



Sahel Capital (Mauritius) Limited

Sahel Capital Partners &amp; Advisory Limited

*Creating Value, Building Businesses, Transforming Communities...*



## The Role of Women in Nigerian Agriculture

Over the years, women have established more defined roles in agriculture. In Nigeria, women are involved in agricultural production, processing and utilization. A woman's role in the agricultural sector is significantly affected by socio-economic factors such as income, education and access to infrastructure. In order for agriculture to advance in Nigeria, gender specific policies and services tailored to women in the value chains should be developed.

## The Engagement of Women in Agricultural Production

According to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development, women account for 75 percent of the farming population in Nigeria, working as farm managers, and suppliers of labour. Though women constitute a large portion of the farming population, women's possibilities in agriculture are hindered by formal and traditional rules. Generally, the extent of gender involvement in agricultural production varies across ethnic groups in Nigeria. Nigerian women farmers work alongside with their male counterparts with some clear distinctions in activities between them. In most cases, the men exe-

cute the tedious tasks such as land clearing and felling of trees, gathering and burning of bush, and making ridges, while the women engage in planting. In addition, women also participate in weeding, harvesting, on-farm processing, and selling of farm produce. Generally, women are rarely connected with agricultural export crops such as cocoa, rubber, cotton, but rather involved with the production of food crops such as maize, cowpea, melon, pepper, cassava, and vegetables. In some cases, women participate in small scale animal production including small ruminants, poultry and aquaculture.

## Women involvement across value chains

### Aggregators & Distributors

Aggregators and distributors are the first point of contact after food products are harvested. Bulk buying of food products is highly capital intensive, therefore women are restricted from this process due to low access to funding.

### Logistics

The transportation of agriculture products in Nigeria is exclusively male dominated. Women are involved in the sale of packaging materials used for most crops and processed foods such as maize, garri and yam flakes.

### Processing

The processing landscape in agricultural value chains is mostly at the informal and small-scale level. At this stage, women handle the bulk of the processing. In contrast, at the formal processing level, established processing companies are owned by men.

## Women involvement across the value chain

**Market Access & Trading:** Men play the part of the middle men, there are no (middle women) across the value chain. Women are less involved in wholesale but rather are more active on the retail side and very visible in open air markets. Women find it harder to enter into the market due to limited education, funds and low social status.



Source: Sahel Capital Field Research, 2014

## Challenges women face in the agricultural sector

The key constraints affecting women's ability to improve efficiency in agriculture include:

**Access to financing:** In Nigeria, women farmers receive less than 10% of the credit offered to small-scale farmers. Women farmers are deterred from applying for formal loans because of the complexity of the administrative process, unsuitable loan sizes and credit rates. Typically, women are not found in farmer clusters. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, in 2007, some 20,098 men accessed loans compared to 8,550 women.

**Access to information and training:** Women participation in farmer training is low due to the lack of awareness, society barriers, and transportation facilities. Cultural norms restrict women from accessing ICT.

**Access to inputs :** Due to poor financing, women are unable to access agricultural inputs such as improved seedlings and fertilizer. Women farmers have indicated that they are unable to use inputs due to high cost in the open market.

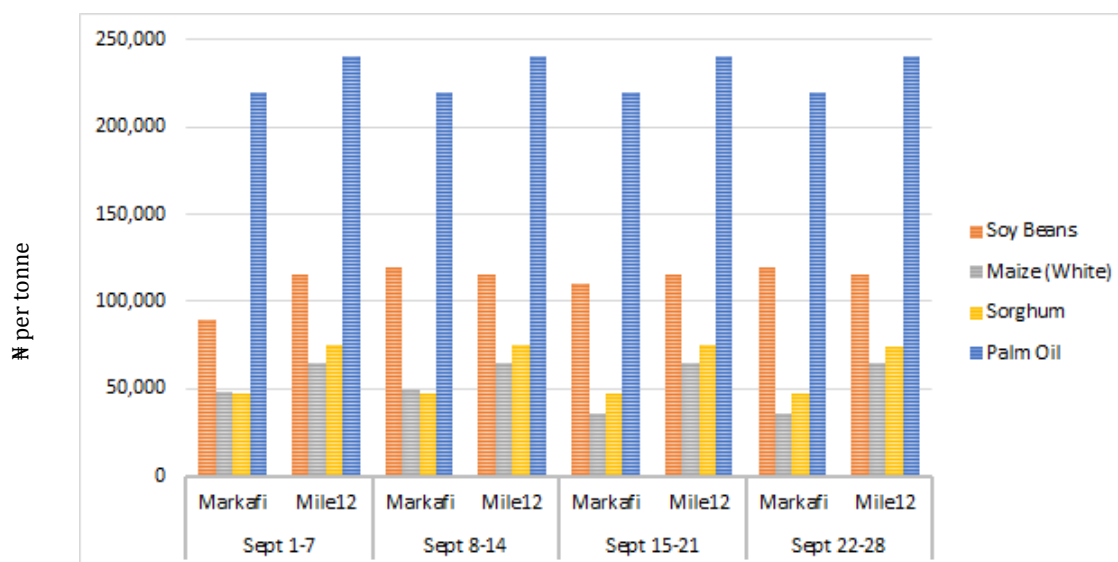
**Access to land:** Women in Nigeria generally own less land due to traditional authority. According to the 2012 'Gender in Nigeria' report by the British Council, women own 4% of land in the North-East, and just over 10% in the South-East and South-South, less than 10% of Nigerian women own land. Thus, the lack of land ownership significantly reduces the chances for women's access to financing because of the need for collateral.

## Initiative Supporting Women in Agriculture

### Community-based Agriculture and Rural Development (CBARDP)

CBARDP was launched in 2003 with the main objective of improving the living conditions of the rural poor with an emphasis on women. The program is jointly funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Federal Government of Nigeria with a focus on eight participating states namely Borno, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Yobe and Zamfara. Through various outreach programs, women farmers have been empowered through improved farming practices that have ultimately increased yields and family income. This program has created vast employment opportunities for rural women and small scale entrepreneurs. A second phase of the CBARDP program was recently launched to promote dry season crop production and small-scale agro processing enterprises.

## Industry Highlights: Commodity Price Update



Source: Novus Agro Commodity Index, 2014

## Sahel Speaks...

### World Economic Forum (WEF) & Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

On September 24, Sahel Capital participated in a panel session on 'Blended Finance: Unlocking the Investment Opportunity in Emerging and Frontier Markets,' in New York. The panel session organized by WEF and OECD featured private equity funds from across the globe.

### Euromoney Conference 2014

Sahel Capital participated in a panel discussion titled, 'Agriculture: Feeding and Funding Nigeria's Green Revolution' during the Euromoney- Nigeria Banking and Capital Markets Conference. The conference held on September 30 at Eko Hotel & Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

### The Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania Conference

Sahel Capital will be speaking on a panel titled 'Enfranchising Women and Girls' in Philadelphia on October 16. The theme of the conference is 'Business, Politics, and Culture in a Changing South-South environment.'

### The World Food Prize: The Borlaug Dialogue International Symposium

Sahel Capital will participate in a symposium on from October 15-18 in Iowa, United States. The symposium will focus innovative means to uplifting small-holder farmers and meeting the increasing demand for nutritious foods.

### The German Marshall Fund & the OCP Policy Center: The Atlantic Dialogues

Sahel Capital will be speaking in a dialogue titled, 'Gender and Equity in the Atlantic Basin' from October 24-26 in Marrakesh, Morocco. The dialogue will focus on highlighting political, economic, and social development in the wider Atlantic region.

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