.81%, telecommunications improved significantly from 5.39% to 28.96%, manufacturing improved from 3.44% to 9.41%, while wholesale trade improved from 2.50% in 1999 to 12.32% in 2005. Surely, the above are indicators of progressive growth but these have all vanished in just 5 years of the demise of the administration that achieved them. Why? The policy design and implementation was not citizen based. At best, they have established a growing Nigerian economy controlled by foreign investors.

The Nigeria Millennium Development Goals Report is a Nigeria-specific analysis of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. It is expected to capture MDG interventions, challenges and successes, as well as 'misses' that should form the baseline for media analysis and reportage across all sectors. Nigeria first published an MDG report in 2004, at a time when it was closely integrated into the country's National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (NMDG Report, 2010). No matter how this report might have been presented or documented for media and public use, there was a clear indication that development programmes in Nigeria have been given more attention in the health sector (implicitly because thissector is more prominent in the schemes of many of the foreign donors who dominate the sector with programmes for malaria eradication and other issues) over others and with no exception to agriculture. Accordingly, President Jonathan confirmed that the MDG Report of 2010 provided up-to-date (2010) data on Nigeria's MDGs indicators with compelling stories of successes : from debt relief gains alone to the extension of primary health care services to over 20 million people, provision of safe water to over 8 million people, the distribution of insecticide-treated nets to protect 5 million mothers and children from malaria, and a 98 per cent reduction in the incidence of polio (NMDG Report, 2010).

According to Awojobi and Adeokun (2012), in 2009 and 2010, health related issues were reported 7 and 8 times (8.8 and 10%) respectively in two major and widely read Nigerian newspapers. This, they concluded, was an indication that health related issues in agriculture by the selected newspapers were given prominence over the period of four years, except for year 2008 when agricultural production issues were less reported compared to the reportage of issues like nutritional values of agricultural, management, production, technology; finance (which talks about loan, credits and other related issues). From the above, the information could be said to be for consumers of farm produce rather than the farmers. The news were not really targeted to improve agricultural production but the health of members of the general public who cared to read newspapers. The findings of Awojobi and Adeokun (2012) corroborated earlier reports on same subject by Agumagu (1988), Adeokun (1988), Olowu (1990) and Mundy and Sultan (1999) who have all reported low reportage of agricultural issues by Nigerian daily newspapers many years ago. Furthermore, the unreliability and inconsistency of the MDG Report was attested to by Igbuzor (2006). Igbuzor has contested the reliability of the 2005 NMDG Report for sustainable development programmes while listing the limitations of the MDGs and its targets as: Simplification of what development is; by restricting the goals to what is measurable. Many

aspects of development cannot be easily measured; modesty of goals; some of the goals are very modest e.g. the goal to half the proportion of people living on less than $1 a day by 2015 and the target to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 and wrong problem target (some of the targets do not address many development problems holistically). For instance, the MDG on education talks only of a full course of primary schooling with no reference to secondary and tertiary education.

However, the MDGs provide additional entry point to engage government on development issues by affecting all segments of the society. This notwithstanding, if serving as the link between government and the grassroots as well as providing the link between local and international actions towards human centered development is one of its predicates, then, it must be 'Nigerianized' by broadening the campaign to include faith based organizations, labour, farmers, differently abled-people, women groups and other social movements in order to advocate and sustain what need to be done and how to do them.

Europe

In Europe, the regional body - European Union (EU) has extensive contacts and trading relations with Third World countries and trading blocs. The EU is acclaimed a major player in global agricultural trade and the biggest importer and second largest exporter of foodstuffs. European agriculture is a major player in the world's agricultural markets. The ability of EU agriculture to produce large quantities of agricultural products, and the diversity and quality of those products, means that the EU has become a major exporter of many foodstuffs (the second biggest exporter globally). But it is not all one-way traffic. The EU is also the biggest importer of agricultural products in the world (European Union, 2011). The EU's net export position has declined in every single sector since 1990. Nevertheless, the EU farm policy - known as the 'common agricultural policy' ensures adequate European food production goes hand in hand with economically viable rural communities and action on environmental challenges such as climate change, water management, bio-energy and biodiversity. In fact, 50 years ago, the focus of EU farm policy was on providing enough food for a Europe emerging from a decade of war-induced shortages (by subsidizing production and supporting prices for farmers by buying up surpluses).

These methods are now a thing of the past. Today, EU policy aims to enable producers of all forms of food (cereals, meat, dairy, fruit, vegetables or wine) to: Produce sufficient quantities of safe, high-quality food for European consumers, make a full contribution to diversified economic development in rural areas and meet very high standards of environmental care and animal welfare. With consumers becoming ever more quality-conscious about food (through well organized media coverage and reporting), voluntary EU quality marks now help them make educated choices. These labels - indicating geographic origin, use of traditional ingredients or methods, including organic- also help make EU farm products to be competitive in world markets. The various reforms of EU farm policy have also promoted innovation in farming and food processing - aided by EU research projects that have increased productivity and reduced environmental impact, e.g. by using crop byproducts and waste products to produce energy. Meanwhile, EU agriculture policy 'is still hurting farmers in developing countries. Reforms proposed to Europe's common agricultural policy will not do enough to prevent price distortion and damage to farmers in poor countries (The Guardian (UK), 2013). According to Mark Tran (a correspondent with The Guardian (UK) see www.guardian.co.uk), proposals for reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will do little to reduce huge subsidies that hurt farmers

in developing countries. In his report, Mark said a 'leaked document' showed that the European Commission was set to announce proposals on farm subsidies which in real terms will increase the -CAP budget from €330bn in 2000-07 to €371bn for 2007-13.

The documents obtained by the *Trade Justice Movement* indicated that total spending for 2014-20 would increase further, to €435.6bn. European support to farm incomes has fallen substantially over the last 20 years. Farmers earned 22% of total annual receipts from government support over the 2008-10 periods, down from 39% annually over the 1986-88 periods. Again, high commodity prices, which automatically push down income support, as well as 25 years of CAP reform has slashed EU spending on agriculture. Despite the decline, CAP still absorbs almost half of the EU budget.

In 2012, the CAP came close to swallowing 45% of the EU budget in 2010 (down from 70% in 1985), or about €53bn for a sector that generates only 1.6% of EU GDP. As at 2011, three-quarters of the money in the CAP budget was handed out in direct payments to farmers. Interestingly, CAP reform comes against the background of the EU's commitment to the policy of coherence for development which ensures that all policies, not just development, promote growth in developing countries. But the continuing high level of farm subsidies will make it hard for EU policymakers to remove the trade barriers affecting the prospect of Third World international agricultural trading.

Retrospectively, this attempt at reform was but the latest round of changes going back to at least 1992 when the MacSharry reforms reduced the level of market-price support. Reforms in 2000 and 2003 reduced most payments to farmers from production to give clearer market signals to farmers. Britain believes that reforming the CAP is the best opportunity in a generation to takea major step forward in dealing with all of these problems. But Trade campaigners have expressed concern at the impact on poor countries citing the subsidies which technically keeps prices artificially low mainly for grain traders in Europe as what would not allow developing country farmers compete favourably in the global market. On the order hand, research cited by the *Overseas Development Institute* (GDI) Report showed that African and Latin American countries are particularly affected by the CAP (European Report on Development, 2012).

A study in 2009 from the University of Lausanne - ETSG Report (2010) argued that the world as a whole would gain from the removal of the most distortive CAP instruments, with Europe being the main beneficiary! It is known that the reallocation of resources within the economies across the world and corresponding terms of trade effects would increase world economic GDP and welfare by nearly €33bn where the European border protection (various import duties) are eliminated. The main message from these studies is that in many cases CAP instruments are distorting and can damage developing countries; this problem must be resolved to ensure coherence between CAP reform policy and development goals (ODI, 2011). Again, this is diplomacy, agriculture and politics working simultaneously favourably for the inhabitants of a particular continent through high level media propagation which is invariably increasing the level of participation of the citizens in agricultural development initiatives.

America

United States of America

Agricultural trade and U.S. foreign policy are interrelated. U.S. export credit guarantees, sanctions policy, and trade disputes in national and international bodies all impact trade and U.S. agriculture either directly or indirectly (Parr et.al 1998). Although the United States is the world's largest donor of international food aid, it also has used trade embargoes and sanctions for both foreign policy and economic purposes more than any other nation of the world. The World Trade Organization (WTO) would probably have been engaged for the settlement of trade disputes involving the U.S and other countries considering the number of NAFTA trade disputes involving the U.S. Parr et.al (1998) also submitted that Canada has investigated and placed duties on U.S. apples, refined sugar, and potatoes. Mexico has investigated and placed duties on U.S. hogs, beef, edible offal, apples, and wheat, and on wheat from Canada to the U.S. In order to control its agricultural activities for thegrowth of its economy through international trade, the U.S. Government has sanctioned North Korea (imposed in 1950), Cuba (1963), Libya (1986), Iraq (1990), Serbia-Montenegro (1992), Iran (1995), and Sudan (1997).

Though these were sometimes lifted- permitting a resumption of exports to these nations, in general, the sanctions have had very small impacts on aggregate U.S. agricultural exports, but have resulted in loss of markets for some commodities which the country has good number of substitutions for. This leaves a poser for the Nigerian media while reporting agricultural activities in the country. The U.S Wheat Associates posted a 'success story' of the association in Nigeria with the caption "The Ultimate Partnership: Helping Nigerian Millers Feed A Hungry People" (see www.uswheat.org/.../1105700_ NIGERIA% 20SUCCESS%20STORY%20).

The article went further to say Nigerians love bread, but the country's farmers cannot grow much wheat, so local millers depend on imports. Agreed, Nigeria survives on importation of wheat for its mill industry but all Nigerians cannot be hungry for American wheat. To be succinct, the absence or reduction of American wheat cannot be said to significantly affect the major items in Nigeria's food basket and cannot make Nigerians go hungry. Though in 1987, the Nigerian government instituted a ban on wheat imports which devastated the flour milling industry and even created a black market for smuggled flour, the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) kept in close contact with Nigeria's milling industry leaders and when the ban was lifted in 1992, the USW—with funding from American wheat farmers and the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service claimed to be the first in line to help the country's millers and bakers rebuild and expand beyond even the most optimistic expectations but buried the real political manoeuvrings and camp shifting involved in the U.S. dominance of Nigeria's mill market.

The USW boasted its move has proven to be strategic move. A fine diplomatic submission; but not very close to the reality. Sure, Nigeria's rapidly expanding flour milling industry works hard to feed its customers, undaunted by a lack of steady electricity, a transportation infrastructure that has yet to be created and national poverty but this cannot be beyond the understanding of average Americans- who are also battling hunger than the U.S. National Statistics may be reporting. Nigeria imports 90 percent of its wheat from the United States partly due to the love for the quality and coupled with the underdevelopment of wheat farming in Nigeria. Without being stereotypical, these indicators should not make Nigerians hungrier than the Americans if the population statistics of the two countries are to be carefully analysed. Accordingly, if Nigeria was the largest single customer of USW in2009 and 2010- buying over a billion dollars worth of

U.S. wheat, then Alan Tracy (the USW President) has no well founded basis to refer to Nigerian consumers as 'hungry'. Some facts about 'hunger' in the U.S. will shed more light on our arguments. For some years now, after the onset of the financial and economic crisis, hunger remains high in the United States. The financial and economic crisis that erupted in 2008 caused a dramatic increase in hunger in the United States. This high level of hunger continues in 2010, according to a government report (with the most recent statistics) released in September 2011 (Coleman-Jensen, 2011).

High importation of American wheat by Nigeria is an economic figure that cannot be ignored, hence Nigerian media must do some 'agro-diplomacy' reporting, if we must get the support of local growers of cassava and other value chain stakeholders to adopt the alternatives for wheat bread and grow the flour industry to a world class using indigenous materials.

Asia

China: Agriculture is a rapidly growing arena for China's economic engagement in Africa (Deborah and Xiaoyang 2009) Today, Chinese leaders want their farmers and companies to go "down to the African countryside" to serve China's strategic interests. More than 44 African countries have hosted Chinese agricultural aid projects, and the Chinese have developed more than 90 farms through their aid (Chen and John 2007). African countries have been net importers of China's agricultural produce especially rice more than two decades ago. According to Duncan (2008), assistance for agriculture is welcome in Africa and can produce diplomatic benefits while also expanding global food supplies, a benefit for China, which became a net food importer in 2003. More so, Eric Olander (2010), stated that Xie Yajing (a Chinese official), commented that China knew that African access to Foreign Agricultural Markets would be a powerful diplomatic lever. Therefore, in his article, *Hearts, Minds and Wallets: Lessons from China's Growing Relationship-with Africa,* Dr. David Robinson of Australia's Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia suggests that granting African commodity producers access to the industrial world's agricultural markets would no doubt be among the most effective tools the West could employ to stem the rising influence of the Chinese on the continent. The significance of agriculture to the growth of Africa and the rest of the world via trade or technical diplomatic arrangements are gradually determining Africa's future alliances.

Table 1: China National Agricultural Development Corporation in African

Country	Investment Date	Farms (Hectares)
Zambia	1990	China-Zambia friendship farm (667)
Zambia	1992	Zhongken Estates Ltd (3,573)
Mali	1995	Sikasso tea complex (100)
Guinea	1996	Koba farm (1800)
Ghana	1997	CALF* Cocoa International Company Ltd (Now apparently bankrupt)
Zambia	1999	Zhongken Friendship Farm Ltd (2,600)
Mauritania	1999	Zhongnog Mauritania Agriculture Co. Ltd/Mpoli Farm (638)
Tanzania	2000	Rudewa and Kisangata estates sisal farms (6,900)
Togo	n/a	Zhongken Agriculture Development Company (300) (planned)
Gabon	n/a	Eastern Agricultural Development Company (Planned)
South Africa	n/a	Co-operative Ostrich Project (Planned)

Note:
CALF = China Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Corporation (now defunct).Source: China State Farm Agribusiness Corporation, a subsidiary company of China National Agriculture Development Corporation.

Table 1 indicates the involvement of China in African agriculture in the before 2000 with some plans to extend them beyond. For Nigeria, bilateral trade has grown exponentially since China and Nigeria signed an agreement on trade and investment promotion and protection in 2001.Significant value of trade of USD 17.7 billion was reached in 2010 almost lO times of same level ten years ago. Nigerian exports to China has been more than double the figures have not been in pace with the growth of Chinese exports to Nigeria (Ebula and Zheng, 2011). This imbalance in trade regime has not only persisted but also intensified through Chinese exports of 66.7% of the bilateral trade total in 2000 and 87.3% of the total in 2010. In the face of such worrisome trade imbalance, by 2010, Nigeria was still China's fourth biggest African trading partner and the second largest Chinese export destination in Africa while China still only accounts for a small fraction of Nigeria's global trade, lagging far behind the country's top partner (the United States) not minding strong competition from Brazil and India. Another strong indication of misrepresented trade relationship between these two countries is that about 87% of Nigeria's exports to china are oil and gas products while by contrast China exports a diversified range of goods to Nigeria, most notably machinery, equipment and manufactured commodities. While the official numbers are impressive, they fail to capture the complete picture of trade between China and Nigeria (Ebula and Zheng, 2011). It is feared that there is a significant amount of unrecorded trade particularly in Chinese goods especially in agro-allied chemicals with significant effects on local agro-allied industry. Available trade data shows that about 60 percent of Chinese exports are destined for just six countries: South Africa (21%), Egypt (12%),

Nigeria (10%), Algeria (7%), and Benin (5%). Also 70 percent of Chinese imports originate from four countries: Angola (34%), South Africa (20%), Sudan (11%) and Congo DRC (8%).54

Nigeria and Intercontinental Agricultural Development

According to an AU/NEPAD paper, "Supporting Implementation of the AU-NEPAD CAADP Agenda: Enhancing Investment Financing For African Agriculture Information On Options And Opportunities", twenty-two (22) countries (including Nigeria) have signed their National Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Implementation Compact and continue to work on their National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NA&FSlPs). Majority of the 22 countries already have the NA&FSIPs waiting for implementation. The paper further stated that the progress in implementing the CAADP agenda demonstrates Africa's resolve and commitment to deliver tangible and sustainable results and impact on socio-economic development through a new agriculture-livestock based development model, based on the AU/NEP AD principles and values but this could be said to be far from the truth as the level of poverty and insecurity on the continent are pointers to the mismanagement of public fund and inadequate funding of agricultural development. In Nigeria alone, 13 percent of the population is unemployed and 70% of those who are unemployed are young people (MDG Report, 2005). The statistic from the International Labour Organization gave more scary information about the future of the world -Youth unemployment rates have proven more sensitive to economic shocks than adult rates.

Between 2008 and 2009, there was a 14.6 per cent increase in the number of unemployed adults, compared to a 9.0 per cent increase in unemployed youth, however, the impact on youth has proven to be greater than that of adults. The youth rate increased by 1.0 percentage point compared to 0.5 points for the adult rate over 2008/09. There are likely to be significant consequences for young people (ILO, 2010).

In 2006, the Punch Newspaper published a feature where it indicated that over 200,000 Nigerians apply for American Visa every year- majority of who are young people. Accordingly, young people often want to travel to other countries to seek better employment, education and means of livelihood (State of the World Population Report, Supplement on Youth, 2006). This however is a strong message to the government to emphasize the need for massive investment in programmes (especially agriculture) that will improve the employment situation of young people in Nigeria. Too much emphasis on the design or implementation of some bloated plans for African agricultural development will not allow Nigerian media address key domestic agricultural problems at least in order to win some international awards on African agricultural reporting. Nigeria should do less of Africa and more of citizen oriented agricultural plans.

Nigeria (2007-2011) Development Programmes: A Place for Agriculture?

Having established that diplomacy extensively involve the arrangement and sometimes the manipulation of relationships for the survival of parties involved, and after evidently presenting that agriculture has been and it is still one of the tools for international diplomacy, it is important to do a retrospective analysis of Nigeria's development plans from 2007 to 2011, being the period that the Federal Government was really struggling to consolidate on the outcomes of many of its developmental initiatives after escaping several domestic and international political manoeuvres between 1999 and 2006. The purpose of this is to help us determine and assess the place of agriculture in the development schedules for Nigeria, bearing in mind that Nigeria is a

member of many international organizations with focus on agriculture development, and again the fact that the country has more than hundred international bi-lateral agreements on development initiatives.

Obviously, there are political and economic factors (excluding media influence) which are always cited (even more often by the Nigerian media) as crucial to the growth of Nigerian economy. They include the following: Influence of political transition; need to bring economic development to all corners of the country; impact of increased oil revenue; drive towards increased representativeness and increased demand for state creation.

Before 2007, the Nigerian Government has been working with the United States through the Central Bank of Nigeria, Finance Ministry, National Planning Commission, and others to improve the Nigerian environment for investment in agriculture through policy reform at the national and state levels. Discussions revolving around agriculture and environment should be in the front across the globe because of their important role in the economy of any country. The Nigerian press has gone a long way in setting the agenda around these factors but it seemed it has not faired enough to be scored the vanguard for citizen diplomacy that can transform the country's foreign policy particularly on agricultural relations. It remains a fact that the force of public opinion has steadily gained strength around the world as Mass Communication has become a global phenomenon (Utulu, 2009). And as such, the Nigerian media should strategically report agricultural programmes and policies in developing societies (Nigeria), as the sector accounts for the larger number of the citizens. Specifically, agriculture has provided employment platform for the majority particularly people living in the rural areas. The sector by estimation accounted for over 80% of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) prior to the discovery of crude oil (Kuye, 2004) which by 2005 has reduced to 41% (Odunlami, 2007). Media coverage of agriculture in Nigeria has always not been strategic. News items on agriculture are mostly on government harsh or contradictory reports while the percentage is also low. This is supported by Okorie and Oyedepo (2011).

Even though their research focused the print media with three selected papers, the findings are critical to the evaluation of what the media give to Nigerians on agriculture because the print media is cheaper and the more available (after radio) medium of mass communication in Nigeria considering the high degree of deficient infrastructural support for the new media (i.e. Internet). The Federal Government since 2007 has strategically embarked on presidential initiatives i.e. the African Growth and Competitiveness Initiative, the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa and the Trans-Sahel Counter-Terrorism Program. Nigeria is also part of other regional activities including the Famine Early Warning System and Anti-Corruption Initiative. Nigeria is a premier participant in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), for which $270 million was committed by 2007 (MOUAU 2007). From 2007 up to 2011, one can say that two official documents have influenced the development agenda of Nigeria. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), as well as the 2007 Manifesto (Programme Implementation) of the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), are two distinctive documents that influenced the creation of the late President UmaruMusa Yar'Adua's 7-Point Agenda. In order to achieve the desired result, the government set up a Nigeria Project Agenda which comprehensively articulated how each Priority Policy will be achieved within specific time frames. The Priority Policies, hinged on reforms, derived from the 7-Point Agenda to address agriculture among other things. Again, reporting all these by the Nigerian media has not changed

the level of commitment of the government for rapid development of the sector. In fact, immediately after the demise of Yar'Adua many of these plans were abandoned in practical terms but the government still goes about claiming to be working with the Yar'Adua's 7 Point Agenda.

The agricultural sector is said to be the fastest growing sector in the non-oil sector in Nigeria. In 2005, it contributed 6.81% out of the 8.21% growth rate recorded by the entire non-oil sector (NPA2007). However, the performance evaluation of the nation's economic growth showed agriculture recorded only modest improvement in 2006, which was why the Federal Government decided to be more committed to the development of the sector based on the identified problem areas (NPA 2007). Some of the problem areas which were; low productivity; low quality of private sector investment; non-competitiveness; weak domestic; policies and institutions; inadequate funding and land ownership and tenure could be well resolved through the importation of'citizenship' into many of Nigeria's foreign relationships on agriculture.

Expectedly, the Federal Government put up strategic plans to help it overcome those constraints. Consequently, thirteen policy options were designed for this purpose which included taking advantage of the various concessional arrangements provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO), African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the European Union-African-Caribbean and Pacific States Agreement (EU-ACP), National Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and increasing budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector. But in 2011, the National Review and Planning Meeting of all the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) and States Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) submitted that the agricultural sector apart from not been well funded by both the State and Federal Governments still lacked adequate extension agents for the dissemination of agricultural innovations and best practices for adoption at rural the level. Therefore, as part of the communique from the meeting, the stakeholders pioneered by the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria urged the government to put in place a well rounded National Extension Policy in Agriculture to address many of the identified problems. Again, all the stakeholders concluded it wasvery urgent that agriculture get nothing less than 30 percent of the annual National Budget if the country must meet up the international standard of 1 Extension Agent to 1000 Farmers recommendation for a highly responsive agricultural sector (Ismail et. al., 2012). Even though with more and more emphasis on international exchange in goods and services, formulators and implementers of Nigeria's foreign policy are seeking novel ways and forms of international economic relations, symbolized by economic, scientific and technical co-operation agreements; Nigeria has not been able to harness for the development of its economy the potentials of bi-lateral agreements and other international conventions it has acceded to many years ago by not providing internal or domestic law for their accurate functioning (Oyebode 2012).

What this means is that agriculture has not been properly incorporated into Nigeria's foreign policy to protect and promote Nigerians and Nigeria's interest at home and abroad. The media can fan up the fire of this trend of international relations by reporting agriculture and the need for citizen diplomacy for the transformation of the sector in a conceptual manner. This will help appropriate agencies of government react functionally while giving the citizens a tremendous platform to diagnose every agricultural transformation initiative for better performance. The media will thus be prescriptive of what citizen agricultural diplomacy might achieve and how it

should be implemented while at same time expressing judgemental assessment of the implementation of the concept for sustainable domestic and international agricultural relations. Nigerian foreign policy has centered Africa from 1960 to 2008. But there has been orchestrated attempt (which started during the late Yar'Adua government) to focus the country's foreign policy to the pursuit of the interests of Nigerians at home and abroad and currently, citizen diplomacy seems to have renewed salience in this cause (Magbadelo,2012). The media must set the pace in this cause. The urge for citizen diplomacy around the globe- using agriculture was well documented in Mary Boote's article *Citizen Diplomacy: Agriculture Brings People Together* posted on (www.truthabouttrade.orgj; developed countries are already working out international relations plans to harness the opportunities in this concept for their countries' agricultural development and sustenance.

Conclusions

Nigeria has come a long way since her independence in 1960. The country has moved from the glorious days of boosting her GDP with agricultural exportsto the reliance on importation of agricultural products like raw food and livestock for her citizens. The media have always been there to report the experiences, expectations and disappointments of Nigerians from many failed agricultural development policies and programmes. Researches and abundant literature have pointed to the fact that the collapse or underdevelopment of many of the programmes was internationally, politically and intentionally masterminded by developed countries.

These so called 'international partners' have always and will continue to design and push down into African throats agricultural policies that will only keep their farmers above the Third World's.

They rely on their foreign policy thrusts for justification of their actions even when one of the obvious is that international trade provisions have not been 'fair' to Africa and Africans. One of the instruments for solidifying such submissions is the media reportage of why these foreign partners must protect their citizens' aspirations above others. Developed countries have constantly devised their media coverage and reportage to present distorting information about agricultural issues where their citizens are likely not to be favoured in any bi-lateral or international arrangements. They disseminate inappropriate data through modern media i.e. using the figures as benchmarks for appropriating global solutions to global crisis emanating from lack of food and poor environment. The yet to be resolved international arrangements on how to manage the Carbon Credit Market without causing more damage to the economy of the third world countries is a typical example.

Nigeria is one of the developing nations that are affected by this 'high polities' in international mass communication, but the Nigerian media can salvage the situation by vigorously reporting more agricultural activities with the aim of propagating citizen diplomacy in agricultural m'atters. Increasing the time, space or percentage of reportage will only increase dissemination percentile but a paradigm shift to the propagation of citizen diplomacy will elicit greater participation from citizens who will consequently see agricultural activities beyond farming, harvesting, selling and eating, They will be more aware of the international politics in agriculture as diplomatic instrument that must be utilized and protected not only by the government but by the citizens for the sustainable existence of their sovereignty.

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