

**Multiple Income Streams - A Focus on Agripreneurship  
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Distinguished Participants,

**INTRODUCTION: THE NIGERIAN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND  
THE AGRO SECTOR**

The agricultural sector like any other sector in Nigeria is vulnerable to the nature of the business environment. The business environment means the external forces influencing business decisions. They can be economic, social, political, legal or regulatory and technological in nature<sup>2</sup>. These factors are outside the control of the business and can have positive or negative effect on businesses. Key players in the business environment are Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Business Membership Organisations (BMOs), Civil Society Organisations, FBO(Faith-Based Organisations), Women's BMOs and CSOs, Research Institutes and the Media.

The nature of the business environment in Nigeria is such that it is not always open, equitable, or rules based, or even predictable. There are hidden costs (for example loans with unstated terms); conflicting laws (multiple taxation), high cost of infrastructure, (e.g. power), women are invisible and small businesses find it hard to access government opportunity.<sup>3</sup>

Cost of doing business in Nigeria is high. SMEs in this context subsidise the state, generating their own power, grading roads, creating alternative sources of water because the mains do not work, providing extra security and opening up roads to their business. Transportation system is not integrated. The cost of moving goods from the farms to the markets, rural to city where there can be better returns is a drain on the resources and time of SMEs. The logistics of organising for the movement of goods itself is a nightmare<sup>4</sup>. The consequences of these challenges are many;

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<sup>2</sup> ENABLE II Programme Briefing Jan 2015 Zamfara

<sup>3</sup> DFID/ UKAid ENABLE Programme, Overview of the business environment in Nigeria, ENABLE II introductory briefing session 28 Nov 2014, Zamfara

<sup>4</sup> Position Paper Business Environment Risks, Ministry of Women Affairs and Business Membership Organisations Gender and Business (GAB) Dialogue Platform with the Governor of Kaduna State Nov 2015

- Incomes are subject to fluctuations without any safety net. Therefore employees go to SME as a last resort not because they have requisite skills, which that sector can use to grow itself but because they have no other choice
- Business management skills are few and far in between. Advocacy skills is not common within the SME sector
- Most of those in the informal sector are not those likely to have time or the learning to read and or internalise policy papers and what is required of them on an issue such as taxation
- They deal with issues when they become problems that are unavoidable and a drain on them e.g. multiple taxation.

**This is where the agro sector and agripreneurs falls.**

## UNDERSTANDING AGRICPRENEUR

First, what is this **agripreneurship**? This simply means an agricultural enterprise, someone whose business is agriculture is an agripreneur. GFARS refers to it as entrepreneurship in agriculture. Entrepreneurship is a concept that encompasses transforming an idea or vision into a “new business or new venture creation, or the expansion of an existing business, by an individual, a team of individuals, or an established business” (Reynolds et al. 1999, cited by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor)<sup>5</sup>.

Entrepreneurs are planners, creative, they take opportunities and accept risks, and can quickly change business strategies to adapt to changing environments. They are often innovators (Kahan, 2012). While usually being innovative and creative, farmers often lack requisite experience, access to services, people, or markets, and skills to have realistic chances to succeed as entrepreneurs (Wongtschowski et al. 2013).

These elements are what we hope to bring into agriculture to make it an enterprise. **Due to business environment factors the agro sector is not there yet.** Agripreneurship has the potential to contribute to a range of social and economic development such as employment and income generation. First it has to be nurtured and strengthened as a conscious way of diversifying the economy. The question is how? And by inference, how can you distinguished audience, play a role?

First we must understand agric enterprise against the background of the Nigerian Fundamentals and the challenges facing the sector. Nigeria is one of Sub Saharan Africa’s largest economies and relies heavily on oil as its main source of foreign exchange earnings and government revenues. Following the 2008-09 global financial crises, the banking sector was effectively recapitalized and regulation enhanced. Since then, Nigeria’s economic growth has been driven

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.g-fras.org/en/agripreneurship.html>

by growth in agriculture, telecommunications, and services. Economic diversification and strong growth however have not translated into a significant decline in poverty levels. Even though agriculture still remains the largest sector of the Nigerian economy and employs two-thirds of the entire labour force, the production hurdles have significantly stifled the performance of the sector. Over the past 20 years, value-added per capita in agriculture has risen by less than 1 percent annually. It is estimated that Nigeria has lost USD 10 billion in annual export opportunity from groundnut, palm oil, cocoa and cotton alone due to continuous decline in the production of those commodities.<sup>6</sup> Food (crop) production increases have not kept pace with population growth, resulting in rising food imports and declining levels of national food self-sufficiency (FMARD, 2008).

GDP From Agriculture in Nigeria decreased to 4,859,436.87 NGN Million in the fourth quarter of 2017 from 5189365.99 NGN Million in the third quarter of 2017. GDP From Agriculture in Nigeria averaged 3771185.70 NGN Million from 2010 until 2017, reaching an all time high of 5189365.99 NGN Million in the third quarter of 2017 and a record low of 2594759.86 NGN Million in the first quarter of 2010.<sup>7</sup>

## **THE AGRO VALUE CHAIN**

There are points along the agro continuum where revenue can be generated and livelihood assured. This is usually referred to as the Agro value chain. This is a set of linked activities that work to add value to a product; it consists of actors and actions that improve a product while linking commodity producers to processors and markets.<sup>8</sup> – These are points along the production line that are interlinked from input to growing to harvest to processing to marketing as in figure 1.

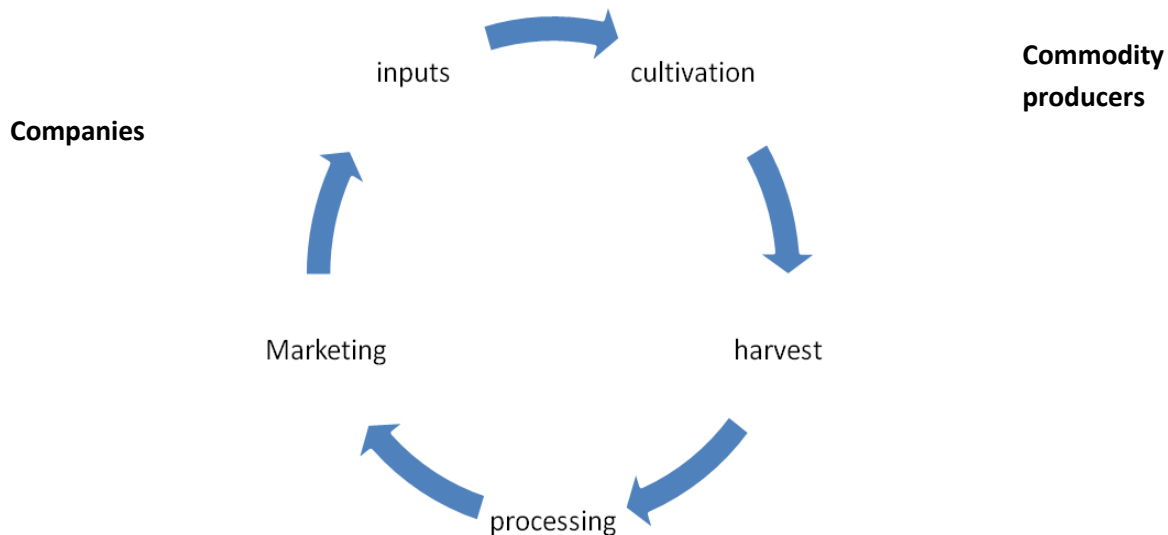
**Figure 1: The agro value chain and roles**

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/gdp-from-agriculture>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.devex.com/news/agricultural-value-chains-a-game-changer-for-small-holders-83981>



There are some areas in the agro value chain where a keen watcher of the sector may focus on generating revenue and may even want to invest. It goes without saying that some may be more lucrative than others depending on the size of investment, market opportunities and turn over.

S/no	Agro Action	Description
1.	Animal Husbandry	Raising sheep, cattle including chicken and other birds
2.	Crop Cultivation	Growing plants such as grains, ginger, tuber, bulbs etc
3.	Mixed farming	Raising crops and animals it can be symbiotic one as feed or manure for the other
4.	Breeding	Own a hatchery for hatching birds, or fingerlings or raising certain bred of animals or an apiary (bee raising)
5.	Technology development	New tools for innovating agriculture including labour saving device eg egusi (melon) sheller or briquette molder
6.	Processing	Adding value to raw products eg milk into yogurts, fruit into juice tomato to paste, tubers into flour etc
7.	Packaging	Design and production of special packages for customised and general users

8.	Inputs		Fertilizer, feeds and medication – purchase and sale
9.	Out grower		Small holder farming where products are planted according to agreed specification and it is sold to a pre agreed buyer
10.	Aggregation and Distribution		Buying up from small holders and selling to whole sale buyers
11.	Export trading		Aggregation of raw and finished products for markets outside the country
12.	Import trading		Trans border marketing of input and outputs
13.	Waste to wealth		Energy production, converting agro waste to energy proving alternative energy sources such as briquettes in lieu of tree felling

Each of these areas can be an income earner and revenue generator for the country. As exciting as this may look, there are challenges that must first be addressed.

## CHALLENGES IN THE SECTOR

In speaking to the challenges of the agro sector, I couldn't find a more concise description of it than this passage from the FAO and the Vanguard Newspaper reproduced here:

*In spite of the oil, agriculture remains the base of the Nigerian economy, providing the main source of livelihood for most Nigerians. The sector faces many challenges, notably an outdated land tenure system that constrains access to land (1.8 ha/farming household), a very low level of irrigation development (less than 1 percent of cropped land under irrigation), limited adoption of research findings and technologies, high cost of farm inputs, poor access to credit, inefficient fertilizer procurement and distribution, inadequate storage facilities and poor access to markets have all combined to keep agricultural productivity low (average of 1.2 metric tons of cereals/ha) with high postharvest losses and waste.*

*The main factors undermining production include reliance on rainfed agriculture, smallholder land holding, and low productivity due to poor planting material, low fertilizer application, and a weak agricultural extension system amongst others.*

*Nigeria is the continent's leading consumer of **rice**, one of the largest producers of rice in Africa and simultaneously one of the largest rice importers in the world. As well as an important food security crop, it is an essential cash crop for it is mainly small-scale producers who commonly sell 80 per cent of total production and consume only 20 per cent. Rice generates more income for Nigerian farmers than any other cash crop in the country. In 2008, Nigeria produced approximately 2 million MT of milled rice and imported roughly 3 million metric tons, including the estimated 800,000 metric tons that is suspected to enter the country illegally on an annual basis.*

Moreover, the country is the largest producer of **cassava** in the world, with about 50 million metric tons annually from a cultivated area of about 3.7 million ha. Nigeria accounts for cassava production of up to 20 per cent of the world, about 34 per cent of Africa's and about 46 per cent of West Africa's. The national average yield of cassava is estimated at about 13.63 MT per ha, as against potential yield of up to 40 metric tons per ha. Close to two-thirds (66 per cent) of total production is in the southern part of the country, while about 30 per cent is in the north-central, and 4 per cent in other parts of the north. The crop is predominantly grown by smallholders on small plots for family consumption and local sale. Large scale commercial plantations are rare.

Nigeria is the world's largest cassava producer and Africa's largest rice importer. The government and private sector therefore need to join efforts to develop ways to enhance cassava's competitiveness in the international market and improve the efficiency of domestic rice production and processing. Under the ATA, the Government of Nigeria is expressing its determination to end the era of food imports, particularly rice, and develop cassava and rice value chains to produce and add value to these selected products and create domestic and export markets for farmers. A range of policies and initiatives to strengthen cassava and rice value chains, from production to marketing are being put in place. However, because of the country's massive size and diversity, different regions may face different constraints because of a decentralized approach to designing industrial policies and initiatives that may not be in sync with the agricultural policies (IFPRI- Policy Note No. 32, 2012).

The Nigeria **fisheries sub sector** contributes about 3-4 percent to the country's annual GDP and is an important contributor to the population's nutritional requirements, constituting about 50 percent of animal protein intake. In addition, the sub-sector generates employment and income for a significant number of artisanal fishermen and small traders. Although capture fisheries has now been declining, Nigeria has a big potential in both marine and fresh water fisheries including aquaculture. In spite of this high potential, domestic fish production still falls far below the total demand, which was estimated at 2.2 million metric tons per year in 2008. As a result, the country imports about 60 percent of the fish consumed. To reduce the level of fish imports, aquaculture has been selected as one of the priority value chains targeted for development in the next four years. The National Aquaculture Strategy Plan has just been finalized with the assistance of FAO to guide support for the value chain.

**Livestock development** is an important component of Nigeria agriculture with abundant social and economic potentials. About 60 percent of the ruminant livestock population is found in the country's semi-arid zone and mostly managed by pastoralists. Domestic production of livestock products is far below the national demand, resulting in large imports of livestock and livestock products. Except for eggs, the domestic production of animal products is less than half the demand for beef mutton and goat meat, while for milk and pork products it is less than quarter the demand (NV20:2020, 2009). About 30 percent of live animals slaughtered in Nigeria are imported from neighbouring countries. Like other subsectors, livestock industry development is constrained by low productive breeds, inadequate access to feeds and grazing lands, frequent farmer – pastoralist conflicts, lack of processing facilities and low value addition and low technical inputs in the management of the animals, including diseases. The livestock sector can create new opportunities for farmers and provide more affordable and healthier diets for future generations. Managing this growth also requires a complex institutional response that can stimulate income and employment opportunities in the rural areas<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/>

*Despite the promising progress agriculture in Nigeria still needs far more investment for example a lack of storage and processing option causes many poor farmers to lose nearly half of their harvest to rot or pests. Also while fertilizer usage is up and local seed production is rising many farmers in Nigeria still lack access to improved crop varieties and basic inputs<sup>10</sup>*

*In summary there are business environment issues; there are no safety nets, access to information is poor, resources meant for the poor by passes the poor; new technologies don't get to them in away and manner with the requisite application knowledge, extension worker system is a parody of itself; government policies are not always well thought through e.g. out grower scheme without commensurate thought of market; Omission of women as viable core of farmers. Multiple points of taxation: Access to quality inputs in a timely manner is tough; Change in laws without a commensurate communication policy; an aversion for payment of tax;*

There are **opportunities** too. In Nigeria, incentive based risk sharing system for agricultural lending (NIRSAL) has generated US\$ 273 million in loans for some 454 projects. They include a new rail- shipping venture that is connecting struggling livestock producers in the north to consumer markets in the south<sup>11</sup> Entry of big farming aggregators such as LAKE rice project, OLAM poultry farms and Dangote Tomato, Eriscoe tomatoes etc means more employment possibilities.

## **SOLUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

**Evidencing the value of tax:** Headline economic growth is no longer enough, inclusive growth that meets the expectations of citizens (at all levels) is needed now, more than ever before. Agripreneurs must have access to citizen awareness, organisation to mobilize and demand increased investment in the sector. This means that citizens will pay tax when they see commensurate services that evidence the value of paying tax.

**Simplify the tax paying system:** there is progress in this regard which needs to be sustained. Tax education must correspond to a process flow that is easy to understand and access given that majority agripreneurs are self employed and have time deficit.

**Tax holidays are key:** Payment **should not be mandatory.** SMEs are corporate persons used to controlling their own insurance and security etc without waiting for government. It is hard to take seriously therefore a government which now suddenly remembers they matter and can add to the GDP. The approach must be subtle. Begin by building trust. Show the correlate between tax obligations and infrastructure or other gains. A lot of our farm lands are located in rural areas with bad or non-existent road networks.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.vanguardngr.com/2017/03/nigerias-steady-progress-agriculture-potential-history-making](http://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/03/nigerias-steady-progress-agriculture-potential-history-making)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/03/nigerias-steady-progress-agriculture-potential-history-making/>

Let people know what is 'tax reform' and the values it brings to their livelihood and security. Find credible voices to speak for the viability of the tax system. This should include incentivisation – e.g. tax relief for SME.

Government must set aside its forte of enforcing tax collection and begin to **collaborate** with other agencies e.g. SMEDAN to bring business development skills and better income management skills to agro SMEs so they are better able to keep their books and report incomes. Part of the conditionality for accessing training could then be requirement to tax payment for their staff. Ditto accessing life insurance, so the NHIS could be a partner to incentivise tax payment where citizens see the health insurance as viable that is. As SMEs access and enjoy health services guaranteed through insurance, they are also required to participate in the CPS. CAC- the Corporate Affairs commission could also be a viable partner for accessing SME database.

The example of tax in Lagos suffices, Citizens didn't want to pay tax at first because in the past it had never really amounted to anything and it was seen as an avenue to siphon funds and exploit the ordinary citizens which gets little or things in return. With aggressive advertisement and reach out, and a demonstration of what tax would do to change lives for the better evidenced in a new better working Lagos, citizens began to pay their tax. Only then were sanctions applied to those who didn't.<sup>12</sup> The moral of the story is, laws will work where there is a sense they are just and fair.

Development partners can help the FIRS find the agro SMEs and facilitate a business environment conversation. The DFID programmes such as Mafita and Propcom can help.

**Participatory policy making:** In Nigeria, unfortunately, policy making is often characterised by little or no dialogue. Policies are made in isolation, with minimal private sector input, little evidence base is sought and more often that not implementation is flawed. The lessons from elsewhere in Africa are to;

- Ensure participation: debates and suggestions on best mechanisms for implementation should be achieved through series of town hall meetings and dialogues with various sectors in the informal sector.
- Subject the tax guidelines to debate and dialogue before it is finally released as guiding principles to the sector
- Adapt to the nature of the agro SME environment. Create an agro SME package – which recognizes SMEs as viable businesses and employers working in a challenging business environment over which they have little control will be a strategic action.
- Create a core of Ambassadors by popularizing those who are paying tax and show the commensurate benefits
- Create a long running Q and A forum programme in local languages.
- Use popular media platforms including the FIRS website and social media where you can focus on the new generation of youth agripreneurs.

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<sup>12</sup> Amina Salihu Tax reform on PRA 2015 PENCOM Conference 2016 Kaduna State



**One size will not fit all:** The Tax sector has to be careful to ensure that its knowledge of the dynamics of the sector fits different clients. This means that FIRS has to design strategies that suit them otherwise it stands the risk of becoming a paper tiger – look very formidable with a lot of potential but unable to go past the shadows of past where occurrences do not show that the employer or employee should trust the system enough to want to pay tax .

The FIRS must begin with a segmentation of the informal sector. This requires an analysis of what kinds of businesses exist, what kinds of capacities are there to run business and make income. This implies that FIRS will need to have its working definition of an agro SME because it may not need to target all agro MSMEs. Specific packages, which meet the situation of the agro entity will have to be designed.

**SWIT as agropreneurs:** CITN and SWIT members need to get involved in agripreneural work. This becomes easy to do since agriculture is an endeavour allowed civil servants by law. To really know the sector you must understand it that can only happen when you are in it. The rest of this submission is dedicated to how SWIT can maximize potential in the sector.

## **THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN IN TAXATION (SWIT) AS AGROPRENEURS**

As has been argued, a key to changing around the challenges in the sector and building empathy lies in SWIT and CITN members better understanding the sector. That comes from participating in the sector. I will therefore like to challenge and encourage you to join the sector.

Permit me to map and analyse your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or constraints (SWOT/C) should you want to participate in the sector. A SWOT analysis basically looks at the pros and cons that we have to be aware of. The strengths and opportunities are expected to help cancel out the weaknesses and the threats.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience managing resources</li> <li>• Knowledge of the tax and other regulatory and policy environment</li> <li>• Access to resources such as land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of agro knowledge</li> <li>• Lack of business management skills</li> <li>• Don't have much time to devote to business</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats or Constraints</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networks in relevant agro related sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of systems that support farmers</li> <li>• Perception that no skills are needed to</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agro schemes that welcome sleeping partners</li> <li>• Internet learning</li> <li>• A critical mass of colleagues</li> <li>• Favorable agro policies esp gender based</li> <li>• Existence of agro insurance</li> </ul> | <p>run agro business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underfunding the project 'cutting corners'</li> <li>• Conflict between profession and agripreneur goal</li> </ul> |
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Please note that in a SWOT analysis, one cancels out the other so, weaknesses to threats are ameliorated by strengths and opportunities.

### **IDEAS FOR AGRIPRENEURIAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Aside from the traditional buying of shares in an agricultural enterprise, there are ideas of participation that can give returns sooner per season. Crowdy farming might be an option for you. *FarmCrowdy* is a private initiative which has different unit options such as maize and rice investment for the sponsor (you the investor). For a farming season between 10 months to one year you invest a minimum sum of N90,000 – 95000 per unit. This covers cultivation, harvest, processing, monitoring and marketing. As a sponsor you don't have to come for monitoring and evaluation but videos can be sent to you to show different stages of the crop's cycles. When the farm produce is sold, Farmcrowdy will return the initial investment which is 90k or 95k depending on the unit you chose with 15% on initial investment i.e you invest 90k for example your return after sale will be 15% interest on our initial investment which comes to an additional 13,500naira only for the period of the 9months.

There is the anchor borrower scheme of the federal government where you can be part of an out - grower scheme where products are bought you an aggregator who pays an agreed market rate for them. You can be part of a cohort of farmers or part of a marketer or a financier team. You don't need to own land to farm. You can rent farmland on a long lease from owners not ready to cultivate their land. That means you could also rent your farmland out and earn some income.

There is also the Madaki farms agro enterprise model. See its call for partnership as an annexure to this paper. Madaki is also part of the Anchor borrower scheme of the FGN.

## NINE KEY LESSONS IN AGRIPRENEURSHIP

These are life learning to note which may equally apply to other fields. I beseech you to keep them in mind and in view as you become agripreneurs.

**a. You have to believe in and respect what you choose to do:** I love being close to nature, respecting nature and appreciating the place of the environment and food security in our lives. Agriculture for me is not an accidental occurrence. It is a hobby which I have turned into a vocation. It is one that can be resource consuming but fulfilling when you see what your hands have been able to yield. I am not saying you must care deeply about agriculture though it helps, plus, you can learn to love it anyway. But do know that you must come to it with the respect that a serious business deserves.

You must have a healthy dose of respect for the profession; work with experts and invest the resources it requires at the right time. It is like nurturing a baby - you cannot delay its needs and expect to raise a healthy child. Some branches of agriculture can be as demanding an dtime bound as a new born child for example, raising chicks into chickens and fingerlings into table fish or fertilizer distribution.

**b. There is no substitute for knowledge.** Every vocation has got its lexicon. It is the language it speaks. Before you begin your agribusiness read up about it, know it's value chain as we said, these are points along the production line that are interlinked from input to growing to harvest to processing to marketing. Attend business schools - there are so many entrepreneurial development classes now tailored to the lifestyle of busy executives there is really no excuse not to learn. From flexi hours to learning online where you go at your own pace and time to interactive fora where you can ask questions – Webinars (online seminars) abound. Ask yourself the key questions these include; what are you producing? Why is it my best option, who is my staff, what is my resource base how much do I need to start, where is my market what is my customer base and how is it segmented? Be prepared. Register a company. Once you do, do your audits, think about your obligations to government, hackney permits for vehicles, even when not producing or making a profit you still need to file your papers with CAC and report to the tax authorities as and when due (here I guess I am preaching to an audience of the converted!).

**c. Know your environment:** Think about possible partnerships. Scout and scour the environment to know what obtains and who to talk with. Apply for a farmland or multipurpose land. Buy now and secure your title. Someday soon in the future of this country, it will be hard to come across farmland at a rate that the regular 'wanna be' famer can afford. Approach the Abuja Enterprise Agency (AEA) to know more, go online and just google – the all powerful search engine will bring out anything so long as it is known by the occupants of Planet earth.

**d. Courage is important:** Agric is not an overnight success endeavor. It is a journey. Some years will be good, some better and others not good at all. Courage is important. And to keep

learning too; 13 years and I am still learning. Every experience matters. Record keeping will be important. Request that the team learns from every experience. You need those notes to compare with upcoming years. Literarily don't put all your eggs in one basket. Mix and match Think about diversifying options even within a mono product context.

**e. Be alert to opportunity:** Nigeria consumed 189.5 metric tons of tomato paste in 2017 alone<sup>13</sup>. Think about how perishable products waste while in season; tomato, sugarcane, onions, organges, pepper, yam. Grains and pulses are merely cheaper because they are easier to store. An agripreneur would think of creating a storage system that can function like a work space. Yet you can combine it with other businesses. Gone are the days where you must get your hands dirty to prove you are a good farmer now with mechanization, improved seedling, hydroponics (soiless farming) you don't have to. You could even be further down the value chain into processing or marketing or input distribution. You can form a cohort of professionals in management who have access to strategic information that could be of benefit to your agripreneurial ambition. **Be optimistic and yet realistic.**

**f. The best fertilizer is the farmer's footsteps-** This is a Chinese saying. You can't turn your back on your agri business. No matter how transformative agro business may become you still must get your hands dirty somewhat because you cannot cede responsibility entirely. You must contribute not just the capital but also sweat equity. You must have means of obtaining progress report. Use your experience of documentation systems to design your own feedback template for team briefs. Read up on new techniques, new medication, new water Management systems, contribute intelligently remember what you are told or learn. One of the key challenges of agribusiness in Nigeria is getting timely qualitative inputs - good quality fish feed or seedling or fertilizer as and when due. Know where and how to get inputs for your business.

**g. Raise a seed grant.** Agribusiness is a gas guzzler – it can drain the purse. You need a good source of funds to start but you don't have to aim too big at the beginning. Start small and build upon a sturdy foundation. in it as with everything good the beginning can be rough but with knowledge a good team and perseverance you can prevail. Don't start with a loan if you can help it. Except you have an alternative means to pay back or it is a soft loan. There are single digit interest agro loans such as the CBN MSMEF 220 billion naira in 2015 with 60% set aside for women's business.

**h. Build a team.** You can't do it alone. Motivate and incentivise the team. As Civil servants you must not be guilty of what you complain others have done to you- under appreciate you, under-reward you. It's a reason to want to serve others better. Agric is serious business. You need technical teams. Peer support is like adrenaline when you think you don't have any more energy to go it fires you to go the extra mile, you egg each other on. Coming from a common background of bureaucracy and professional careers you have shared affinity and will have

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<sup>13</sup> Sunnewsonline.com retrieved 5 May 2018

common problems such as figuring out what the business is about, you can work the system in terms of obtaining firsthand knowledge from public offices, about credit opportunities, training, equipment.

**i. Work Smart and be innovative.** In this century there are innovative ways to invest in agriculture and there are grants to support agro ideas. Hadis Foundation has been able to attract some. In a case where you have more funds than time you could become a sleeping partner in an agribusiness. **Check for uncalculated risks:** Just as with any business the issue is to ensure there is trust and proper documentation of agreements - these remain important. You want to give out money in partnership understand the terms. You have land try to get the title to secure it and also enhance your ability to use it as a security or collateral. Protect your investment now there is insurance for agricultural products where forces of nature might cause unanticipated downturns, insurance can give relief.

## WHAT NEXT?

Try to better understand the agro sector and its challenges

Get involved in advocacy to nurture the agro enterprise sector. If well run and supported the sector can be a huge revenue generator for the country. Citizens often say we know we should pay our tax, we want to pay our tax but we also want to see service in return

Carpe diem - Seize this moment and begin. The first step is always the hardest the rest they say is history. Food security is too serious an issue to be left in too few hands using old ways of growing and processing food. We all need to get involved.

A better understanding of the sector makes better revenue collectors. When you know all the dynamics well you can better encourage the sector and encourage macro and micro growth. Remember: You need the rain to get the rainbow. Therefore commit now.

Look forward to a more responsive tax regime for the agro enterprise sector and to welcoming you to the Club!

I thank you for listening  
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