

PrOpCom

Making Nigerian Agricultural Markets Work for the Poor

PrOpCom “Goes to Abuja”

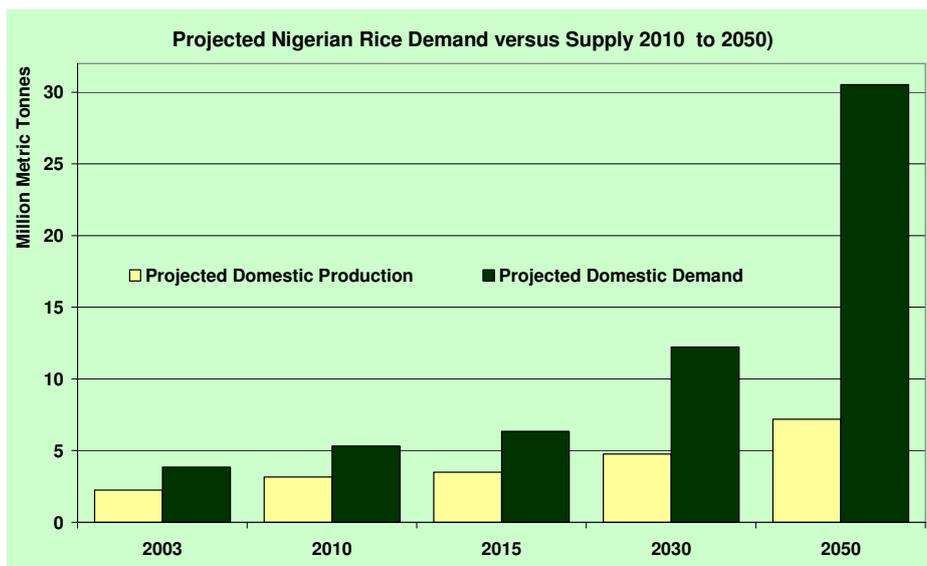
The House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture is responsible for steering the nation’s policy on agriculture and ensuring the interest of the country when it comes to agricultural trade and investment. More specifically, the committee is charged with the responsibility of making laws that will boost agricultural production, processing, marketing and stabilisation of prices of agricultural products and commodities.



The Chairman of the committee on agriculture, Honourable Makonjuola, approached PrOpCom to help professionalise the committee by building their capacity and bringing topics and partners into their field of influence. Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) partnered with PrOpCom to research and provide evidence that can help inform this committee objectively on issues relating to agricultural production and market stabilisation.

On Wednesday the 3rd of March 2010, the NESG and PrOpCom were invited to present some of this research to the House Committee at the National Assembly building in Abuja. The presentation on the future demand and supply of rice in the Nigerian market investigated the current gap between rice demand and rice supply and projected into the future – as far as 2050, how this gap would widen.

Research Findings



The findings of this research were that the gap which currently stands at 40% (i.e. 60% of Nigerian rice demand is presently met by domestic production, while the rest is imported), will widen to 61% by 2030 and 76% by 2050 as population increases, urbanisation accelerates and rising incomes fuel consumers’ taste for rice, replacing traditional staples such as yam, and cassava. The

recommendations of PrOpCom and the NESG were therefore that government policy needs to be more supportive of local production and processing by facilitating the provision of improved seed varieties with higher yields, irrigation of rice farm land to enable 2 or more crop cycles per year and also the sanctioning of errant states when it comes to implementing or adhering to such favourable policies.

Honourable Makonjuola was fully appreciative of this information and technical support, point out that the relative “inexperience” of some of the law makers (many of the members are representing their constituencies for the first time) in this “fledgling democracy”, which is barely ten years old, would be addressed by such information and support.

Further Support

While seeking to influence such policy at the national level, PrOpCom continues to work with state governments to steer their policy making as well as enhancing the capacity of private sector actors along the value chain to improve and demand improvements in the production and processing of rice.

NESG’s presentation to the house committee on agriculture is the first of many similar activities that we hope will inform and enlighten the members and effectively influence policy making. PrOpCom is also working with other bodies to establish a Think-Tank that will serve as a lobbying group for the House of Assembly and a ready source of supporting evidence. Field trips to key agricultural areas and technical retreats are a likely tool to be used by the Think-Tank in advising policy makers.



Hon. Makonjuola, Chairman House Committee on Agriculture, reacting to the presentation

Expected Impact

If the policy makers are positively influenced by the information received, to the extent that government’s policy towards supporting improved rice production and processing, the immediate result will be to close the gap between the levels of supply and demand for rice. The in turn will imply significant savings on foreign exchange through reduced importation, income generation for rice producers and processors in-country, including poor farmers; employment generation along the value chain for rice and improved well-being for consumers with increased access to and choice of rice products for consumption.

The Honourable Members in attendance were:

Hon. Members	Position	Representing (State & District)
Gbenga Makonjuola	Chairman (Ag. Cttee)	Kwara State: Ekiti/Isin/Irepodun/Oke-Ero
Ike Chinwo	Deputy Chairman (Ag. Cttee)	Rivers State: Obio/Apor
Haliru Garba Hamma	Member (Ag. Cttee)	Sokoto State: Illela//Gwadabawa
Segun Osibote	Member (Ag. Cttee)	Ogun State: Ijebu North/Ijebu East/Ogun Waterside
Akindahunsi Titilayo	Member (Ag. Cttee)	Ekiti State: Ekiti South West/Ikere/Orun/Ise
Chris Eta	Member (Ag. Cttee)	Cross River State: Boki/Ikom
Ibrahim Yusha’u Kanya	Member (Rural Dev. Cttee)	Jigawa State: Babura/Garki

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