Farmers Accessibility to the Cassava Initiative Elements in the Central Agricultural Zone of Nigeria

Kehinde Yewande Ogunleye. Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, P.M.B. 4000, Ogbomoso -Nigeria.

Abstract

The Government cassava initiative was introduced in July 2002 to address the poor linkage between production, marketing and utilization of cassava. This study examined the extent of farmers’ accessibility to the elements of this initiative. Data were obtained from individuals who had at least 10 years membership of Cassava Growers Association (CGA) which constituted the target group in the implementation of the initiative in the central agricultural zone of Nigeria. Respondents totalling 190 were selected using multistage sampling procedure. Interview schedule was used to elicit information from respondents. Descriptive statistics and regression were used to analyse the data at p = 0.05. Access to improved stem cuttings and extension training for cassava production ranked highest while credit from international agencies and land for large scale farming ranked lowest among the initiative elements. Majority of the respondents (74.7 %) had high access to the initiative elements. Age significantly affected access to the initiative elements (b= -0.2410). Also, significant relationship exists between change in production activities and access to local government land for cluster farming (r=0.333), access to farm gate processing centre (r=0.269), access to processing equipment (r=0.255) and access to credit (r=0.125). Significant relationship also existed between change in marketing activities and access to market (r=0.422), access to local government land for cluster farming (r=0.547), access to farm gate processing centre (r=0.422) and access to credit (r=0.340). Access to initiative elements improved production more than marketing of the participating farmers. Hence, there is need to intensify efforts on the marketing component of the initiative to achieve growth in the agricultural sector through cassava enterprise.

Keywords: Access, production, marketing, cassava, initiative elements.

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