

Title of Article: Evaluating the Crisis of Rural Development Planning in Nigeria

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Abstract: The case has often been made for the transformation of Nigeria's agricultural sector from a predominantly subsistence system to a market-oriented agribusiness sector. This invariably requires structural and technological changes, as well as institutional and policy support. Agriculture cannot realistically compete with other sectors of the economy as farmers are thrown to market forces. Agriculture has to be supported because of its unique position and nature. In addition, unbalanced economic development and unequal access to economic opportunities are the results of policies that have allocated to the urban areas a lion's share of all government's developmental efforts to the detriment of the rural areas. The lack of adequate infrastructure in the rural areas has been compounded by the ineffectiveness of the different development plans in Nigeria towards addressing agricultural and rural development planning. There is therefore need for a critical appraisal of previous development policies and programmes that have heightened rural-urban differentials with far reaching consequences for agricultural development in Nigeria. This paper therefore explores the potentials in the agricultural sector as it holds great promise if properly harnessed. It examines what the challenges have been and how best to move forward on the path to a viable and sustainable rural transformation in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Agribusiness sector, agricultural sector, development policies, economic development, infrastructure, rural areas, rural development, rural farmers