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**The Sidi Osho Foundation**  
**News Letter Series Seven**  
**Benson Idahosa University 12<sup>th</sup>**  
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### **Message from the President of Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF)**

As universally recognized, beyond income measurements, lack of access to education, nutritious food, health care, employment, water and housing are all indicators of crushing poverty. Though Africa's impressive economic performance over the past decade has rekindled hopes for the continent's future, in Nigeria however, despite the relative impressive economic growth over the last 10 years, unemployment and the incidence of poverty has worsened since 2004. The figures recently released by the National Bureau of Statistics suggest that the incidence of poverty in Nigeria worsened between 2004 and 2010.

The report indicates that the number of Nigerians living below poverty line of \$1 a day, rose from 68.7m to 112.5m (63.7% rise in poverty incidence) during the period while the population rose from 139.2m to 158.6m (13.9% rise in population) over the same period. However, during the same period, Nigeria's economy grew strongly at an average annual growth rate in excess of 6.6%, making the country the 5th fastest growing economy in the World in 2010 at 7.87% real growth rate. The above represents the paradox of growth in the face of poverty and inequality.

The challenge for Nigeria and by extension, Africa, is to ensure that this paper growth translates into effective poverty reduction, job creation wealth making and narrowing inequalities. Today for instance, African youths represent a disproportionate 60 percent of the continent's unemployed, and of these 40 million youths, 22 million, many of them women, have given up on finding a job. In countries such as Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ghana, Rwanda and Zambia, poverty is at least three times higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

There is no doubt that the perennial chaos and human rights abuses of the gravest kinds which plagued the world in the last five decades have left indelible marks on humanity. In the African region, in addition to the debilitating effect of internecine wars and human rights abuses, the people of Africa continue to suffer incalculable harm from the prolonged effects of hunger, poverty and disease. The AIDS/HIV pandemic and other communicable diseases have ravaged the continent while the nurturing of ethnicism has snowballed into genocide and large scale atrocities.

African governments, leaders and concerned stakeholders continue their search for an environment conducive for freedom, equality, justice and dignity of the people of Africa. Inspired by the great achievements and legacy of the iconic Mandela on the African continent, SOF was established to impact the lives of the underprivileged and underserved, as well contribute immensely to the efforts made by concerned stakeholders over the years.

As we stand at the threshold of a new century, it is not only timely but also expedient to conscientiously begin to find lasting solutions and establish inclusive development initiatives that will advance humanity. SOF, in collaboration with other stakeholders will provide a world of equal opportunities for families, women, and youth through our development programs on education, food security, health, poverty reduction, women and youth empowerment.

It is my fervent hope that with your cooperation and support, SOF will attain its set objectives to improve and impact the lives of Africans and Africa at large.

## **Sidi Osho Foundation**

### **Vision, Mission and Projects**

#### **Introduction**

Poverty has been shown to be on the increase in Nigeria and other African Countries where the population has been estimated to be living below poverty level is over 70%. All the Sectors of the Economy are affected by this poverty level.

**Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF)** is a private, voluntary, non-profit, non-faith based, non-governmental Organization based in Lagos, Nigeria.

SOF was conceived in 2012 by **Prof Sidi Osho** who is President.



### Description of SOF Logo

Interlocking Human Beings which means unity, performance, cross organizational relationships, clear focus and the show of power. Apart from promotion of friendship, connecting and together building communities, nations and ensuring sustainability. The Color **Red** is the color of action, inner power and strength, optimism, connectivity and social activity. While the **Yellow** color is the brightness of the Sun and creativity, it stimulates the mind and encourages good business acumen. The Logo denotes good health and growth and vitality, a healing color with sense of generosity and compassion and the cultivation of trust, respect and integrity.

**Vision:** To provide a world of equal opportunities for families, women, communities and youth through empowerment for the realization and maximization of their potentials towards a better future.

**Mission:** To promote and contribute to the growth of human development and alleviate poverty in Africa through these development initiatives.

### SOF Projects

#### 1. EDUCATION

- To provide leadership, skills and enterprise training to Nigerian youths in all higher institution.
- To provide access to basic and higher education for women, children and youths.
- To provide access to higher education through free-tuition initiatives and scholarships.
- To promote education and educational initiatives at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- To promote and provide Universal Basic Education through initiatives and policies.
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#### 2. ENTREPRENEURIAL

- To provide entrepreneurial and vocational skills to women, young graduates and youths
- To provide financial and technical support for small and medium-scale projects for graduates and youths
- To assist families and communities in identifying economically viable enterprises for income generation, in order to provide technical and financial support for their implementation.

#### 3. FOOD SECURITY

- To provide sustainable agricultural production systems, food security and qualitative nutrition initiatives
- To promote good nutrition, agricultural practices and nutritional status.

#### 4. HEALTH

- To provide and promote quality and safe health care delivery
- To reduce maternal and infant mortality and morbidity

#### 5. LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

To provide leadership skills for youths, as well as mentor youths as responsible and future leaders for the African continent

## 6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- To develop a global partnerships for sustainable development

## 7. GENDER AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- To empower children, women, youths, families & communities in developing countries for a better future
- To empower families and communities towards sustainable development
- To eradicate negative social and cultural factors affecting women and children
- To stabilize and enhance family structures and relationships, in order to promote discipline, leadership, and support projects such as, "Girl-Child Scheme", "the Boy Drop out" and "The Children in Distress."

### SOF Core Values

**Sidi Osho Foundation (SOF)**, is a non-profit, non-faith-based and non-governmental organization, that is geared towards encouraging public mindedness, accountability, truthfulness and transparency in the society. SOF aims to empower and transform lives in different sectors and to ensure that respect for human rights is adequately attained. We aim to promote and contribute to the growth of human development; alleviate poverty in Africa and impact lives.

### REPORT AS GUEST LECTURER FOR BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY'S 12<sup>TH</sup> COVOCAATION LECTURE ON 15<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2016: "REVIVING AGRICULTURE: A PANACEA TO FALLING OIL PRICES IN NIGERIA"

The Topic is very apt and timely, given the major challenges Nigeria is facing today that threatens to erode the gains that we have achieved as a country in the past decade.

#### **Promotion of Commercial Agriculture - Establishment of Integrated Farms**

The strategy will facilitate a transition from subsistence farming to small, medium and large scale commercial agriculture by helping reduce market failures that continue to limit smallholder participation in the market. Land Use Act needs to be modified for any meaningful commercial agriculture programme to succeed. Furthermore capital injection becomes an strategy for this to be put in place.

#### **The Supply and Appropriate Pricing of Agricultural Inputs -**

Irrigation; Seeds/Cuttings, Fertilizers; Livestock Breeds of Livestock/Fish are quite important factors. Their pricing should be in line with the needs of the farming sector and to a reasonable subsidy level. It must be stated that there is no country where agriculture is not subsidised and hence that of Nigeria should not be different.

**Role of the Private Sector** - The government must create the enabling the private sector to invest in the Agricultural sector. It is on record that the proportion of agricultural production in Nigeria from the private sector is over 95% with the three tiers of governments providing the

remaining. But this private sector needs to be further encouraged either through reduction in tax, use of some economic instruments, linkages and improved transportation systems. At the moment power is a major obstacle to agricultural development. All efforts must be put in place to solve this hydra headed problem if progress is to be achieved in agriculture.

#### **Research dissemination and Training in Agriculture with emphasis entrepreneurs**

**Research:** In Nigeria today, though some level of research is being done in agriculture, the impact has not really been felt. The outputs of research have not gotten to the farmers due poor linkages with the farm sector. The World Bank assisted agricultural development programme died a natural death immediately the World Bank completed its term in 1995. Today the ADP is a shadow of itself. A rejuvenation of this programme with proper sustainable modalities in place is required. Furthermore adequate funding of research in agriculture on various enterprises is very expedient. If the USA could spend a colossal sum of \$1.0 billion on research in grains alone, in one year, it behoves Nigeria to spend near that on agriculture generally given over 43% of active labour force in this sector.

**Training- Informal** training in this sector is very essential. Government and the organised private sector should institute programmes that will empower the existing farmers on how to improve their current levels of production and productivity. The extension system should adopt community development approach to hasten the adoption of this strategy.

#### **Food Security**

In order to reduce unemployment **SOF** has signed an MOU with **International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)** to promote Youth Agri-preneures. Our goal is to establish one integrated farm in states in Nigeria and train youths, women's group, farmers, etc on agriculture and later empower them with finance to set up their own farms (Osho, 2015).

IITA and SOF are activity involved in training of Young Graduates in Agric Enterprise business establishment. Over 1000 graduates are beneficiaries of this program.

**Formal Training-** This the normal training programme in Universities and Polytechnics. This training should be more practical with the cration of IGR opportunity for the student of agriculture as a work and initiative. An integrated Farming system must be crated in schools of Agriculture. Some other forms of tertiary institutions also take in students of Agriculture. There are three Universities of Agriculture in Nigeria today namely, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta; Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike in Abia State and the University of Agriculture, makurdi, Benue State. Apart from these Universities, there are over 40 Universities having faculties of Agriculture. Agricultural enterprises is the in thing worldwide and this should be combined with environmental issues. Furthermore, entrepreneurship and skills acquisition should find a place in the synopsis of every Faculty of Agriculture.

**Linkages-** International linkages must be put in place so as rub minds with best types of institutions. Many of these are yearning for these linkages with willing Universities in the developing nations. This is the time to do this. It is a task that must be accomplished by this great University.

**Women in Agriculture** - Around the world, female farmers play an important role in agricultural productivity. The agricultural system in Sub-Saharan Africa that is predominantly small-scale farming system with more than 50% of the agricultural activity performed by women, producing about 60-70% of the food in this region. However, women in agriculture face many more challenges than their male counterparts, including barriers related to land ownership, access to technology and machinery, training, decision-making powers, and participation in value chains. As a result, female farmers are unable to reach their full potential. Removing the barriers faced by women farmers would boost agricultural output, strengthen women's abilities to feed themselves and their families, improve their economic situation, and further promote greater global food security.

**Women's access to credit** is another factor that reduces a woman's efficiency and productivity on her plot is lack of access to credit. Credit is important for securing fertilizer, improved varieties of seeds and other technology on farms. Most women farmers are not able to obtain credit without a male guarantor or without husband's assistance. The disparity between who farms and who receives inputs, credit etc. is due to institutional barriers and social constraints.

#### **African Development Bank (AfDB) is Empowering Women in Agriculture**

The African Development Bank is involved in initiatives to empower women economically in agriculture. The Bank has further identified areas of partnerships in the region to achieve this important target.

in economically. Their strategy is to:

- Empower women in the continent is not only a moral imperative, it is critical for the broader economic success of the continent.
- Promote the participation and productivity of women should have a direct impact on improved food security through increased productivity, improved quality of life of the rural communities supported by them through higher household incomes, and increasingly sustainable livelihoods through broader participation and access to regional and global value chains.
- Promoting agribusiness entrepreneurs along the value chain, creating products to target niche markets and expanding cooperative programmes.
- These themes will be targeted at four important crops: **cocoa, coffee, cotton and cassava**. These crops have been chosen because of their importance for food security or in being a primary generator of export revenues for African countries.
- Collectively, these four sub-sectors account for USD 43 billion in production value\* and USD 12 billion in export value\*\* across the focus countries.
- The Countries are **Côte d'Ivoire** which is the largest cocoa producer, generating one-third of the world's cocoa. **Ethiopia** is Africa's largest coffee producer and exported USD 771 million in **coffee** in 2013.

**Burkina Faso** is Africa's largest cotton producer. **Nigeria** is the largest African (and global) cassava producer.

### The Value Chain Approach

The agricultural value chain offers an important lens for framing the interactions of the various players and sectors that intersect with agriculture. **These players include the producers, processors, traders and consumers.**

- **The benefit of the value chain approach** is that it helps institutions drive integration between the different sectoral players mentioned. In an increasingly competitive market, small farmers and upstream enterprises become co-dependent and success depends on better linkages between these operators in the value chain of each crop type.
- Improvements to production yield and processing, as well as increasing the value of products, will require improved coherency and flows (of produce, services and information) within these value chains. The outcome will be better environments for farmers and small enterprises within which to operate their businesses.
- **Impact of the value Chain** - will be achieved among the many small-scale farmers, processors and upstream enterprises. African countries are major producers of a number of commodities but are rarely involved in the higher value-add downstream activities, reducing the income earned as well as the range of opportunities for export.
- **Value addition** remains one of the largest opportunities for Africa's agricultural sector. In addition to the increased revenue that could be earned by countries, local value addition will allow for local facilities to be improved which will prevent produce losses. Approximately 30-40 percent of agricultural produce is lost as a result of inefficient post-harvest storage facilities and processing methods.
- **Agricultural value addition** as a percentage of GDP in sub-Saharan Africa was 11.2 percent in 2010/13. Taking a systematic approach to developing agricultural value chains provides an opportunity to reduce agribusiness costs while generating employment in the wider economy.
- **To increase integration into global value chains and improve the export imbalance**, African countries need to increase their yields, build world-class industrial processing facilities and improve their links to global markets for processed products.
- **To increase yields**, the crop yields will need to increase through the expansion of relevant technologies (e.g., machinery) and access to inputs (e.g., fertiliser, pesticides and technical know-how).
- **Building world-class processing facilities** will require significant investment in basic operating inputs such as capital, electricity and water, as well as a supply chain of raw materials and operational inputs (e.g., spare parts) to maintain and sustain processing facilities.
- **Expanding links to global markets** will require high-quality produce, good government institutions and favourable regulatory frameworks to ensure timely distribution.
- **There will be integration into regional and global value chains** as well as opportunities for higher value capture.



















































































