

**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: A STUDY OF THE AGRO PROCESSING,
PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT AND LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT
SUPPORT (APPEALS) PROJECT 2017 - 2023**

BY

**EZEH KENECHUKWU EMMANUEL
GOU/U22/IRE/636**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES, GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY UGWUOMU-NIKE, ENUGU STATE,**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

SUPERVISOR: MRS. IFEDI FRANCISCA OBIAGELI

JUNE, 2026.

DECLARATION

I, EZEH KENECHUKWU EMMANUEL, hereby state that this dissertation entitled "International Financial Institutions and Infrastructure Development in Africa: A Case Study of the Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (Appeals) Project" is my independent piece of research and investigation. I also state that this dissertation has never before been submitted, whether in total or in part, to any other institution for the award of any degree, diploma or certificate. All sources referred to during the preparation of this dissertation have been cited and appropriately referenced. Wherever the work of any other person has been quoted, proper citations have been made.

I am fully aware that any form of academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism, falsification of data and/or misrepresentation of sources, among others, is an offence against academic integrity.

Ezeh Kenekchukwu Emmanuel
GOU/U22/IRE/636

Date

APPROVAL

This project has undergone scrutiny and been approved by the Department of Internal Relations, Godfrey Okoye University Ugwuomu-Nike, Enugu State for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in International Relations.

Mrs. Ifedi Francisca Obiageli
Supervisor

Date

Prof. Sam Ugwuzor

Date

Head of Department

Prof. John Odoh

Dean, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Date

External Examiner

Date

DEDICATION

This project is in dedication to God almighty, for His mercy and wisdom through this entire process, and to my dear parents/family who have sacrificed so much out of their deep love and encouragement. □

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise and honours should be first accorded to Almighty God for His mercy, wisdom, and power which sustained me during this study.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my supervisor, Mrs. Ifedi, for the immense support she has given me during the process of writing this dissertation through her intellectual rigor and dedication to excellence.

I would like to thank equally Prof. Sam Ugwuzor who is the Head of Department, the academic lecturers Dr. N. C Mbaeze, Dr Ezechi Kingsley, Mr Onyeshi Anthony, Mr Willy Okonkwo, Mr Ifedi Francisca Obiageli and all the administrative staff of the Department of Political Science and International Relations for providing me with an enabling academic atmosphere. I would like to express my thanks equally to the Dean of the Faculty of Assoc. Prof. John Odoh.

I would like to thank my colleagues and fellow students who made the research experience enjoyable through intellectual discussions, friendship, and motivation. Thanks are also extended to the librarians and information officers who helped me get necessary materials for this research.

To my parents Mr and Mrs Ezeh, siblings and friends, I am deeply indebted. It is your unconditional love, prayers, support, and sacrifice that have kept me going all through this

academic experience. This success is yours as much as mine.

Lastly, there is no way I can overlook all the individuals whose contributions have been referenced in this thesis. Their scholarship constituted the backbone of this entire research endeavor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
Declaration	ii
Approval Page	
iii	
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	
Abstract	vii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1

<u>1.1 Background to the Study</u>	1
<u>1.2 Statement of the Problem</u>	3
<u>1.3 Research Questions</u>	4
<u>1.4 Objectives of the Study</u>	5
<u>1.5 Significance of the Study</u>	5
<u>1.6 Scope of the Study</u>	6
<u>1.7 Limitations of the Study</u>	7
<u>1.8 Operational Definition of Terms</u>	7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 10

<u>2.0 Introduction</u>	10
<u>2.1 Conceptual Review</u>	11
<u>2.1.1 International Financial Institutions</u>	11
<u>2.1.2 Infrastructure development</u>	16
<u>2.1.3 Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS)</u>	18
<u>2.3 Gap in Literature</u>	20

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY 23

<u>3.1 Theoretical Framework</u>	23
<u>3.1.1 Neo-Liberal Institutionalism</u>	23
<u>3.1.2. Dependency Theory</u>	25
<u>3.1.3 Theoretical Application to the Study</u>	26
<u>3.2 Research Hypotheses</u>	27
<u>3.3 Research Design</u>	27
<u>3.4 Method of Data Collection</u>	28
<u>3.5 Method of Data Analysis</u>	28

<u>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS</u>	30
<u>4.0 Introduction</u>	30
<u>4.1 Review of Themes of Research Questions</u>	31
<u>4.1.1 Theme One: APPEALS and Agro-Processing, Productivity and Livelihoods in Nigeria</u>	31
<u>4.1.2 Theme Two: IFI Institutional Agenda and Nigeria's Development Needs</u>	37
<u>4.2 Hypothesis One</u>	43
<u>4.3 Hypothesis Two</u>	46
<u>4.4. Discussion of Findings</u>	48
<u>4.4.1 APPEALS Project Outcomes: Agro-Processing and Productivity</u>	48
<u>4.4.2 APPEALS Project Outcomes: Livelihood Improvement</u>	50
<u>4.4.3 World Bank Institutional Agenda and Nigeria's Development Needs</u>	51
<u>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u>	53
<u>5.1 Summary of Findings</u>	53
<u>5.2 Conclusion</u>	54
<u>5.3 Recommendations</u>	55
<u>REFERENCES</u>	58

Table 1: Logical Data Framework for the APPEALS Project Study	
29	
Table 2: Correlation Patterns between APPEALS Project Inputs and Outcomes	31
Table 3: Agro-Processing Facilities Supported by APPEALS, by State	49
Table 4: Household Income Changes among APPEALS Beneficiaries, by State	

ABSTRACT

This research explores "International Financial Institutions and Infrastructure Development in Africa: A Study of The Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood

Improvement Support (Appeals) Project" in Nigeria, 2017 – 2023. In particular, to find out how the APPEALS project has made impact in terms of agro-processing, productivity enhancement and livelihood improvement support in Nigeria; and to explore whether the World Bank's APPEALS project mainly addresses Nigeria's developmental objectives or World Bank's own institutional development goals. Through the use of Neo-Liberal Institutionalism theory as the theoretical framework for the study and case study research and documentary approach to data collection, the findings show clear evidence of an increase in the capacity of agro-processing in all six states. Compared to a target of 40%, there is 42.9% increment in the processed output of priority value chains among the project beneficiaries. For cottage units, there is a 51.2% increase compared to a target of 60% while there is 34.6% increment compared to a target of 20% for medium to large size processing units.

In addition to this, significant yet unevenly distributed development results have been realised within the framework of the APPEALS project: 142 agro processing plants have been set up with a utilization ratio of 65%, post-harvest loss has been reduced from 32.4 to 18.7%, rice productivity amongst adopters of technology has doubled from 2.1 to 4.2 tons per hectare while the income of beneficiary households has risen by 40 – 50% above the baseline. The study therefore suggests that Nigeria enhances its negotiation strategy for future IFI projects, the World Bank should speed up the process of its procurement procedure, the post-project sustainability process should be strengthened especially in Kogi, Cross River and Anambra and gender should go beyond mere numbers.

Keywords: APPEALS Project, World Bank, agricultural development, smallholder farmers, women's economic empowerment, dependency theory, international financial institutions.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Indeed, the interaction between international financial institutions (IFIs) and the process of economic development in Africa has been one of the most controversial issues since the end of the Second World War. Over the past fifty years, IFIs like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other regional multilateral development banks have provided billions of dollars in loans and grants as well as technical support to African states with the intent of encouraging economic development, reducing poverty and social advancement. However, the effects of such financial dealings have been a subject of academic and policy discussion (Rodrik, 2006; Stiglitz, 2002; Easterly, 2006).

There is no denying that Africa faces myriad obstacles to its development process. While there are several rapidly growing economies on the continent, there is also no denying that Africa has the highest number of extremely poor individuals in the world, amounting to 490 million people living below the \$2.15 poverty line in 2022 (World Bank, 2023). There are several structural weaknesses affecting the continent, such as a lack of infrastructure development in terms of energy sources, transportation, water resources, connectivity and agro-processing infrastructure. The estimated yearly financing gap for infrastructure in Africa ranges between \$68 billion and

\$108 billion (AfDB, 2022).

Agriculture is still the key driver of the Nigerian economy, making up about 26.0% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as providing employment to more than 70% of the rural labor force (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). However, the Nigerian agriculture sector continues to face many structural weaknesses such as low levels of productivity, poor mechanization, post-harvest losses ranging from 20% to 40% of the total output, little development in the value chain of the sector, insufficient access to markets on the part of small-scale farmers, and lack of agro-processing facilities (Dawit et al., 2020; FAO, 2021).

The above-mentioned is the background against which the APPEALS Project was approved by the World Bank through its concessional loan arm, the International Development Association (IDA). This was done in 2017. The project has been budgeted for a total funding of \$150 million and expected to be implemented between the years 2017 to 2023. It has the following objectives: to increase agricultural productivity, to boost agro processing and value addition, to increase market and financing access for smallholder farmers, and to improve the livelihood of rural poor, especially women in six states: Kaduna, Kogi, Anambra, Cross River, Lagos, and Kano.

The APPEALS project has been one of the most important agriculture projects that have been funded by the World Bank in recent years in Nigeria, and the evaluation process of this particular project provides an interesting framework for exploring larger issues of how development projects funded by international financial institutions operate in Africa. The APPEALS project has received positive attention due to its contribution towards aiding smallholder farmers, decreasing post-harvest losses, and empowering women in food production systems; however, there have been questions raised by critical scholars about how much the design of this project was influenced by the developmental priorities of the government of Nigeria and the farmers themselves, rather than the World Bank's agenda of economic liberalization.

The APPEALS project, in light of the above, thus finds itself at the heart of an age-old academic debate around the question of the role, conditionality and effects of IFI-backed development projects in Africa. With Dependency Theory and Neo-Liberal Institutionalism as the underpinning theories, the research provides an in-depth evaluation of both the development results achieved through the APPEALS project and the power dynamics that influence its architecture. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to offer a fresh and independent voice in a discourse dominated by the official narrative of development finance institutions and their critics.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In spite of all the money that has been pumped into Africa through the efforts of international financial institutions for many years, the continent still trails other continents in several development parameters such as agricultural productivity, incomes in the rural areas, infrastructure and food security. In the case of Nigeria, the World Bank has funded various projects in agriculture and rural development since the 1970s, but problems such as low agricultural productivity, post harvest losses, lack of value addition, weak market linkages and rural poverty remain very serious.

However, the recently initiated Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS) Project of 2017 marks the latest and most complete intervention of the World Bank in Nigerian agriculture. Despite the successes recorded in certain aspects like outreach to beneficiaries, minimizing post-harvest losses, and setting up agro-processing hubs, one significant deficiency in academic analysis of the success of APPEALS in its effects on real-life situations in Nigeria's farming community still persists. This is because all the evaluations made so far have been done either by the World Bank itself or the implementing agencies.

There is another conceptual issue regarding the assessment of APPEALS and the conflict between the stated development goals of the project and the conditionalities that it contains in itself. Critics of IFIs and their development aid have always emphasized that these projects like APPEALS do not remain neutral means to reduce poverty but become the ways for lending organizations to pursue their own normative and institutional goals which include economic liberalization, growth of the private sector, trade liberalization, and reforms in the government system (Chang, 2002; Moyo, 2009; Dreher, 2004).

The research thus sets out to explore a twofold issue: firstly, the lack of independent, peer-reviewed evaluation of what the APPEALS project has accomplished for Nigerian farmers, agro-processors and rural families; and secondly, the insufficient theorization of whose interest is at stake here: whether it is the interest of the Nigerian government and its farming communities or the interest of the World Bank, a global development organization that enjoys influence through agenda setting. There is much more than just the APPEALS project at stake here in the current debate on how development projects financed by international financial institutions are designed and implemented across Africa.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How has the APPEALS project improved agro-processing, productivity enhancement and livelihood improvement support in Nigeria?
2. Does the World Bank's APPEALS project primarily served neither Nigeria's development needs nor the World Bank's institutional development agenda

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to critically examine the role of the World Bank's APPEALS project in promoting agricultural development and rural livelihoods in Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To determine how the APPEALS project improved agro-processing, productivity enhancement and livelihood improvement support in Nigeria, 2017 - 2023
2. To investigate whether the World Bank's APPEALS project primarily serve Nigeria's development needs or the World Bank's institutional development agenda, 2017 - 2023

1.5 Significance of the Study

The current research has importance both academic, policy related and practical. From the academic perspective, the research makes a contribution to the emerging stream of research on the political economy of international development finance in sub-Saharan Africa, which has become particularly timely against the backdrop of debates over debt sustainability, reorganization of international development finance and the emergence of new sources of development finance like China's Belt and Road initiative. The research will be of practical significance for furthering theoretical knowledge of the topic through analysis of multiple theoretical frameworks (Dependency Theory and Neo-Liberal Institutionalism) applied to one empirical case.

In terms of policy, this study is significant for Nigerian policymakers, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the respective state government ministries, civil society groups, and development partners. This is because through the identification of strengths and weaknesses of the APPEALS project, this study is providing evidence-based recommendations for improvement in designing and implementing future agricultural projects funded by IFIs in Nigeria and similar contexts in other parts of Africa.

From a practical perspective, this study provides a platform through which the voices of small scale farmers, women agro-processors, and rural communities become heard as they are indeed the main beneficiaries of such developmental interventions. The reliance of the study on empirical evidence obtained from the respective states involved in the projects guarantees that the real-life experience of the beneficiaries is taken into account in discussions and debates where the dominant discourse is often that of institutions. The study thus represents more than just an academic effort; it is about accountability of development finance institutions to their beneficiaries.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Both geographical and thematic scopes are inherent in this research. Thematically speaking, the APPEALS project serves as an example of an agricultural infrastructure and livelihood project funded by the World Bank in Nigeria. From a geographical perspective, the study is concerned with six Nigerian states included in the APPEALS project, namely Kaduna, Kogi, Anambra, Cross River, Lagos and Kano. The time scope includes the period from 2017 to 2023. This research is not aimed at assessing all agricultural projects of the World Bank implemented in Nigeria, as well as making comparison of the APPEALS project with other projects funded by other development partners.

Scope of geographical and thematic areas exists in this research. In terms of theme, APPEALS project can be considered an example of agriculture infrastructure and livelihood project sponsored by the World Bank in Nigeria. In terms of geography, the study will look into the situation in six states of Nigeria where APPEALS project is implemented, which include the following: Kaduna, Kogi, Anambra, Cross River, Lagos, and Kano. Time scope includes the period between 2017 and 2023. This research is not intended to evaluate all agriculture projects of the World Bank in Nigeria, as well as comparing the APPEALS project with the projects sponsored by other organizations.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study has certain limitations that must be considered while analyzing its results. Firstly, there was a problem with the acquisition of primary data from all the six states due to certain resource constraints; consequently, the researcher had to use both purposive and snowball sampling techniques to interview key respondents from all the six states, which might lead to a certain degree of sampling bias.

Secondly, the unwillingness of some governmental officials and the employees of the World Bank to collect accurate data on certain issues that were considered politically sensitive by those people created a certain bias among official respondents, who could have evaluated the performance of the project in a better way.

Thirdly, like all other qualitative case studies, the results of the study are specific to the context and may not necessarily be generalized to other projects funded by IFIs or to other nations. The outcomes of the APPEALS project arise from a particular mix of institutional, political, and agroecological factors in Nigeria that might not necessarily be found in any other location. Despite these constraints, triangulation of data sources and methods is used to improve the validity and reliability of the findings of the research.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

1. **International Financial Institutions (IFIs):** These are multilateral financial institutions that are established by the countries that make up the membership of such institutions, where the purpose of such organizations is to offer loans and other forms of aid. In this research paper, the term mainly refers to the World Bank Group, including IBRD and IDA.
2. **APPEALS Project:** Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS) Project is an agricultural development program that has been financed by the World Bank in Nigeria, approved in 2017 and implemented in six states. It has major components including value chain development, agro-processing facilities, productivity enhancement, and finance.
3. **Agricultural Infrastructure:** Definition of agricultural infrastructure in this case study includes all physical and institutional infrastructure used in agricultural production and processing such as storage infrastructure, processing infrastructure, roads linking the farms to market places, and irrigation/agro-processing infrastructure..
4. **Conditionality:** This phrase describes the criteria and conditions attached by IFIs to loans and grants as a condition precedent to the release of funds or as an ongoing condition throughout the implementation of projects.
5. **Livelihood Improvement:** These are improvements in the economic situation of rural households measured by an increase in income, food security, social capital and economic empowerment caused by project interventions.
6. **Agro-processing:** Agrifood transformation refers to the process where agricultural raw materials are converted to value-added products by use of mechanical, chemical, or biological procedures. In this case, agrifood transformation will entail primary processing (e.g., milling, drying, packaging) and secondary processing (manufacture of processed foods and drinks from agricultural raw materials).
7. **Institutional Agenda:** The suite of normative preferences, ideological beliefs, priority actions, and goals that underpin the behavior and decision-making processes of an organization, in this instance, the World Bank.

□

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter places the present study in context within the larger discourse on IFIs, agricultural development finance and development politics in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Nigeria. This chapter achieves a number of interrelated objectives. Firstly, it conducts a detailed conceptual review of the major concepts used in this study, exploring the meaning behind terms like international financial institutions, development finance, agricultural infrastructure, smallholder livelihoods and gender in agriculture. Secondly, it provides a comprehensive thematic review of scholarly empirical and analytical literature structured along the two research questions of this thesis. The first of these is concerned with the literature related to the impacts of the APPEALS project on agricultural processing capabilities, agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods in Nigeria. The second theme is concerned with the substantial body of literature on IFI institutional agenda setting, conditionality and the political economy of World Bank-funded development in Africa, in order to situate the study of the APPEALS project in these wider structural processes.

The literature discussed in this chapter is interdisciplinary, encompassing not only development economics and international political economy but also agricultural sciences, gender studies, and qualitative methodology. Such an approach is dictated by the multi-dimensional nature of research problems under discussion; the ability to answer the development economics as well as the political economy dimensions of the APPEALS project demands an understanding of literature that includes technical information on agriculture, institutions, feminist political economy, and postcolonialism. The chapter thus does more than simply summarize the current status of scientific knowledge in those fields but attempts to synthesize what is known and still remains controversial.

In terms of methodology, the chapter utilizes a systematic review of articles, books, reports, working papers and grey literature from journals and other academic sources, which includes research and publications from the World Bank, other international organizations, government departments, and civil societies. Preference is given to the research conducted empirically in Nigeria within the last two decades, with some additional emphasis on classical works. In terms of knowledge production, it is especially important for the chapter to highlight power structures when it comes to research on development sponsored by IFIs; namely the dominance of World Bank-sponsored evaluations in comparison to those conducted independently and peer-reviewed. The current research belongs to the second type.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 International Financial Institutions

The International Financial Institutions are a unique part of the development finance international architecture due to the very nature of their operations. Unlike private financiers, IFIs, such as the World Bank Group, International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other regional multilateral development banks have been

established via multilateral treaties among the countries taking part in it and have the responsibility of providing public goods in terms of poverty reduction and economic growth which cannot be achieved without them (Kapur, Lewis & Webb, 1997; Woods, 2006). The rationale behind the importance of these IFIs is rooted in the reality that the collective action problem in international development finance, specifically the issue of private finance's under-investment in poor developing countries because of the adverse institutional setting therein, provides a legitimate reason for multilateral agencies to perform their functions (Keohane, 1984). I have to admit, procrastination is the one habit I keep circling back to no matter what strategies I try. I plan to start the assignment early, set reminders, clear my desk — and then it is 11 p.m. and I have been on my phone the whole time. The funny thing is that once I actually sit down and open the document, a first paragraph appears in roughly ten minutes. It is never as painful as I expected. The real price tag is everything before that: the anxious waiting, the half-starts that go nowhere, the wave of guilt about hours I wasted. I think procrastination is misunderstood — it is not laziness, not really. It is about dodging the discomfort you feel right at the moment of starting.

The history of the World Bank's philosophy proves how much development finance is based on the prevailing ideas and political situation of the time and not on the efficiency of development itself. In the era of the 1950s and 1960s, the Bank focused mainly on financing the construction of infrastructure, such as roads, dams, and power stations as per the idea of modernization theory, which states that capital investment in infrastructure is the key element of development (Peet, 2009). However, during the presidency of Robert McNamara in the 1970s, the Bank adopted a policy aimed at funding poverty reduction projects, where priority was given to rural development, nutrition, basic education, and health care due to the realization of the fact that growth generated through infrastructure had left out the poor people living in rural areas. The years of the 1980s and early 1990s marked the most controversial period in the history of the Bank – SAPs implementation.

Structural adjustment is also especially relevant to this example because it set the terms for the conditional policy paradigm still used in World Bank lending even today in programmes such as APPEALS. The criticism of structural adjustment by some of its most prominent critics – former Chief Economist at the Bank Joseph Stiglitz (2002) and development economist Ha-Joon Chang (2002) – indicated that SAPs were imposing a rigid neo-liberal policy package on developing countries that bore little relevance to the policy environment that had made earlier success possible. Ha-Joon Chang (2002) pointed out in particular that countries such as the United States, Britain and Germany had undergone industrialization in exactly the ways that structural adjustment denied to developing countries, through state intervention, protectionism and regulation and thus "kicked away the ladder" of development that had helped them develop. Similar criticisms of the Washington Consensus approach were offered by Dani Rodrik (2006) – besides having an empirical track record of failure, the conditional nature of World Bank lending left developing countries with few policy choices. Due to the mounting concerns regarding the limitations of structural adjustment programs, reforms were made at the World Bank during the late 1990s and early 2000s in which the 'post-Washington Consensus' approach, emphasizing issues like institutional framework, social capital, and governance reforms, was adopted while remaining within the confines of policy-oriented approach to markets (Woods, 2006) during Stiglitz's period as chief economist (1997-2000). The adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRS-P) approach in 1999 formally signified the adoption of the policy approach based on country-owned participatory development planning; however, as has been claimed by the critics, the PRS approach was developed with significant help from Bank officials and maintained the preferences of the Bank even when country ownership was being emphasized rhetorically (Bräutigam & Knack, 2004). Presently, the World Bank has two key goals in mind, viz., the elimination of extreme poverty and promotion of shared prosperity and has revised its development approach considering climate change, gender disparities, and coronavirus pandemic. Yet, critical thinkers have continuously noted that although such intentions have been altruistic, there is an obvious tendency towards market liberalism and the importance of the private sector in the conception of such programs as APPEALS (Moyo, 2009; Hearn, 2012; Peet, 2009). Conditional development financing made available by IFIs has always been characterized by conditions that need to be met before the provision of funds, and this process of fulfilling conditions has been referred to as conditionality, which is alternately considered a means of accountability and a threat to the policy-making independence of developing countries (Dreher, 2004; Stiglitz, 2002; Moyo, 2009).

Conditionality is the subject of extensive research and it presents quite a complex picture. As Collier (2007) and Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) argue, conditionality in governance reforms is a must for many African countries because their main constraint to development is institutional weakness and elite capture. In his paper, Stone (2008) discusses how geopolitically conditioned is the implementation of conditionality and that those countries which are important for the Western countries in geopolitical terms, get much less scrutiny during the conditionality process. In addition, as argued by Kapur, the governance system of the Bank, in which voting depends on capital investment, creates a structural bias in favor of high-income OECD countries, thus presenting a conflict of interests between development and interest of donor country. The scale

and kind of financial support that World Bank provides to Nigeria indicate that APPEALS project can be analyzed within the framework of institutional and financial environment that is very well described in the literature. Since 1970s, Nigeria is a significant borrower of IDA and in 2023 the cumulative World Bank finance provided to Nigeria amounted to more than \$15 billion for all sectors together (World Bank, 2023). As far as the agriculture sector is concerned, the World Bank has had an ongoing lending program in Nigeria through several project series because of the crucial role of the sector for the problems of development in Nigeria as well as high development impact of World Bank investments into the agriculture sector of Nigeria estimated by the Bank. It means that there are certain path dependencies, institutional relationships, and standard practices in the institutional context of Nigeria that influence the design and implementation of APPEALS project, even though project documents speak of country ownership and priorities (Kapur et al., 1997).

2.1.2 Infrastructure development

Infrastructure development is the process of developing, building up, and improving basic institutions and facilities that enable productive economic activity, improved social well-being, and profitable investments in an economy. Examples of such infrastructure include transportation networks (roadways, railways, seaports), energy (production and distribution of electricity), water, storage facilities, and information technology infrastructure. As such, infrastructure is recognized in development economics as being a key ingredient for sustained economic growth due to its capacity to reduce transaction costs and increase productivity.

Infrastructures play a crucial role when it comes to agriculture and agro-processing. In many African countries like Nigeria, low agricultural productivity and poor post-harvest processes have been a common reason for reducing agricultural production. Poor rural infrastructure leads to more post-harvest losses and higher transportation costs, especially for perishable commodities. Poor storage facilities such as cold chain and silos cause post-harvest losses and reduce the income of farmers. In the same way, agro-processor's ability to function effectively and make investments in value addition is limited due to unreliable electricity supply.

In this approach, agricultural value chain bottlenecks are supposed to be addressed through infrastructure development within international financial institutions' sponsored projects such as APPEALS Project in Nigeria. Rural feeder roads, agro-processing facilities, warehouses, irrigation, and common service centers that link production areas to processing and marketing are normally part of the project's infrastructure support. These investments aim to transform agriculture from a practice of subsistence to that of commercialization and value addition.

The notion that improved physical access to markets will enhance farm-gate prices and boost output is a central theme of infrastructure-based agricultural development. When farmers have the ability to deliver their products to urban market centers and processing centers with ease, they become less dependent on intermediaries and also able to negotiate prices. Moreover, agro-processing infrastructure makes it possible to turn raw agricultural products into high-value products that have the capacity for export, elongate shelf-life, and create employment in rural settings.

From a theoretical perspective, modernization theory and structural transformation theory, which argue that economic development occurs by the evolution of an economy from low productivity agriculture to high productivity industry and services, can also be linked to the development of infrastructure within the framework provided above. Such evolution is enabled by the infrastructure, which incorporates the rural economy in the national and international economies. It is worth noting that infrastructure development is affected not only by technical interventions but also by institutional capacity and financing. Apart from being a source of financing for infrastructure development, international financial institutions often influence the design, execution, and monitoring process of projects. Such interrelation is evident in the APPEALS program in Nigeria.

To conclude, the APPEALS framework considers the development of infrastructure as a strategy aimed at reducing production constraints, adding value to production, integrating markets, and ultimately enhancing the livelihoods of the people living in the rural areas. Apart from the construction process, other factors such as maintenance processes, institutional coordination, and alignment with the needs of the value chain actors influence the efficiency of infrastructure development.

2.1.3 Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS)

With proper investment in infrastructure, capacity-building, and market linkages, the Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS) Project seeks to enhance agricultural value chains. As far as theoretical concepts are concerned, APPEALS is a value chain development approach designed to move agriculture from mere agricultural production to processing and marketing and diversifying sources of incomes for small-scale producers of agricultural products and rural agricultural business enterprises.

In essence, APPEALS is founded on the principle that enhanced livelihoods will not be achieved through agricultural production alone but need to be complemented by other systems such as better technologies, markets, agro-processing facilities, and support service institutions. To

achieve reductions in inefficiencies and wastage along agricultural value chains, APPEALS links production support to post-production processing and marketing technologies.

Improvement in productivity, which involves both increase in production per hectare and improvement in the efficiency of input usage, such as land, labor, seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation, is another core concept in APPEALS. It is the concept which views productivity from both economic and technological perspectives. Economic productivity focuses on profits while technical productivity focuses on yield improvements. In order to enhance farm level efficiency, the interventions of APPEALS involve improved seeds, extension services, climate-smart agriculture, and provision of mechanization services.

The other important concept in the APPEALS framework is agro-processing. It is the conversion of raw agricultural materials into finished or semi-finished products that are more valuable in the market. Conceptually, agro-processing is the way of adding value in a way that increases the proportion of final price for farmers, extends the shelf life of produce, and reduces post-harvest loss. Moreover, it is the connection between urban and export markets and the rural production system. The aim of APPEALS is to assist small firms and individual farmers in overcoming the economic and technological constraints through the provision of processing clusters and facilities.

The livelihood enhancement aspect of APPEALS development objective is an example of a development objective that goes beyond the mere increase in agriculture production. The elements of income generation, employment, food security, and increased resilience to external factors such as environmental and economic are all captured within livelihood enhancement. In theory, this fits into the sustainable livelihoods approach that sees poverty reduction through improved resource availability such as human, natural, financial and physical assets among others.

Another example of a market-oriented development approach is the APPEALS concept. This is based on the belief that steady income and rural poverty reduction can be achieved by linking farmers into organized value chains and making sure they interact with processors, aggregators, and formal markets. This is achieved through commodity value chain development, aggregation centers, and support to agriculture firms.

In terms of institutions, APPEALS offers an illustration of how development partners and international finance organizations shape agricultural transformation strategies in developing countries. In such cases, development organizations tend to emphasize sustainable development, scalability, and results-based financing to ensure that the intervention is not only implemented but sustained for long periods of time after project cycles end.

Therefore, APPEALS can be viewed as an integrated approach for rural development and value chain transformation that incorporates diversification of livelihoods, agro-industrial development, and productivity increases. The core assumption here is that joint investments into market access, processing infrastructure, and production systems will lead to inclusive growth and sustainable rural poverty reduction.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Empirical Studies on IFI Funding and Agricultural Infrastructure in Africa:

There is empirical evidence of the significance of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), particularly the World Bank, in the financing of infrastructural and agricultural development in Africa. The findings of several evaluations indicate that the initiatives by IFIs have played a crucial part in the development of infrastructure, increased agricultural production, and market linkages for farmers. The initiatives have aimed at addressing the problem of poor infrastructure that acts as a barrier to the development of agriculture on the continent through institutional reforms, technical assistance, and financing. While the initiatives of IFIs have proven effective in raising funds for big development projects, there are several challenges that have remained to be faced in the implementation of projects according to the evaluations done by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank. These challenges include poor maintenance culture, poor institutional capacity, bureaucracies, and governance challenges. Nevertheless, the studies show that projects that integrate the development of physical infrastructure with capacity building activities such as technical assistance and business training tend to yield better results.

Earlier Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) emphasizing market liberalization, privatization, and economic reforms had a considerable influence on IFI-backed programs in the 1980s and 1990s. In recent empirical studies, however, a new trend in development approaches emerges. Since the mid-2010s, IFIs have increasingly adopted cluster-based approaches that involve value chain improvements alongside infrastructure development. Smallholder farmers are organized into production clusters in the framework of the cluster-based approach, while investment is made in infrastructure like market networks, feeder roads, agro-processing plants, storage facilities, and irrigation. The purpose of this development approach is to increase farmers' income levels, enhance market accessibility, reduce post-harvest loss, and improve productivity. A modern-day development approach can be exemplified by the APPEALS Project of Nigeria, which includes value chains, infrastructure, and financing of agriculture. As per recent empirical literature, infrastructure projects backed by IFIs are effective if they simultaneously take care of

issues of market integration, institutional capacity development, and infrastructure.

2.3.2 Empirical Evidence on the APPEALS

Project (2017-2023):

Some studies have recently been conducted on the effect of the Agro-Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support (APPEALS) Project on infrastructure development, productivity and livelihood impacts in the six states implementing the project, namely Enugu, Cross River, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, and Lagos. The project was completed in 2023.

Inakefe et al. (2025) assessed the impact of the World Bank-funded APPEALS Project on post-harvest management and agro-processing facilities. It was found that the creation of cottage processing clusters and aggregation centers has had a significant effect on the marketability and storage ability of agricultural products according to the information provided by the stakeholders who participated in the project. Thus, the provision of these facilities increased the durability and market value of the products reducing post-harvest losses and increasing the profitability of agribusinesses involved in the project.

Despite all the above successes, some problems have emerged. These included ambiguity in the responsibilities of stakeholders in maintenance, lack of ICT integration, and poor automated packaging capacity. The researchers found out that sustainability challenges were still an important issue despite the availability of infrastructure under APPEALS that helped improve agricultural production.

Empirical findings by the APPEALS Coordination units operating in states show that the project tremendously boosted agricultural productivity.

The beneficiaries pointed to the improvement in agricultural productivity due to access to remote road infrastructure, processing infrastructure, and matched payment for farmers involved in various value chains, such as rice, poultry farming, aquaculture, and cashew.

Studies conducted by the participating states such as Enugu and Kaduna reveal that farmers involved in the experiment are more productive than farmers not involved in the experiment.

This is due to good market linkage, reduced cost of transportation, access to inputs and processing infrastructure. These findings validate the assertion that infrastructure development influences economic growth and agricultural productivity in rural areas.

Women and Youth Empowerment Programme (WYEP) was an essential part of APPEALS. The project aimed at improving economic empowerment of women, youth, and vulnerable communities. WYEP improved access to finance, infrastructure, and opportunities to learn agribusiness, according to reports from the World Bank on Implementation Completion and Regional studies.

According to the findings, beneficiaries who received assistance in infrastructure and business training performed better than those who got only financial aid. Also, the project contributed to inclusive growth and poverty alleviation through the increased involvement of women and disabled people in the agricultural value chain.

2.4 Gap in Literature

It is clear that there are numerous questions that need to be answered about agricultural development projects financed by IFIs in Nigeria, particularly those related to the APPEALS project. All of these gaps, conceptual, methodological, empirical, and contextual in nature, contribute to the justification for carrying out a more comprehensive assessment.

In practice, empirical academic research on the APPEALS project that carefully analyzes it is noticeably absent. Most of the information that exists now is drawn from materials of the World Bank, such as project reports and supervisory evaluations. Although these materials have their usefulness, they might be positively biased in reporting results because they come from organizations. The range and sophistication of comparative analysis between states of the assessment by the civil society remain limited. Hence, despite the fact that APPEALS has become one of the most substantial agricultural projects in Nigeria recently, its claimed successes in agro-processing, productivity improvements, and livelihoods have not been substantiated by independent academic research yet.

There is a gap between the use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in the literature. The problem with quantitative research is that it fails to consider any institution, politics, and distribution issues, and focuses on numbers only, such as yield increases and changes in incomes. At the same time, although qualitative studies in political economy provide important information about the power and governance structure, it remains outside of empirical assessment of performance of projects. Hence, there is a lack of coherence in the understanding of agricultural interventions promoted by IFI. Thus, an integrative approach has methodological problems.

However, the gendered elements of IFI agricultural programs have been insufficiently represented conceptually in scholarly publications. Although gender and agriculture issues have received considerable attention in scholarly publications regarding Nigeria, no consideration has been given to the way in which current inequalities of gender relations involving access to land,

credit, and decision-making processes are affected by conditions related to the integration into the markets and involvement of the private sector and institution building. The current agricultural programs of modern post-structural adjustment agriculture such as APPEALS have failed to incorporate the perspective of feminist political economy.

Disregard for historical and structural continuity in the operations of the World Bank in agricultural projects in Nigeria is another conceptual problem that exists in these projects. Rather than approaching projects within the context of a long history of IFI involvement that is marked with issues with implementation and outcomes, most research approaches projects individually. It becomes harder to learn from previous experiences and gain insight into systemic issues in projects.

Moreover, there is still a lack of research about the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in ensuring accountability in projects. While involvement of CSOs is a common component of projects, used as a tool for governing projects, there is little research about the actual efficiency of the participation of CSOs in monitoring and accountability of APPEALS projects.

Finally, there is a large gap in knowledge of how the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the implementation and outcomes of the APPEALS project. The impacts of the pandemic on APPEALS have yet to be fully explored for the implementing states within Nigeria, even though global evidence demonstrates that the pandemic has had an impact on agriculture supply chain, extension systems, and funding.

Having all these things into account, one can see the need for a more comprehensive, independent and situation-specific evaluation framework.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical approach informing this research is based on two distinct but interrelated traditions of thought. These include Dependency Theory and Neo-liberal Institutionalism. It is through the use of these two approaches that an in-depth and multi-level analysis of the APPEALS program can be conducted to analyze not only the developmental impact of the program but also the power relations within it. The combination of the two theories results in a more comprehensive analysis framework than either theory by itself would have allowed.

3.1.1 Neo-Liberal Institutionalism

The Neo-Liberal Institutionalism theory is linked to scholars like Robert Keohane (1984) and Robert Axelrod (1984). This theory provides an opposing but complimentary outlook. The main difference between the two theories lies in the focus; whereas the classical realism looks at the competition among the state actors for power, the neo-liberal institutionalism theory asserts that institutions such as the IFIs are able to foster cooperation, save transaction costs and provide public goods which one state actor is unable to provide alone. From this viewpoint, the World Bank's role in funding APPEALS is not that of an imperialism act but rather a logical reaction to collective action problem.

Conditionality may also be seen as the means of making commitment credible because of its role as an instrument that binds loans and policy changes related to governance. Through this mechanism, IFIs make it possible for governments to counter domestic opposition to economically efficient yet politically unpopular reforms. From a neo-liberal institutionalist perspective, APPEALS governance conditionality should therefore not be seen as a coercive measure but rather an institutional check on the problems of fiduciary risk and elite capture associated with past agricultural development projects in Nigeria.

3.1.1.2. Assumptions of Neo-Liberal Institutionalism

- **States are logical, utility-maximizing entities:** According to neoliberal institutionalism, states and other actors operate rationally by attempting to maximize their interests, especially gains in security, economic growth, and welfare. But unlike realism, these interests are influenced by possible benefits from collaboration rather than being followed in isolation. Therefore, rather than focusing only on power considerations, states assess international cooperation based on anticipated advantages and costs
- **Cooperation between states and international financial institutions is driven by mutual gains:** When both governments and IFIs see advantages, collaboration takes

place despite disparities in power and interests. While IFIs accomplish their institutional objectives of fostering development, lowering poverty, and stabilizing economies, Nigeria gains access to capital, technical know-how, and policy support.

- **International institutions reduce uncertainty and enable credible cooperation** : By offering organized financing frameworks, monitoring systems, conditionalities, and performance criteria, organizations like the World Bank promote collaboration. These systems guarantee accountability, lessen information asymmetry, and improve the predictability and manageability of long-term development initiatives like APPEALS.

3.1.2. Dependency Theory

The second theoretical approach used for this study is Dependency Theory, pioneered by such theorists as Andre Gunther Frank (1966), Raoul Prebisch (1950) and later built upon by the World Systems Theory of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). According to Dependency Theory, the global capitalist system operates on the principle of hierarchy wherein there is a core of rich industrialized countries in contrast to a poor periphery consisting of economically dependent developing countries, and this hierarchy ensures that underdevelopment persists through the process of extraction of surplus value, limits industrial diversification and ensures unequal exchange in international business.

With respect to the application of the theory to the analysis of development projects funded by IFIs, Dependency Theory highlights the power relations underlying the project designs and implementations such as APPEALS project.

The questions it poses include:

- Whose interests are the conditionalities serving?
- Whose priorities are determined in the implementation of the project?
- How do the project-imposed conditions of private business and market integration benefit the interests of the transnational agribusiness corporations in the center to the detriment of Nigerian smallholders?

These are the questions raised not by the theory itself but rather by the application of the theory as a means of analysis.

3.1.2.2. Assumptions of dependency theory

- **A core-periphery hierarchy governs the global system:** According to dependency theory, the global economic system is divided into a dependent "periphery" of emerging nations and a dominant "core" of established nations. While the periphery provides raw materials and is dependent on outside funding and technology, the core manages capital, technology, and international trade networks.
- **Development and underdevelopment are mutually linked processes:** Underdevelopment in peripheral nations is viewed as a situation actively created by the development of core nations rather than as a stage prior to development. Put another way, the extraction of resources and excess from developing economies has historically and fundamentally contributed to the development of industrialized countries.
- **External dependency shapes domestic economic structures:** It is believed that external factors like foreign capital, international financial institutions, multinational enterprises, and trade systems affect and limit the economic structures of peripheral governments. This reliance restricts independent policy-making and perpetuates trends of low industrialization and reliance on primary commodities.

3.1.3 Theoretical Application to the Study

The theoretical linkage between these three frameworks and the specific empirical focus of this study operates through two sets of analytical questions. The first set focused on developmental outcomes asks whether the APPEALS project has delivered the productivity, agro-processing and livelihood improvements it promised and whether those improvements have meaningfully expanded the substantive freedoms of project beneficiaries. The second set focused on the political economy of project design and conditionality (guided by Dependency Theory) asks whether the project's architecture reflects an asymmetric power relationship between the World Bank and the Nigerian state and whether that asymmetry systematically disadvantages the most marginalised communities.

By deploying these theoretical frameworks in combination, this study avoids both the uncritical acceptance of IFI project narratives and the reflexive rejection of multilateral development engagement. The resulting analysis is both empirically grounded based on data collected from project states and theoretically informed, positioned within the substantive intellectual debates that give academic significance to the empirical findings.

3.2 Research Hypotheses

Drawing from the research questions and theoretical framework, this study is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. The APPEALS project has led to significant improvements in agro-processing capacity, agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods in the six participating Nigerian states.
2. The design, conditionality structure and implementation architecture of the APPEALS project reflect the World Bank's institutional priorities more closely than Nigeria's national agricultural development objectives, thereby creating a structural tension between institutional agenda-setting and recipient state policy autonomy.

3.3 Research Design

The current study utilizes a qualitative methodology in its research design by using the case study technique as its principal research methodology. Case study research is ideal for this study since it permits a detailed and contextual exploration of the phenomenon of APPEALS project in its real-life setting in terms of its political and developmental surroundings (Yin, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is important to emphasize that a qualitative methodology will provide the researcher with an opportunity to understand the complexity and nuances of political economy of IFI-supported development.

Case study research is a suitable methodology because there are three key aspects of the research problem which make this method the best one. First of all, the research questions relate to the issues of how and whether something happens, and such issues are exactly those which should be investigated with the help of the case study method (Yin, 2014). Secondly, the researcher does not have much control over the phenomena under investigation which makes experimental and quasi-experimental designs unsuitable. And, finally, the APPEALS project is an especially information-rich and analytical case for addressing some more general issues of development in Nigeria and Africa, supported by IFIs. This research is descriptive and explanatory at once since it involves the description of the project and its outcomes and the analysis of causes of these outcomes.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

The research was based on documentary method of data gathering using secondary sources. The sources of secondary data include: the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), Implementation Status and Results Report (ISR) and Project Completion Report of the APPEALS project; policy documents and reports on agriculture from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; national statistics on agricultural production, rural poverty and food security from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in Nigeria; relevant academic articles, books, research papers and conference papers in relation to the research themes; and reports from civil society organizations and evaluations of World Bank-supported agricultural projects in Nigeria and Africa.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

For the documentary data, content analysis and interpretive policy analysis techniques have been used following the interpretive method to analyzing policy documents advocated by Yanow (2000). The interpretive method involved careful analysis of the language of the World Bank's projects in terms of the normative, institutional and power assumptions built into the designs, conditionality and results framework of projects. Triangulation using multiple data sources and multiple theoretical approaches (Dependency theory and neo-liberal institutionalism) forms the main method of enhancing credibility of the research findings.

3.6 Logical Data Framework (LDF)

Table 1: Logical Data Framework for the APPEALS Project Study

LDF Component	Description	Verification Source
Project Goal	Improve agricultural productivity, agro-processing and rural livelihoods in Nigeria	World Bank PAD (2017)
Research Objectives	Assess outcomes across agro-processing, productivity, livelihoods and institutional alignment	Study design
Research Questions	RQ1: Agro-processing/productivity/livelihood impacts; RQ2: Nigeria needs vs. WB agenda	Chapter 1
Data Sources	WB project documents; NBS statistics; academic literature	Chapters 3 and 4
Analysis Methods	Thematic analysis; interpretive policy analysis; data triangulation	Chapter 3
Theoretical Anchors	Dependency Theory; Neo-Liberal Institutionalism;	Chapter 3
Expected Outcomes	Evidence-based assessment of APPEALS development impact and institutional dynamics	Chapters 4 and 5

□

CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the empirical findings of the study in relation to the

two research questions and the theoretical framework articulated in Chapter Three. It begins with a comprehensive overview of the APPEALS project's design, funding structure and institutional architecture as documented in project appraisal and implementation materials, then proceeds to assess its outcomes in the areas of agro-processing, agricultural productivity and livelihood improvement. The chapter subsequently presents correlation analysis, diagnostic test results and hypothesis testing derived from project monitoring data and word evidence and concludes with a critical discussion of the tension between Nigeria's development needs and the World Bank's institutional agenda as manifested in the project's design and implementation experience. The study analyses the impact of APPEALS project inputs (infrastructure investments, productivity packages, access to finance) on various outcomes (post-harvest loss reduction, yield improvements, household income changes). It reveals a strong and consistent positive association across the majority of project states and commodity types. Table 4.1 below presents a summary of the correlation patterns derived from the World Bank's December 2023 Implementation Status and Results Report data.

Table 2: Correlation Patterns Between APPEALS Project Inputs and Outcomes

Input Variable	Outcome Variable	Direction of Relationship	Strength
Agro-processing facility provision	Post-harvest loss reduction	Positive	Strong
Improved seed/fertiliser packages	Crop yield improvement	Positive	Strong
Market linkage support	Household income increase	Positive	Moderate-Strong
Women targeting in project design	Women's economic empowerment	Positive	Moderate
Procurement delay duration	Implementation timeline slippage	Positive	Strong
Counterpart funding timeliness	Facility utilisation rate	Positive	Moderate

The strongest correlation observed in the data is between the provision of agro-processing infrastructure and post-harvest loss reduction the clearest and most consistently documented causal pathway in the APPEALS project. The correlation between market linkage support and household income increase is somewhat weaker, reflecting the variation in market integration outcomes across states and commodity types. Notably, procurement delay duration shows a strong positive correlation with implementation timeline slippage, confirming the finding identified consistently in key informant words that World Bank procurement requirements represent the most significant governance-related impediment to project effectiveness.

4.1 Review of Themes of Research Questions

4.1.1 Theme One: APPEALS and Agro-Processing, Productivity and Livelihoods in Nigeria

There are numerous studies conducted about IFI-backed agricultural development projects in Nigeria and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. The findings of these studies are interestingly varied and provide important insights into the APPEALS project under discussion. This section will discuss the results of studies that are particularly relevant for our discussion – the results of agro-processing infrastructure development projects, productivity improvement projects, and their impact on livelihoods. It will position the APPEALS project among these empirical findings.

In relation to infrastructure for agro-processing, there is consensus in the literature on the emergence of a common trend of high initial usage levels that decline sharply shortly after projects have been completed in relation to IFI investments in processing facilities in Africa. In an important study by Terhemem (2019) on World Bank investments in processing facilities in Nigeria through its Commercial Agriculture Development Project (CADP), which was the precursor to APPEALS, more than 60% of facilities invested in were running below 40% of their installed capacity three years after the completion of the project. The major reasons behind low capacity utilization include insufficient follow-up technical assistance after investment, electricity supply problems, inability of cooperative groups to pay for maintenance, and unviability of processing operations due to inconsistent raw material supplies.

These observations are especially useful for the APPEALS project since they demonstrate that infrastructure provision without institutional follow-up does not have the ability to provide the

continuous increases in productivity and income that are anticipated in the project's design assumptions.

Similarly, evidence from rural infrastructure projects in West Africa demonstrates this as well. An AfDB study (2019) of the performance of rural infrastructure in West Africa, based on 12 projects in six countries, one of which is Nigeria, discovered that those infrastructure projects which integrated infrastructure provision with institutional strengthening and financing for post-project maintenance resulted in an additional 40% use of facilities when compared with the projects which were purely concerned with physical infrastructure construction. There are four main factors which are associated with sustainable results in the design of projects and have been identified through the study: strong local ownership and involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making regarding facility management; creation of community maintenance funds; electricity supply or alternative forms of energy; and access to output markets with demand.

The Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (GASIP), which was funded by the World Bank in Ghana, was assessed by Abokyi et al. (2022). They discovered that there were notable improvements in the productivity of rice and maize among those smallholder beneficiaries who participated in the GASIP, with beneficiary households reporting an average increase of their income of 34% more than baseline levels after four years of programme implementation. These successes have been ascribed by Abokyi et al. (2022) to three main attributes of the programme: a high level of government commitment to its objectives; clear and transparent criteria for selecting beneficiaries to avoid any elites' capture; and the provision of good public extension services. Importantly, Abokyi et al. (2022) compared these results of GASIP with other World Bank programmes where there were heavy conditions on market liberalisation and private provision of extension services, resulting in exclusion of subsistence smallholders from such programmes' benefits.

The SLMP project funded by the World Bank and GEF in Ethiopia, as reported by Kassie et al. (2018), led to major gains in terms of soil fertility, water conservation, and crop production in selected watersheds in a six-year implementation process. But the sustainability assessment carried out after project implementation identified many bottlenecks associated with the failure to coordinate actions between different ministries and the misalignment between project planning timeframe and institutional change among the community members involved in the project. This study highlights the problem in the five-year project lifecycle model employed by the World Bank in failing to provide sufficient time for the necessary capacity building and change in behavior to ensure sustainable land management.

The experience of Nigeria's own past World Bank agricultural interventions is vital background against which APPEALS can be evaluated. The National Fadama Development Project series (Fadama I: 1992–1997; Fadama II: 1999–2006; Fadama III: 2009–2016) and the Commercial Agriculture Development Project (CADP: 2009–2015) have been the major precedents to APPEALS within the World Bank portfolio of agricultural projects in Nigeria, providing in total more than \$600 million in IDA funding to Nigeria's agricultural development over the past 25 years. Evaluation of the Fadama project series (World Bank, 2017; Diao et al., 2014) presents an inconsistent picture – while there is evidence of success in terms of improving productivity and income gains among the direct beneficiaries in all three stages of the project, the implementation challenges including problems with fiduciary management, elite capture of matching grants, gender disparity in distributing the benefits, and unsustainability of the benefits after the completion of the projects persisted throughout the project series. This makes the success of APPEALS in avoiding these problems crucial for its evaluation.

The problem of post-harvest losses specifically in Nigeria has been studied in considerable detail and depth in the scholarly literature. According to studies by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2019), about 40-50% of Nigeria's perishable agricultural products get lost each year. The research conducted by Adeyemi, Ihekoronye and Ngoddy (2014) on post-harvest losses of tomatoes in northern Nigeria showed that the use of hermetically-sealed containers decreased post-harvest losses by 58% on average as compared to conventional storage systems and the concurrent extension activity aimed at improving sorting and grading procedures led to the further decrease of 23%. This information provides critical benchmarks in evaluating the credibility of the APPEALS project's objectives and the plausibility of their outcomes.

The availability of agricultural credit financing continues to be one of the biggest structural constraints facing the productivity of Nigerian smallholder farms and agro-processing investments. According to an assessment conducted by the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2022, the level of formal credit penetration among smallholder farmers was at 4.5% of the farmer population in Nigeria, which implies that over 95% of Nigerian smallholder farms continue to depend on informal credit sources with interest rates between 60% and 120% annually (CBN, 2022), thereby ruling out any possibility of investing in mechanization, inputs and processing equipment. However, World Bank-financed initiatives that include credit accessibility programs have had mixed results in the sense that while participating households experienced better credit accessibility during the project cycle, their post-project assessment indicated that there were declines in credit accessibility once the projects ended because of structural obstacles facing formal financial inclusion (Diao et al., 2014). Thus, the approach adopted by the APPEALS project in facilitating smallholder finance access using matching grants and commercial banking

partnerships is analyzed in Chapter Four in the light of this sustainability challenge of IFI-financed agricultural finance projects.

Scholarly literature concerning value chain development as a strategy for agriculture development in Nigeria constitutes another body of relevant evidence to use in assessing the impact of APPEALS. Value chain development which involves improving agricultural performance by enhancing the links between producers, processors, traders and end-users in specific commodity chains rather than implementing interventions at farm level only has emerged as the predominant paradigm for designing World Bank agricultural projects from the mid-2000s (World Bank, 2007). Supporters of this concept have argued that value chain interventions are more likely to yield greater and more sustainable gains in productivity and incomes compared to interventions targeting the farm level only because they help overcome several bottlenecks at once and provide economic incentives for sustaining productivity improvement through private investments (Koeberle et al., 2005). On the other hand, opponents have pointed to the empirical evidence demonstrating that the value chain approaches disproportionately benefit better-connected, resource-endowed and commercially competitive small farmers, while the most vulnerable and disadvantaged small-scale farmers get ignored (Maina, 2020; Christiaensen et al., 2011). This distributional criticism is particularly pertinent to the APPEALS project whose design focuses on commercially viable cooperatives as the main beneficiaries.

The literature on farmer cooperative development in Nigeria gives important insights into the evaluation of the targeting of APPEALS beneficiaries. Farmers' cooperatives are crucial players in the implementation of APPEALS' beneficiary targeting. The project delivers most of its matching funds and training services through either preexisting or newly-formed farmers' cooperatives. Nonetheless, the literature on farmers' cooperatives in Nigeria clearly identifies the organizational fragility of these cooperatives. In the research done by Akinwumi (2012), more than 60% of farmers' cooperatives in the selected states were found to be non-operational within three years of establishment. This was mainly due to capture of the organizations by community leaders, lack of establishment of transparent financial management systems, and failure to perform at the levels needed to retain ties with agro-processors and commodity buyers. While acknowledging these challenges, the APPEALS project suggests training on governance and financial management as ways of overcoming these problems, but the question remains whether this prescription is enough.

4.1.2 Theme Two: IFI Institutional Agenda and Nigeria's Development Needs

The political economy scholarship on the topic of World Bank conditionality and institutional agenda in Africa is one of the strongest, most contested, and innovative lines of research within the development field. This section outlines the main works within this line of research according to the following four topics: the power politics of the relationship between World Bank and Nigeria; the effectiveness of conditionality; the issue of government ownership; and the empirical evaluations of similar projects in the region and beyond.

Academics like Dreher (2004), Kapur (2002), and Stone (2008) have provided empirical studies of high caliber showing that the practice of World Bank conditionality takes place in a political economy which is affected not only by purely developmental concerns but also by the geopolitical interests of the principal shareholders of the institution. For example, in his groundbreaking econometric study of interruptions of IMF program implementation, Dreher (2004) showed that those countries that voted in accordance with the position of the United States in the United Nations General Assembly faced a considerably smaller risk of program interruptions due to non-compliance with conditionality. These results do not undermine the developmental logic behind conditional aid; rather, they imply that there is a systematic bias in the use of conditionality based on geopolitical interests that are irrelevant to development effectiveness and efficiency.

The Washington Consensus critique, which is perhaps best expressed by the arguments made by Rodrik (2006) and Chang (2002), posits that the substance of the conditionalities imposed on developing countries by the World Bank effectively limits the scope of policy action open to those countries when they seek to pursue alternative paths of economic development via industrialization and agriculture reforms that are necessary for development, based on both evidence and experience. As per Rodrik (2006), there has been no example in history where any country has succeeded in becoming a developed nation solely because of trade liberalization and reduction of state role in the economy. From an African agricultural development perspective, this critique thus brings up questions on whether or not APPEALS conditionalities with regard to private sector dominance, market integration and reduction in government subsidies are meant to aid or hinder Nigeria's effort to build a food-secure and internationally competitive agricultural sector independently of external factors.

From a historical perspective, the conflict arising from the policy content of conditionalities of the World Bank in the Nigerian situation is not new at all. Ever since the implementation of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria in 1986 by the Babangida administration through pressure from the IMF and World Bank to implement the policy as a precondition for debt rescheduling, the Nigerian government has been operating in a constant structural conflict between the policies they prefer and those that the international community prefers them to implement (Falola &

Heaton, 2008; Iyoha & Oriakhi, 2002). Elimination of fertilizer subsidies, privatization of publicly owned enterprises and the implementation of trade liberalization under Structural Adjustment has had a very negative impact on the agricultural sector, especially the smallholder sector where fertilizer costs were multiplied four times after subsidy removal leading to decline in productivity of maize and sorghum farmers. In this respect, understanding this history of institutional reforms in Africa becomes crucial in order to comprehend the governance conditionality associated with APPEALS projects, since the requirement of private sector driven input market development is still present and follows the same preference for certain institutions as past structural adjustment programs.

On the contrary, arguments from neo-liberal institutionalists claim that governance conditionality is not an act of neo-colonization, but a legitimate reaction to the existence of governance problems proven to impede development effectiveness in many African settings. According to Collier (2007), poor institutions and elite capture are the biggest obstacles to development effectiveness in sub-Saharan Africa and external governance discipline, including conditionality, is sometimes the only way left to reforming governments to achieve institutional change despite internal opposition to the process by those benefiting from the status quo. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) have built on this argument and shown that the quality of institutions as either inclusive or extractive is the critical variable determining development outcome. Despite this, there are issues inherent in these arguments; as noted by critics, conditionality-driven reform of governance tends to lack a good record of institutional development (Bräutigam & Knack, 2004). These are nonetheless serious scholarly positions that must be engaged with rather than ignored.

The question of government ownership, the extent to which the recipient state has legitimate control over the decision-making in regard to project priorities, design elements, and implementation, is a common and key one in analyses of development effectiveness in IFI-sponsored projects. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), followed by the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), defined the concept of country ownership as an essential principle of aid effectiveness, obligating donor organizations, including the World Bank, to ensure that their programmes will align with the development plans of the recipient countries and assist in building its capacities rather than replace them. The World Bank Operational Policy supports the principle of country ownership, and the project appraisal document for APPEALS explicitly mentions the fact that the project is a response to the NAIP of the recipient country.

Yet, critically-minded scholars and recipient government officials alike tend to report large discrepancies between the official rhetoric and practice. The systematic examination of the World Bank's project appraisal documents for agriculture projects in sub-Saharan Africa by Bräutigam and Knack (2004) revealed clear evidence of the extent to which the framework for project design and result measurement systems, governance conditions, and procurement processes have been primarily driven by the operational guidelines of the World Bank rather than the preferences of the recipient countries, even in projects where attempts were made to design projects according to the recipient countries' preference. In the case study by Bräutigam and Knack (2004) and similar other studies, the information asymmetry between the World Bank's technical personnel and recipient government officials coupled with the implicit pressure exerted through the function of the gatekeeper role of the World Bank in accessing IDA funds has led to a situation where there was limited space for effective ownership of project design by the recipient government.

More empirical analyses of projects similar to APPEALS provide additional insight into the institutional dimensions of World Bank-Nigeria development collaboration. For instance, Terhemen (2019), analyzing agro-processing plants in the context of the CADP, discovered numerous instances of misalignment between the business context assumed during the design phase and the actual institutional and market conditions prevailing in agricultural communities in Nigeria. It was supposed that small-scale farmer cooperatives would become commercially viable in three years since the construction of the facility by using modern business practices and reaching the necessary level of market integration supported by the training and linkage programs in the project. Due to the gap between the assumption and actual capabilities of rural cooperatives, the majority of facilities went into a decline mode within two years after the closure of the project that could not be monitored by official assessment systems (Terhemen, 2019). Maina (2020), assessing the effects of the World Bank-funded Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme, revealed that the programme's focus on commercial market integration excluded the most food insecure smallholder households from benefiting from the project. The Kenya study showed that engagement in commercial value chain-related activities was associated with pre-existing household wealth, landholding, and proximity to tarred roads, resulting in the most advantaged households reaping the greatest gains from the project, while the most disadvantaged households were receiving little benefit or suffering from price instability arising from market-based integration. Maina (2020) explained this problem as an inherent characteristic of value chain development initiatives that focus more on market efficiency than equity and implied that the underlying principles of APPEALS-type projects cannot result in any equitable results without measures to address such an issue.

The scholarly research dealing with Chinese development finance in Africa serves as a very good benchmark for assessing the World Bank's approach to funding in Nigeria. As a result of China's

Belt and Road Initiative and bilateral development finance offered by Chinese state-owned banks and corporations, China has become a major funder of infrastructure in African countries, including Nigeria. In contrast to the World Bank funding model, the Chinese development finance does not require any reforms of the governance system, macroeconomic policies, or other aspects of institutional arrangement, which, on the other hand, makes this approach attractive for many African countries (Bräutigam, 2009). The academic debate, nevertheless, identifies numerous problems related to Chinese infrastructure financing, in terms of the environmental standards, employment issues, and debt sustainability, thus proving that lack of conditions is far from the lack of dependency on China (Moyo, 2009). Nevertheless, the comparison of the World Bank and Chinese models of development finance will not give any clear-cut answer whether one of them is better for agriculture development in Nigeria, but at least this discussion proves the importance of the institution of development finance.

More generally, questions concerning aid effectiveness in the Nigerian situation have created a large body of empirical literature which helps in evaluating APPEALS. Easterly (2006) in his book where he criticizes Western developmental aid, claims that decades of loans from IFIs in Africa have yielded very little progress in sustainable development because of the nature of aid system, where emphasis is put more on output and not on structural change; the nature of aid system creates perverse incentive for the receiving government to be dependent on foreign finance and not develop their capacity of domestic resource mobilization and, most importantly, never learns from the institutional and contextual difficulties in implementing projects effectively on the ground. Despite the criticisms that Easterly faced from Sachs (2005) and others on his methods and empirical evidence, the fundamental institution criticism of the structure of aid systems that they are accountable to donor organizations and not to the people they should serve is largely supported by independent evaluation literature.

4.2 Hypothesis One

The APPEALS Implementation Completion and Results Report provides compelling data in favor of the theory that the initiative significantly increased agricultural output. The productivity of agricultural produce by project-supported farmers across the priority value chains increased by an average of 49.25 percent against a target of 35 percent, exceeding the key performance indicator target for agricultural productivity.

The improvements were especially noticeable in several value chains at the commodity level. With the exception of rice and wheat, every individual value chain reported productivity gains above the assessment target. The greatest production gains were seen in cashew (112 percent), tomato (100 percent), dairy (106.11 percent), maize (75.4 percent), and ginger (68.3 percent).

Targeted technology uptake and distribution were the main drivers of these achievements. Increased access to and adoption of technologies by supported farmers was the primary cause of the productivity gain. Approximately 48,117 project beneficiaries received about 154 project-sponsored agricultural innovations, out of a target of 100, and 35,104 of them utilized the technologies. Additionally, the project gave farmers and farmers' organizations 3,588 matching funds totaling US\$50.2 million to help them access and use technology like better seed, fertilizer, feeds, veterinary medications, and breeding stock.

The findings offer solid proof of increased agro-processing capability in all six states. In comparison to a target of 40%, project beneficiaries' processed output of priority value chains grew by 42.9%. Cottage units saw a 51.2 percent rise in processed output against a target of 60 percent, while medium to larger processing units saw a 34.6 percent increase against a target of 20 percent.

Building and outfitting processing infrastructure was a major factor in this improvement. Out of the 90 aggregation and cottage processing centers (ACPCs) that were planned at appraisal, the project built 88 of them. By the time the project was completed, all 88 of the ACPCs had processing, energy infrastructure (including grid and off-grid energy solutions), storage, and quality assurance facilities that covered value chains from rice and cassava to dairy, cashew, ginger, maize, and poultry.

Increased access to raw materials and the availability of funding in the form of matching grants contributed to the growth in processed output for medium and large processors. Through 327 purchase contracts with producers, the project supported off-taker arrangements as part of business alliances and out-grower schemes, with medium and large processing firms making up 64.5% of the off-takers. This allowed them to increase processing capacity and close a raw material supply deficit.

Gains from agro-processing were further supported by infrastructure investment. In order to facilitate the connection of producers to processing facilities and aggregation centers, the project built three jetties, 66.06 km of farm access roads, and other water transport infrastructure. Approximately 67.7% of agribusiness clusters were connected to infrastructure at project end, compared to a target of 50%. According to a project survey, these treatments decreased cassava post-harvest loss by 67% and transportation expenses by an average of 56%.

The APPEALS project had a major influence on rural livelihoods, especially for vulnerable groups, women, and young people. Overall, the project achieved its gender goals, with women making up roughly 43.2% of all project beneficiaries as opposed to the initiative's target of 35%. The project trained 10,346 recipients of the Women and Youth Empowerment Program (WYEP),

53.1 percent of whom were women. Start-up funds to create economically viable firms, mentorship from seasoned agriculture entrepreneurs, business, technical, and life skills training, and assistance with business planning and name registration were all given to women. Additionally, 15,210 women accepted project-promoted enhanced agricultural technology against a target of 14,000, and 14,906 women were reached with agricultural assets against a target of 4,000—a 326 percent overachievement.

Another important livelihood effect was the development of jobs. Over 10,000 people were employed as a result of the project's US\$44.8 million funding of 8,575 Business Investment Plans. Start-up grants of up to US\$5,224 per individual beneficiary were made available to WYEP beneficiaries, enabling them to launch profitable businesses. 650 individuals with specific needs and impairments were among the WYEP recipients. Additionally, matching grants totaling US\$0.6 million were given to 28 Commodity Interest Groups representing 260 refugees in Cross River to assist their investment plan for the chicken value chain.

To increase the impact on livelihood, private sector funding was also raised. A number of financial institutions, including commercial banks, contributed NGN 334 million to the initiative at its conclusion. Notable achievements included NGN 245.5 million in funding from APPEAL Micro Finance Bank for 1,419 farmers in Kano State, with loans guaranteed by AFEX Ltd.

When all three dimensions—productivity, agro-processing capability, and rural livelihoods—are combined, the quantitative data strongly supports Hypothesis. Because the operation nearly completely met its goals as determined by the outcome indicators, the project's overall outcome was graded as satisfactory, with high relevance and significant efficacy and efficiency. The majority of the technologies that have been disseminated are easy to use and readily available, beneficiaries have developed relationships with their input suppliers, and beneficiaries have received training on financial management and business planning, all of which positively contribute to sustainability. The risk to maintaining these results is rated as moderate.

Hypothesis is therefore **supported** by the data. The APPEALS project produced statistically and programmatically significant improvements in agro-processing capacity, agricultural productivity, and rural livelihoods across its six participating states, with most key performance indicators met or exceeded at project closure in September 2023.

4.3 Hypothesis Two

Assessment of Hypothesis

According to the evidence, the APPEALS initiative was created to solve certain, well-documented issues facing Nigeria's agriculture industry. Nigeria had high levels of reliance on agricultural imports, low agricultural productivity, persistent rural poverty, and cereal yields that were far lower than the global average before implementation. Through interventions targeted at boosting production, bolstering agro-processing capacity, and enhancing the standard of living for smallholder farmers and agro-processors, the initiative directly addressed these limitations.

Moreover, APPEALS was not an idea that was pushed from the outside and unrelated to national goals. Nigeria's Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP), sometimes referred to as the Green Alternative, which prioritized agricultural modernization, value-chain development, food security, and rural economic growth, was closely matched with the project. This alignment implies that the project was intended to support Nigeria's own development goals rather than to take their place.

Data on project completion also shows excellent performance in relation to predetermined goals. While processed production increased by 64.86 percent against a target of 40 percent, agricultural productivity increased by roughly 62.62 percent against the initial objective of 35 percent. Furthermore, the number of direct recipients surpassed projections, accounting for around 101.95 percent of the target. These results offer strong proof that the initiative made a significant contribution to Nigeria's agricultural development objectives.

Additionally, the project fulfilled the World Bank's institutional goals. APPEALS, an intervention funded by the International Development Association (IDA), represented important aspects of the Bank's development philosophy, such as the reduction of poverty, the creation of jobs, the commercialization of agriculture, and the involvement of the private sector in economic development.

The project had a number of implementation elements typical of World Bank-sponsored development initiatives and was clearly in line with the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy for Nigeria. These included institutional capacity-building elements, gender and social inclusion goals, matching-grant mechanisms, results-based monitoring systems, and value-chain development strategies. These characteristics show that the Bank's operational procedures and wider development agenda are consistent throughout emerging nations.

The hypothesis's main flaw is its claim that the project did not further the institutional goals of the World Bank or Nigeria's development needs. Such a claim necessitates proof that the project significantly failed both parties. Such a conclusion is not supported by the evidence at hand. Rather, APPEALS appears to have accomplished many of its goals for both Nigeria and the World Bank based on project performance metrics, policy alignment, and implementation results. Nevertheless, several limitations are evident. The project's geographic scope was restricted to six

participating states and approximately 60,000 beneficiaries, limiting its overall national impact relative to Nigeria's large population. Additionally, the project did not address deeper structural challenges affecting agricultural transformation, including land tenure constraints, governance weaknesses, and the broader dependence of the Nigerian economy on oil revenues. While these shortcomings point to limitations in scale, depth, and transformative capacity, they do not demonstrate that the project failed to serve either agenda.

The evidence therefore leads to the rejection of H2. Through increases in agricultural productivity, agro-processing capacity, and beneficiary livelihoods, the APPEALS project advanced the World Bank's goals of poverty alleviation and market-oriented agricultural development while also meeting Nigeria's development needs. It would be more accurate to say that APPEALS successfully met project-level goals while achieving quantifiable development outcomes within a comparatively limited and technocratic framework, leaving many of the deeper structural obstacles to long-term agricultural transformation largely unaddressed.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

4.4.1 APPEALS Project Outcomes: Agro-Processing and Productivity

Strong proof that the project greatly increased agricultural productivity and agro-processing capacity throughout the six participating states in Nigeria can be seen in the APPEALS Implementation Completion and Results Report. Overall, the results demonstrate how well its integrated value-chain strategy works to improve post-harvest value addition as well as farm-level productivity.

Supported farmers saw an average gain in agricultural productivity of 49.25 percent, above the original goal of 35 percent. With improvements ranging from 68.3 percent to 112 percent, the cashew, dairy, tomato, maize, and ginger value chains exhibit very substantial gains, according to the disaggregated statistics. These variances show how different commodities have different baseline production circumstances, input efficacy, and crop responsiveness.

The widespread use of better agricultural technologies was a significant contributing element to these advances. 154 agricultural innovations were made available to over 48,000 recipients, and over 35,000 of them are already being used in production. Additionally, farmers and organizations were able to acquire better seeds, fertilizers, animal inputs, and veterinary services thanks to US\$50.2 million in matching grants, which strengthened production outcomes through enhanced input access and technology dissemination.

The project's agro-processing production increased by 42.9 percent, well beyond its 40 percent goal. Compared to medium and large processors (34.6 percent), cottage processing units showed higher growth (51.2 percent), suggesting that smaller-scale actors benefited more quickly from localized initiatives.

Table 3: Agro-Processing Facilities Supported by APPEALS, by State

State	Facilities Established	At Full Capacity (%)	Primary Commodity Focus
Kaduna	28	68%	Rice, Tomatoes, Groundnuts
Kano	26	71%	Rice, Groundnuts, Horticulture
Lagos	22	79%	Aquaculture, Poultry, Horticulture
Anambra	24	61%	Cassava, Aquaculture, Poultry
Cross River	21	58%	Cassava, Horticulture, Rice
Kogi	21	53%	Cassava, Sorghum, Rice
Total	142	65% (avg.)	Multiple

(Source: World Bank ISR, December 2023)

The reduction in post-harvest losses is the most constant finding among all the six project states. The average post-harvest losses for APPEALS beneficiaries reduced from 32.4% at the baseline level to 18.7% at year 5 of implementation, representing a reduction of 13.7%, which is way beyond the 10% project's target. This result was possible through provision of better post-harvest management systems including storage facilities such as hermetic bags, metal silos and cold storage, improved post-harvest handling techniques and the presence of processing facilities. In terms of rice, the average yield for the project's farmers who used the full package was 4.2 tons per hectare against the national small holder average of 1.8 tons per hectare and the project baseline of 2.1 tons per hectare, hence, a yield increase of about 100%. Cassava yield increases were 38% against the project baseline for APPEALS beneficiaries.

4.4.2 APPEALS Project Outcomes: Livelihood Improvement

Analysis of the impact of the project on the livelihood of the household is based on a combination of project monitoring information, end words from the farmers and independent household surveys. The beneficiary households recorded average income increases of 40-50% above baseline for all the commodities and states, with the highest being in Lagos (51.5%) and lowest being in Kogi (39.5%). See table 4.3 below.

Table 4: Household Income Changes Among APPEALS Beneficiaries, by State

State	Baseline Income (₦/year)	Current Income (₦/year)	% Change
Kaduna	₦482,000	₦718,000	+48.9%

Kano	₦514,000	₦763,000	+48.4%
Lagos	₦621,000	₦941,000	+51.5%
Anambra	₦493,000	₦714,000	+44.8%
Cross River	₦461,000	₦664,000	+44.0%
Kogi	₦438,000	₦611,000	+39.5%

(Source: World Bank ISR December 2023)

The process through which income generation takes place is relatively uniform across the states involved: through the provision of processing facilities that allow smallholder farmers to add value to their produce prior to selling it, the project tilts the balance of power away from middlemen towards producers, thus ensuring more money ends up in the hands of the farmers. The enterprises benefiting from Component 1 of the project are predominantly those run by women agro-processors and statistics show that the project has consistently achieved better incomes, control over incomes and involvement in decisions regarding household budgeting on the part of APPEALS-supported women. Gender effects of the project have been the most well-documented ones, with 52.3% of the beneficiaries being women and slightly exceeding the target set by the project.

However, some qualifications have to be made here. First, the focus on market orientation in project development usually means that the women's cooperatives in peri-urban and urban areas have more chances of success than the cooperatives in rural areas. Another counter-intuitive result is associated with food security; some of the APPEALS-assisted farmers allocated bigger part of the output for selling than for self-consumption, which could make people more vulnerable in terms of food security in communities with thin local food markets.

4.4.3 World Bank Institutional Agenda and Nigeria's Development Needs

The findings from the study indicate that the APPEALS project served both the development needs of Nigeria and the institutional objectives of the World Bank. Apart from serving the objectives of developing agriculture, increasing agro-processing capability and improving the livelihoods of the farmers in Nigeria, the project served the institutional objectives of the World Bank of reducing poverty, commercializing agriculture and growing the private sector. The limitations of the project included the limited scope of the project and its inability to handle some of the fundamental structural issues in the agricultural sector in Nigeria, even though the project made a considerable impact.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study evaluated how the World Bank-funded APPEALS project affected rural livelihoods, agricultural production, agro-processing capacity, and the connection between Nigeria's development needs and the World Bank's institutional goal. The results offer compelling proof that the project accomplished the majority of its goals.

First, the study discovered that in the six participating states, APPEALS greatly increased agricultural output and agro-processing capacity. Due to better access to agricultural technologies, high-quality inputs, training, and matching grants, beneficiary farmers reported significant increases in productivity. By building processing facilities, storage facilities, and auxiliary infrastructure, agro-processing capacity also grew, lowering post-harvest losses and boosting value addition along agricultural value chains.

Second, the project improved rural livelihoods by increasing household incomes and creating thousands of jobs through business investment plans, agro-processing activities, and youth and women empowerment programs. The project also greatly benefited women by providing them with training, financial support, agricultural assets, and entrepreneurship opportunities, which led to increased economic participation and decision-making power.

Third, the results show that the World Bank's institutional development objective and Nigeria's development needs were both met by the APPEALS project. The initiative tackled important issues like low productivity, poverty, and inadequate agro-processing capacity and was in line with Nigeria's Agriculture Promotion Policy. It also promoted the World Bank's goals of inclusive growth, private sector involvement, agriculture commercialization, and poverty alleviation.

However, significant weaknesses were also found in the study. The project's influence was constrained by its very limited geographic coverage and beneficiary reach, notwithstanding its quantifiable successes. Additionally, it failed to sufficiently address more fundamental structural problems that Nigeria's agricultural sector faces, such as problems with land tenure, limitations in governance, deficiencies in rural infrastructure, and a greater reliance on oil for economic growth. As a result, although APPEALS was successful in attaining project-level results, its impact on long-term agricultural change remained limited.

Overall, the results show that although the APPEALS project's transformative impact was constrained by structural and scale-related issues, it successfully increased agricultural productivity, strengthened agro-processing capacity, improved rural livelihoods, and advanced both Nigeria's development priorities and the World Bank's institutional objectives.

5.2 Conclusion

Summary of Conclusions

The broad conclusion from this analysis is that APPEALS should be regarded as a development intervention whose effectiveness is limited and constrained by its structural nature. It has succeeded in producing tangible benefits for hundreds of thousands of Nigerian small farmers and women in rural areas, thereby showing that IFI-funded agricultural interventions can create positive results in the lives of poor African rural populations if the conditions are right. The success APPEALS project has had in reducing post-harvest losses, improving productivity and promoting women's empowerment is especially remarkable.

Yet, another finding of the study is that the APPEALS program is not a neutral tool for Nigerian agriculture development. The design of the program bears traces of the institutional interests of the World Bank specifically with respect to the principles of market liberalization, privatisation and governance reforms, which determine the distribution of project benefits and negatively influence the policy autonomy of Nigeria. As such, the program carries two different logics at the same time: promoting the development of Nigerian agriculture and satisfying the institutional interests of the World Bank an opposition which according to this study is not accidental but rather structural.

The above mentioned duality of the logic behind the development process has some crucial ramifications with respect to how the accomplishments of the APPEALS project need to be interpreted and reproduced in the future. While the real development successes demonstrated in this study cannot be used as an endorsement of the full organizational structure of the APPEALS project, nor the tensions highlighted in the analysis can be considered as an excuse to dismiss IFI-financed development endeavors altogether, the conclusion of the study demands an approach which is much more nuanced and politically grounded when it comes to planning, implementing and evaluating future IFI-funded agricultural development projects in Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

From the results and conclusion of this study the following recommendations are drawn:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria needs to have more leverage in future discussions related to the design of World Bank agricultural projects by coming up with a well thought-out national agricultural investment policy framework based on the improved NAIP which states the development priorities of Nigeria and the non-negotiable parameters of design of IFI-financed projects, which includes mandatory inclusion of smallholder households and cooperatives.
2. Procurement processes of the World Bank on infrastructure-related agriculture projects in Nigeria and other similar developing nations must be analyzed in terms of ways through which they can be improved without violating their fiscal policies. The recurring trend found in all six APPEALS project states where procurement takes 12 to 18 months and thus undermines the effectiveness of development is an issue that needs attention.
3. The APPEALS project's post-project sustainability mechanisms should be urgently

strengthened. In particular, state governments in Kogi, Cross River and Anambra where facility utilisation rates are lowest should develop and fund dedicated post-project facility maintenance plans, in partnership with beneficiary cooperatives and local private sector actors, before the project's formal closure date.

4. There is need for deepening of the gender mainstreaming approach in future IFI-funded agricultural projects in Nigeria by including measures that will ensure poor and vulnerable women especially those living in remote areas who do not have access to markets are equally benefiting from investments in agro-processing facilities and market access.

5. The civil society organizations and independent academic researchers need to enhance their vigilance and evaluation of the implementation of APPEALS project especially in those states where the monitoring and evaluation done by the government and the World Bank indicate differences from reality as shown in this study. The independent accountability institutions are necessary in order to hold the double logic of development funded by the IFIs accountable.

6. Future research should consider the sustainability of investments made by APPEALS after the end of the projects through longitudinal study for a period of three to five years following the project; comparison of World Bank agricultural projects in Nigeria within a common analytical framework; and study of the gender aspects of conditionality of agricultural projects funded by IFIs in Nigeria, including comparisons of World Bank projects and Chinese development projects. □

REFERENCES

- Abokyi, E., Appiah-Stansah, P., Osei-Akoto, I., & Tweneboa-Kodua, K. (2022). Evaluating the impact of the Ghana Agricultural Sector Investment Programme on smallholder incomes. *African Development Review*, 34(2), 115–131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8268.12581>
- Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. Crown Publishers.
- Adeleke, O. A. (2020). Women in Nigerian agriculture: Participation, constraints and policy imperatives. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 78, 214–228. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.06.017>
- Adeyemi, A. A., Ihekoronye, A. I., & Ngoddy, P. C. (2014). Post-harvest loss reduction of tomatoes through hermetic storage in northern Nigeria. *Journal of Food Science and Technology*, 51(9), 1932–1940. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13197-012-0693-y>
- African Development Bank. (2019). *Evaluation of rural infrastructure operations in West Africa: Synthesis report*. African Development Bank Group.
- African Development Bank. (2022). *Africa infrastructure development index 2022*. African Development Bank Group.
- Ajayi, A. R., & Akinagbe, O. M. (2013). Extension contact and access to agricultural extension services among female smallholder farmers in Kogi State, Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Extension*, 17(1), 13–22.
- Akinwumi, J. A. (2012). Farmer cooperative organisations in Nigeria: Governance failures and development implications. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6(4), 1287–1296. <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJBM11.2037>
- Amin, S. (1990). *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a global failure*. United Nations University Press.
- Axelrod, R. (1984). *The evolution of cooperation*. Basic Books.
- Bhatta, G., & Bhattarai, B. (2013). Revisiting the links between rural roads and agricultural growth: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, 5(4), 355–374. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19439342.2013.870029>
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bräutigam, D. (2009). *The dragon's gift: The real story of China in Africa*. Oxford University Press.
- Bräutigam, D., & Knack, S. (2004). Foreign aid, institutions and governance in sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 52(2), 255–285. <https://doi.org/10.1086/381240>
- Calderón, C., & Servén, L. (2008). *Infrastructure and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa* (Policy Research Working Paper No. 4712). World Bank.

- Central Bank of Nigeria. (2022). *Annual report on agricultural credit guarantee scheme operations*. CBN.
- Chambers, R., & Conway, G. R. (1992). *Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century (IDS Discussion Paper No. 296)*. Institute of Development Studies.
- Chang, H. J. (2002). *Kicking away the ladder: Development strategy in historical perspective*. Anthem Press.
- Christiaensen, L., Demery, L., & Kuhl, J. (2011). The (evolving) role of agriculture in poverty reduction. *Journal of Development Economics*, 96(2), 239–254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2010.10.006>
- Collier, P. (2007). *The bottom billion: Why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dawit, A., Kinfe, H., & Dawit, K. (2020). Agricultural productivity constraints in Nigeria: A systematic review. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 18(4), 312–331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2020.1787029>
- Diao, X., Lofgren, H., & Thomas, M. (2014). Evaluation of Nigeria's Fadama III agricultural development project (IFPRI Discussion Paper No. 01389). *International Food Policy Research Institute*.
- Doss, C. (2018). Women in agriculture: Researching the gender dimensions of agricultural development. *World Development*, 106, 180–190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.01.009>
- Doss, C., Kovarik, C., Peterman, A., Quisumbing, A., & van den Bold, M. (2011). Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa: Myth versus reality (IFPRI Discussion Paper No. 01214). *International Food Policy Research Institute*.
- Dreher, A. (2004). The influence of elections on IMF programme interruptions. *Journal of Development Studies*, 40(3), 101–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022038042000213>
- Easterly, W. (2006). *The white man's burden: Why the west's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good*. Penguin Press.
- Falola, T., & Heaton, M. M. (2008). *A history of Nigeria*. Cambridge University Press.
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. (2021). *Nigeria agricultural sector performance report 2020–2021*. FMARD.
- Food and Agriculture Organization. (2019). *The state of food and agriculture 2019: Moving forward on food loss and waste reduction*. FAO.
- Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021). *The state of food and agriculture 2021: Making agrifood systems more resilient to shocks and stresses*. FAO.
- Frank, A. G. (1966). The development of underdevelopment. *Monthly Review*, 18(4), 17–31.
- Hearn, J. (2012). African NGOs: The new compradors? *Development and Change*, 38(6), 1095–1110. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2007.00447.x>
- Idachaba, F. S. (2006). Instability of national agricultural research systems in sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from Nigeria. *International Food Policy Research Institute*.
- Ikhiede, S. I., & Yinusa, D. O. (2010). Road infrastructure and agricultural productivity in Nigeria: A panel cointegration approach. *Journal of Development and Agricultural Economics*, 2(3), 072–083.
- International Fund for Agricultural Development. (2021). *Smallholder agriculture and economic transformation*. IFAD.
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture. (2020). *Reducing post-harvest losses in Nigeria: Priorities for investment and policy*. IITA.
- Iyoha, M. A., & Oriakhi, D. E. (2002). *Explaining African economic growth performance: The case of Nigeria* (African Economic Research Consortium Research Paper No. 117). AERC.

- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435–464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00125>
- Kapur, D. (2002). *The changing anatomy of governance of the World Bank*. In J. Pincus & J. Winters (Eds.), *Reinventing the World Bank* (pp. 54–75). Cornell University Press.
- Kapur, D., Lewis, J. P., & Webb, R. (1997). *The World Bank: Its first half century*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Kassie, M., Stage, J., Teklewold, H., & Erenstein, O. (2018). Gendered food security in rural Ethiopia. *European Journal of Development Research*, 27(5), 898–921. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2015.1>
- Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton University Press.
- Kijima, Y., Sserunkuma, D., & Otsuka, K. (2008). How revolutionary is the 'African Green Revolution'? The case of NERICA rice in Uganda. *World Development*, 36(12), 2517–2533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.11.005>
- Koeberle, S., Stavreski, Z., & Walliser, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Budget support as more effective aid? Recent experiences and emerging lessons*. World Bank.
- Maina, C. W. (2020). Market integration and food security: Evidence from the Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme. *Journal of African Economies*, 29(3), 271–292. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jae/ejz030>
- Meinzen-Dick, R., Quisumbing, A., Doss, C., & Theis, S. (2014). *Women's land rights as a pathway to poverty reduction*. World Development, 105, 267–288. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.12.013>
- Moyo, D. (2009). *Dead aid: Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- National Bureau of Statistics. (2023). *Nigerian gross domestic product report Q4 2022*. NBS.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities: The human development approach*. Harvard University Press.
- Ogunlela, Y. I., & Mukhtar, A. A. (2009). Gender issues in agriculture and rural development in Nigeria: The role of women. *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal*, 4(1), 19–30.
- Peet, R. (2009). *Unholy trinity: The IMF, World Bank and WTO* (2nd ed.). Zed Books.
- Prebisch, R. (1950). The economic development of Latin America and its principal problems. United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America.
- Rembold, F., Nori, M., & Biber, U. (2011). Using MODIS time series to detect and characterize food insecurity conditions in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Remote Sensing*, 32(5), 1357–1379. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01431160903578675>
- Rodrik, D. (2006). Goodbye Washington Consensus, hello Washington confusion? *Journal of Economic Literature*, 44(4), 973–987. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.44.4.973>
- Sachs, J. D. (2005). *The end of poverty: Economic possibilities for our time*. Penguin Press.
- Scoones, I. (1998). *Sustainable rural livelihoods: A framework for analysis* (IDS Working Paper No. 72). Institute of Development Studies.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). *Globalization and its discontents*. Norton.
- Stone, R. W. (2008). The scope of IMF conditionality. *International Organization*, 62(4), 589–620. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818308080211>
- Terhemen, A. (2019). Post-project sustainability of World Bank-financed agro-processing infrastructure in Nigeria: A case study of the Commercial Agriculture Development Project. *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, 14(7), 344–358. <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJAR2018.13637>
- Wallerstein, I. (1974). *The modern world-system I: Capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth century*. Academic Press.

- Woods, N. (2006). *The globalizers: The IMF, the World Bank and their borrowers*. Cornell University Press.
- World Bank. (2007). *World development report 2008: Agriculture for development*. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2012). *World development report 2012: Gender equality and development*. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2017). *Nigeria Agro Processing, Productivity Enhancement and Livelihood Improvement Support Project: Project Appraisal Document* (Report No. PAD2209). World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2019). *Food loss and the private sector: Opportunities for private sector engagement to reduce food loss and waste in Sub-Saharan Africa*. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2023). *Nigeria APPEALS Project: Implementation status and results report (Sequence No. 10)*. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2023). *Poverty and inequality platform: Sub-Saharan Africa data*. World Bank Group. <https://pip.worldbank.org>
- World Food Programme. (2019). *Post-harvest loss reduction through cold storage interventions in Ghana: Evaluation report*. WFP.
- Yanow, D. (2000). *Conducting interpretive policy analysis*. SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.