



Research Article

# Impact of the National Special Programme for Food Security on Livestock Farmers in Ideato South Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

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This study was designed to assess the impact of the National Special Programme for food Security on livestock farmers in Ideato South Local Government Area, Imo State. Sixty participating farmers from three villages where the NSPFS programme was implemented were interviewed to examine their socio-economic characteristics, level of living, level of awareness, adoption level and income level. Another sixty non participant farmers from the three villages where National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS) was not implemented were also interviewed making a total sample size of 120 livestock farmers selected from six villages. Data was generated from both participants and non-participants farmers through the use of a questionnaire and oral interview. Seventy percent of the farmers were males and about 50 percent were between 51 and 60 years. The study showed that there were differences between income, livestock production and level of living of participant and non-participant farmers. More than 80 percent of the participant farmers claimed that they adopted the livestock management practices introduced by the NSPFS. The overall assessment showed that there were great impacts of the programme on the income, livestock production and level of living of the participant farmers. The results of the study, therefore, showed that more awareness should be created. There was also need for the programme to be implemented to other villages in the study area. There should be adequate supply of inputs to the farmers as well as improved extension services to enhance production of livestock production in Ideato South Local Government Area. The programme should be extended to all the 774 Local Government Areas of the Country.

## INTRODUCTION

Despite ample food production and large food surpluses in developed countries, hundreds of millions of people still struggle for their daily bread (Berck and Bigman, 2005). The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that one out of every eight people in the world suffers from chronic mal-nutrition, lacking sufficient food to live healthy and productive lives. The World Bank also estimated that almost 450 million people suffer from a severe protein deficiency and additional 400 million cannot afford even the minimum diet necessary for good health (World Bank, 2006).

In 2005, delegates to the World Food Conference expressed the hope that food insecurity, hunger and mal-nutrition would be eradicated within three years. However, at the International Conference on Nutrition, stark evidence was produced confirming that in many parts of the world this hope was still to be fulfilled (UN, 2006). Food security, therefore, remains a persistent concern of developing countries. Food security is dependent upon three factors: availability, stability and accessibility of food supplies. Therefore, to achieve this, a country must be able to grow sufficient food or have enough foreign exchange to enable it to import food (UN, 2006).

Livestock production in Nigeria had been predominantly rural until recently when development in husbandry and breeding for improvement was given a prominence of place. Generally, livestock husbandry plays a very important role in the development of a nation. The limited supply of animal protein in tropical countries like Nigeria is primarily the result of low productivity owing to traditional management rather than small numbers of animal. The trend is likely to continue unless animal production is expanded to areas not now utilised and production efficiency through improved breeding greatly increased (Olayide, 1972). Domestic animals are the main source of man's protein requirements. Proteins are also obtained from plants such as groundnuts, cowpea, pigeon pea and Soya beans, but plant protein is in some respects, inferior to animal protein. To live a healthy life, men must consume adequate amount of animal protein in addition to plant proteins which is normally obtained from vegetables. Apart from proteins, man needs foods rich in minerals (calcium, iron, phosphorous and vitamins) (Kayode, 2004).

Protein from livestock is needed for physical and intellectual development as well as for developing immunity against disease (Atinmo and Akinyele, 1983). Livestock production is also an instrument to socio-economic change to improved income and quality of life. In Nigeria, livestock provides about 36.5% of total protein intake (NISER/CDC, 1991) but this still falls short of the minimum animal protein requirement recommended by World Health Organization (WHO). The level of domestic livestock production still falls short of demand. For example, in 1997, demand for beef was

554,000 tonnes, while it was 6270,000 tonnes in 1998 but the domestic supplies were 376,000 and 391,000 tonnes in 1997 and 1998 respectively (NAERLS, 2004). Efforts being made to improve the level of domestic production have not yielded the desired result. Since the 1970s, cattle rearing for instance witnessed only slight modernisation with the establishment of cattle ranches in Gombe, Manchock, Mokwa, Obudu and Upper Ogun in Ogun State, while, sheep and goats are scattered throughout the different ecological zones in the country (Akinwumi and Ipki, 1989).

Most of rural Nigerians have low income. Consequently their standards of living are very low. The rural Nigerian diet is rarely balanced. Some of them are incapable of maximum production at work and play. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that 52 million people worldwide were under-nourished in 2000 – 2002 as a result of lack of protein (FAO, 2000-2006). The Food and Agriculture Organization also recorded that in 2000-2002, there were 19% under-nourished people in developing countries, including Nigeria (FAO, 2004). Like many developing countries of the world, Nigeria is faced with the problem of malnutrition particularly in terms of protein intake (Shaib, 1984; FAO, 2000; World Bank, 2005). As the cost of living in the country rises, the problem of malnutrition becomes even acute. It is apparent that the minimum of 65gm of protein per day recommended by World Health Organization (WHO) is yet to be attained in Nigeria (Shuaib, 1984; UNDP, 2006). Rather, the per capita consumption per day has been found to be about 6.5gm which is only 10% of the WHO recommended level (Adeniyi, 1998; UNDP, 2006). It has, however, been confirmed by both agriculturalists and nutritionists that developing the livestock production is the fastest means of bridging the protein deficiency gap presently prevailing in the country (FGN, 2003). Although there has been some increase in local production of livestock, the demands for livestock products still far exceed the required supply. Irrespective of the high demand, many farmers involved in livestock business to meet the increasing demand, hardly expand their stock (Ofia, 1992).

The major problem facing the livestock production in Nigeria today as Williams and Williams (1991) noted, is the inability to grow at a rate that is fast enough to cope with the human population. Sustainable livestock production anywhere in the world is faced with a myriad of problems but that of Nigeria as a tropical country is unique because of the special characteristic of a tropical region (Ogunbayo *et al.*; (1992). Most livestock farmers see livestock as a hobby rather than a business. Loosli *et al.* (1973) noted that among the factors which limited livestock production in the tropics are diseases and parasites, the heat and humidity of the climate, low genetic potentials of the indigenous animals, poor feeding and management, lack of training and experience of the local people in animal husbandry and

absence of the infrastructure necessary to supply the needed inputs for production and distribution.

The overriding importance of agriculture in the socio-economic development of Nigeria makes it imperative that greater emphasis must be placed in agricultural growth and development. Consequently, over the years government at all levels has placed priority on food security and sustainable agriculture through commitment in financing agriculture and putting up programmes aimed at improving agricultural production (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, 1999; FGN, 2006).

### **Problem Statement**

Nigeria, in spite of her great potentials, has been experiencing food shortage and serious protein deficiency for her teeming population since the sixties. This has caused a continuous rise in the country's import bill on food items over the years as a result of decreasing domestic production. Nigeria currently faces serious food and agricultural problems, manifesting in the declining per capita food production, growing food importation and accelerating ecological degradation (Iheanacho and Ogumbameru, 1997). This is in spite of the fact that the country has the human and natural resources to produce in sufficient quantity the kind of food needed. In a bid to solve the problem of food production in the country, the Federal Government of Nigeria has initiated different programmes over the years. For instance, on May 21st, 1976, the Obasanjo led Military Government launched the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) (FGN, 2004). The aim of this programme was to make the nation self-sufficient in the basic needs of the people. There was also the Green Revolution launched in 1979. Besides the Green Revolution of the Shehu Shagari administration, another practical step taken to address the growing poverty and malnutrition problems among Nigerians was the National Directorate of Employment of the Babangida's administration. The directorate had various programmes which included National Youth Empowerment and Vocational Skills Development, especially in livestock and poultry production (FGN, 2000).

There was also the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) established in 1986 (Uwalaka, 2001). Under this programme, people were mobilised and organised to participate actively in production activities which would ensure abundance of food in terms of protein, availability of housing, rural health and nutrition, manpower development, and rural industrialization. The Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) was launched in 1997 by the then wife of the Head of State, Mrs. Abacha as a welfare scheme. Most of these programmes have had to be abandoned at some point in time due to change in government and in certain cases, perceived ineffectiveness. (Sani, 2000)

All the above mentioned programmes and a number of other ones because of one reason or the other, failed to meet target of self-sufficiency in food production. As a result, and as a first step towards the Millennium Development goals target of reducing by half the number of hungry people by 2015, the Federal Government of Nigeria operated a pilot project of the NSPFS in 3 sites of Kano State (FGN, 2006). Based on the successful experience, a five year nationwide National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS) was launched in 2001 with the objective to increase and stabilise food production rapidly and sustainable through the wide spread dissemination of improved technologies and management practices in areas with high potential, and to create an economic and social environment conducive to food production as well as reaching some 30,000 farming families in each selected areas (FGN, 2006).

In meeting this objective, Government decided to implement the programme with its own human and financial resources estimated at US\$45million while Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provided technical and managerial support on demand to the Government (FGN, 2006). The components of this programme include activities aimed at improving household food security through water control, such as on farm irrigation, capacity building, and water management, crop intensification and diversification, soil fertility improvement, livestock improvement, aquaculture, and inland fishery, animal diseases and trans-boundary pest control.

The field activities have been launched in all thirty six States. A total of 109 sites were selected to be developed on the basis of one site per Senatorial District. The Priority areas were selected on the basis of existing secondary data relating to potential of bringing about rapid improvement and their representative of major agro-ecological zones. Subsequently, selection of sites in each state was based on Participatory Rural Appraisal and Needs Assessment conducted by States/local implementation teams. The scale of intervention involves 250-300 farm families in each site (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, 2001). The implementation is in phases. The livestock component under farm diversification was expected to provide beneficiaries with alternative for income generation and improve livelihood.

To achieve the above, a Need Assessment Survey was carried out in 2001 in all the thirty six States and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, and the results show that all the States required assistance in various livestock enterprises. Arondizogu in Ideato South Local Government Area was one of the sites selected and it was one of the sites the Programme was implemented in the first phase in 2001. The selection of the site was as a result of the Base Assessment done in the area. In a study on impact of Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPS), Idachaba (1989) and Okorie (1986) discovered that the programme has not recorded

huge success commensurate with the money spent in the implementation of the programme.

### Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to access the impact of NSPFS on the living standard of livestock farmers in the study area. The specific objectives were to:

- i. identify the socio-economic characteristics of livestock farmers in the study area;
- ii. determine the Farmers level of awareness and adoption of recommended NSPFS management practices in the study area
- iii. determine the impact of the programme on the livestock production and level of living of the farmers

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in six villages in Ideato South Local Government Area of Imo State. Imo State is in the South East Zone of Nigeria. The State is made up of twenty-seven Local Government Areas out of which Ideato South Local Government Area is chosen for the study. Ideato South is chosen because it is where the NSPFS programme site is located in the State. Ideato South Local Government Area has a total population of 200, 000 persons in 2012 projected from 2006 census figure. (NPC 2006). Imo State occupies a landmass of 5,530 square kilometres with a total population of 4,500, 987 million persons in 2012 projected from 2006 census figures (NPC, 2006). The State shares boundaries in the North with Anambra State, in the South and West with Rivers State and in the East with Abia State.

The State has two dominant seasons – rainy and dry seasons. Rain falls between April and October while the dry season starts from November to early March, though early rain starts March. The Igbos form the major ethnic group in the State, Christianity and traditional religions are beliefs by people in the State. The State falls within the tropical rain forests zone with dense forest in the south (FGN, 2004).

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of the State. This is basically due to the rich arable land suitable for the growth of a wide range of tropical crops. Crops grown in the State include yam, cassava, maize, oil palm and cocoa fall under the category of cash crops. The people also keep livestock like goats, pigs and poultry (NARP, 1998). Three villages where the NSPFS was implemented were purposively selected from the Local Government Area. Another set of three villages in which the NSPFS was not implemented were also selected in the same Local Government Area. The selected villages where the Programme was implemented were Ndizuogu, Ntueke, and Umueshi while Amanato, Dikenafai and Umuchima were the villages without participants. The total population of farmers from the six villages were 1,200 from which 60

participating farmers and 60 non-participating farmers were randomly selected making a total of 120 farmers. Primary and secondary data were used for this study. The primary data were obtained by means of a questionnaire instrument which was administered to the participating and non-participating farmers. The questions were asked on age, family size, sex, education, flock size, number of animals in stock, intensity of livestock production, number of times of extension contact, package adopted, attitude toward programme, problems faced by farmers, problems of implementation, and benefits derived from the programme. The primary data was collected from July to August, 2006. Oral interviews were also held with the NSPFS programme coordinator and other field workers in the area. The secondary data sources includes reports, articles from journals, proceedings, textbooks, calendar and data collected from the programme coordinator of NSPFS in the area. Analytical tools employed for this study were descriptive statistics involving the use of frequency distribution tables, percentages, means and ranges

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Socio-economic Characteristics Respondents

In order to analyze the impact of National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS) on livestock farmers, it is pertinent to describe the Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (farmers). This description would serve as a background to further the discussion in later chapter. However, it should be noted that the presentation covers all respondents (farmers) in some cases and at times restricted to only NSPFS Participants.

#### Sex

It was observed that 30 percent of the respondents were female while 70 percent were male. Only 14 women participated in the programme against 46 men. On the other hand, 22 out of 36 females were recorded as non-participants against 38 non-participants men. The low participation on the part of the women may be attributed to culture, values and norms which may hinder women from fully participating in the programme. This is in line with the study by Oni and Yusuf (1999) in which they found that women were seriously under-represented in livestock production as a result of social and cultural values. Also a study on women involvement in livestock production by Ifegu (1990) showed that women were engaged in other businesses like buying and selling, sewing and basket making.

#### Age

Age is an important variable in this study that cannot be overlooked. The study revealed the comparison of age

between the participant and non-participant farmers. The mean age of participant and non participant farmers within the age bracket 30-39 was 5%, while the age above 60 was 53%. A recent study on socio-economic characteristics of pig farmers in Oyo-State by Adesehinwa (2004) state that ages of farmers involved in pig were between 51 and 60 years as there were none in age group 21-30 years. The farmers at Ideato (study area) concentrated majorly on poultry, goats, and piggery. The contributing factor could be an environment where farmers live

As earlier stated, the reason for high percentage of old people over young farmers could be attributed to the nature of livestock production, Livestock production requires less attention especially when the animals are matured, risk involvement may not be as high as other business ventures. It could be practiced on a small scale with small capital and the operation could not be too technical and could be done near the neighbourhood. It could be also that the youths were engaged in rural-urban migration in search of white-collar jobs or may be basically engaged in food production only.

### Educational level

Education was generally considered an important variable that could enhance farmer's acceptance of new technologies. The study showed that approximately 5% of the farmers attended adult education, while 46.7% had primary education. For those who were formally educated, 31.7% had secondary education, while 6.7% had tertiary education. The low percentage of those with formal education may be due to limitation of educational facilities in the villages which to a great extent could adversely influence adoption of innovations in livestock production.

### Sources of income

The study revealed the sources of income of the farmers in the study area. The predominant source of income of

farmers was personal savings which was common to both participants and non-participants. Approximately 82 percent of the farmers sourced their income from personal savings. Cooperatives and banks recorded low percentages with 0.8 and 10 percent respectively. This could imply that since the farmers in the study area are low income earners and operate in a small scale, they may not be capable of meeting the demands of the banks such as provision of collateral. It could also be that the interest rate was high.

### Family size

The family size in Africa was often used to determine how rich a man is. The study showed that both participating and non-participating farmers fall between the family sizes of 5-9 recording the total percentage of 58. In a study of socio-economic characteristics of ruminant farmers by Oni and Yusef (1999), it was discovered that family size is a very important socio-economic characteristic since in most cases family labour constitutes the main source of farm labour to rural dwellers. Oni found an average of farm family to be seven individuals. This could justify the old belief that traditional Africans value large family, regarding it as a mark of honour to the family. It may also mean that the farmers needed the large family for labour supply.

### Market strategy

The study revealed the type of marketing strategy individual farmers adopted to sell their animals. Approximately 87 percent of the farmers disposed their livestock through retail method. The greater number of respondents, who use retail, comes from the non-participating farmers. This may be because they are not aware of the new marketing strategy introduced in the programme. Only 27 percent of the participating farmers claimed to have used wholesale method. This could be that those farmers were knowledgeable about the new marketing strategy as a result of the programme.

**Table 1: Percentage distribution of respondents by personal characteristics**

Age	Participants		Non-participants		Total	%
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
30-39	2	3.3	3	5.0	5	4.2
40-49	7	11.7	10	16.7	17	14.2
50-59	25	41.7	20	33.3	45	37.5
60 +	26	43.3	27	45.0	53	44.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational level</b>						
Adult literacy	2	3.3	4	6.7	6	5.0
Primary	21	35.0	35	58.3	56	46.7
Secondary	26	43.3	12	20.0	38	31.7
Tertiary	11	18.3	9	15.0	20	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 continued

<b>Income</b>						
Personal savings	43	71.7	55	91.7	98	81.7
Friends	7	11.7	1	1.7	8	6.7
Bank	1	1.7	0	0.0	1	0.8
Cooperative	8	13.3	4	6.7	12	10.0
Others	1	1.7	0	0.0	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Family size</b>						
1-4	10	16.7	9	15.0	19	15.8
5-9	34	56.7	35	58.3	69	57.5
10+	16	26.7	16	26.7	32	26.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marketing Methods</b>						
Wholesale	13	21.7	1	1.7	14	11.7
Retail	45	75.0	59	98.3	104	86.7
Contract	1	1.7	0	0.0	1	0.8
Others	1	1.7	0	0.0	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

### Impact Assessment of National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS)

The primary objective of this study was to assess the Impact of NSPFS to livestock farmers in Ideato town of Imo State.

#### Level of participants' awareness of the recommended practices

The participating farmers were interviewed to ascertain their level of awareness of NSPFS management practices before the programme was introduced, 80% of them said that they were not aware of any of the NSPFS management Practices, while 20% agreed that they were aware of few of the practices. It could be that the 20% who admitted having knowledge of the few practices had participated in a similar programme in the past or that they got the knowledge from their friends outside the study area.

#### Level of adoption

The programme introduced eight (8) management practices which were adopted by the livestock farmers who participated in the programme. The study revealed all the technologies disseminated by the NSPFS to livestock participant farmers out of which five (5) were adopted by all farmers. These were: use of improved breeds, provision of good clean drinking water, proper and regular sanitation, provision of shelter for night roosting, and timely removal of dead animals. While 96.7% isolated sick animals from the rest, 83.3% and 93.3% provided the animals with the right quantity of feeds and vaccinated accordingly. While 16.7% of the non-participants said they use improved breed and naturally provide their animals with good drinking water,

vaccinate, isolate sick animals and remove dead animals as quickly as possible, provide shelter which common sense demands. The high adoption levels for these management practices could be associated with farmers awareness that these practices increase production and minimize loses.

#### Level of livestock production

As part of impact assessment of NSPFS, the level of livestock production was examined. The result revealed that more animals were kept by participant farmers while non-participant famers kept fewer animals as indicated in the table. This may be as a result of not participating in the programme or there was no knowledge of new improved method of production. The participating farmers had a total of 9,775 animals of poultry, goats, sheep, rabbit, fish, and pigs, while the non-participating farmers had a total of 1,380 of above mentioned animals. The above analysis was considered relevant so as to determine if there was increase in the livestock of both farmers as a result of types of system used and if the programme packages of modern technologies have impacted on the production level.

The study showed that 92 percent of the participants used modern method of production. This also proved that greater number of participants adopted the new method of livestock production introduced in the programme, while 83 percent of non-participants still used the traditional methods of production. This could be attributed to lack of awareness or that the non-participant livestock farmers did not know why they were recording low turn-out of production. This is in line with Upton (2004) who said that intensity of livestock production depends upon the stocking rate, sources of system and animal species and yield per head. He further said that growth in livestock products and farm

household income can be achieved by increasing stock rate, changing to more intensive production systems or improving reproduction rate.

### Level of Living of the Respondents

The study showed that 63.3 percent of participating farmers had radio recorders as against 43.3 percent of non-participating farmers. The study also showed that the participating farmers were able to acquire comfortable houses and cars. This may be as a result of increase in their level of production due to their participation in the programme. The non-participating

farmers as the result showed could not afford comfortable house or a car. It could also mean that they were still under the traditional method of production thereby recording low productivity and income.

There is tendency that with the increase in the purchasing power of the participating farmers as a result of increase in production level, their nutritional status had increased. Most of the participants (70%) said that their mode of feeding had changed. They can now increase their protein, vitamin and mineral intakes. It was concluded therefore, that the programme has had a positive impact on the level of living of the participant farmers.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to the Impact of NSPFS Programme on level of adoption, Animal population and Standard of living**

Practices	Participants (N =60)		Non-participants (N =60)	
	No. Adopted	% Adopted	No. Adopted	% Adopted
Use of improved breeds	60	100	10	16.7
Improved Supplementary feeds/feeding	50	83.3	4	6.7
Improved good drinking water	60	100	18	30.0
Improved vaccination	56	93.3	8	13.3
Proper sanitary measures	60	100	7	11.7
Shelter for night roosting	60	100	13	21.7
Isolation of sick animals	58	96.7	7	11.7
Timely removal of dead animals	60	100	10	16.7

  

Animal	Participants		Non-participants			
	Number	Frequency	%	Number	Frequency	%
Poultry	5,000	20	33.3	1,000	16	26.7
Goat	525	16	26.7	1,000	10	16.7
Sheep	350	10	16.7	80	20	33.3
Rabbit	150	4	6.7	0	0	0.0
Fishery	250	8	13.3	0	0	0.0
Piggery	3,500	2	3.3	200	14	23.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,775</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1380</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

  

Level of living	Participants		Non-participants	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Properties acquired and owned				
Radio recorder	38	63.3	26	43.3
Bicycle	8	13.3	30	50.0
Television	5	8.3	2	3.3
Motor-cycle	2	3.3	0	0.0
Car	2	3.3	0	0.0
Set of chairs	5	8.3	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

### CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest that the NSPFS Programme has some positive impact on the participant farmers. Most of them adopted the NSPFS management practices. The high adoption contributed to high income, increase in livestock, and better standard of living as against the non-participant farmers. The programme

which has diverse activities were been influenced by many factors such as age, sex, family size, education, credit etc. The farmers were males and within the age bracket of 50 to 61. The participant farmers and the programme implementers encountered many problems, some of which were addressed. The participating livestock farmers had access to information on innovation from Extension officers and this affected their

production performance positively. Finance, Access to Extension services, Feeds, disease, harsh weather and government policy were identified as major problems encountered by the livestock farmers. It was suggested that the programme should be spread to all the 774 local government of the Country.

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