DETERMINANTS OF FARMERS’ PARTICIPATION IN FARM SETTLEMENT SCHEME IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA: LESSONS FOR FUTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

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Abstract: In its determination to provide food and jobs for Nigerians, and appeal to educated young men to set the pattern for farming, many state governments have re-introduced Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS)/Graduate Employment Scheme once abandoned. One major challenge leading to programme failure in Nigeria is the inability to know the influence of the factors on the participation and constraints of such programmes. This study analysed the determinants of crop farmers’ participation in FSS in Lagos State with the aim of drawing some lessons for future rural development programmes. One hundred and thirty (130) farmers were sampled through two-stage sampling procedures. Data were collected with the aid of a questionnaire and were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics such as the logit regression model. Results show that about 67% of the respondents were male and 72% were married. The major constraining factors to participation in FSS were administrative bottlenecks, inadequate capital, and government interference. The logit regression showed that educational level, farming experience, extension contacts and security of land under FSS were the significant variables (P<0.5) that directly influenced the probability of participation of the farmers in FSS in Lagos State, Nigeria. Farming experience is very crucial for the survival of FSS. Therefore, it is recommended that the determinants of participation and constraints to the participation of the farmers be assessed in any rural development programme to know the necessary action against failure. The effort at increasing extension contacts about FSS will further encourage farmers to participate in FSS.

Key words: food shortage, farming systems, land, commercial farming operation.

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Introduction

The problem of food shortages and insecurity is exacerbated in Nigeria because food production is probably in the hands of small scale farmers practicing mixed cropping systems and cultivating fragmented land (Fawole and Oladele, 2007). Nigeria government is re-introducing the abandoned farm settlement schemes in the western region in the 1950s (The pointer, 2015; The Hope, 2017) as the National Farm Settlement and Youth Empowerment Agency to create a mechanized system of farming and for the purpose of attaining food sufficiency (Nwabughio, 2017) despite the assertion that farm settlement schemes are obsolete, having typically been implemented only in Third World countries lacking the stability and resources to have permanent success.

Farm settlement is a government initiative for promoting rural development (Jaeger, 1981) by providing small farmers with resources and land for commercial farm operations, efficiency in the utilization of land resources and dignity in farming through the provision of infrastructure (Shafto, 2017). A secondary goal was to increase the standard of living among rural communities in a cost-effective manner and discourage rural-urban migration. This was modelled after the Israeli Moshavim, a co-operative, semi-collective agricultural settlement, designed as part of the Zionist state building programme where members work together to develop the land, increase the economy of the state and defend the nation (Aron, 1968, Abdulsalam, 2016). African countries have been home to the most ambitious farm settlement schemes (FSS) with some assistance of foreign aid organizations. For instance, there is Land Resettlement Scheme in Kenya. Under the scheme, three types of settlements were established namely, the high-density scheme, the low-density scheme and the yeoman scheme. The high-density scheme is the most important in terms of its largeness and coupled with the fact that it absorbs both the landless and unemployed with little or no capital or agricultural knowledge. The low-density schemes are exclusively for experienced farmers with working capital. The yeoman scheme is meant for wealthy and experienced farmers (Igbanibo, 2012). We have the Nyakashaka Resettlement Scheme in Uganda established by the Church of Uganda to provide prospects for productive farming for young school leavers that are unemployed; the Farm Settlement Scheme in Western and Eastern Nigeria which was established to attract young educated persons to take up farming and discard the negative ideas they have on farming as well as to demonstrate that by careful planning, farms can be established and operated by young educated farmers with reasonable assistance in form of advice and loans from government; the Gezira Scheme in Sudan where peasants, young school leavers and unemployed persons were settled in large-scale modern farming enterprises with a centralized management that co-ordinate the farming activities of the settlers.
In general, FSSs depend on participants voluntarily relocating, and are seen as the fastest method for developing rural areas. They serve as testing grounds for new farming methods and as a way to transform market economies. Governments implement the schemes with the hope that by infusing large amounts of capital into specific areas, surrounding areas would benefit economically.

A FSS involves the relocation of a group of people who lack capital and land resources to go into profitable farming. Farmers in the scheme are usually educated and possess enough management drive in making career. They are only given basic training in the art of cultivation and management of the mandate crops (Famoriyo, 1986). Farm settlements are stable place to live, grow crops and possibly raise animals with movement only when the soil in the area lost fertility.

The main purpose of this study was to examine, among others, factors influencing farmers’ participation in farm settlement scheme (FSS) and identify constraints encountered by farmers in their willingness to participate in the FSS in the study area.

Farm settlement schemes in Nigeria and guidelines for management of FSS in Lagos State

Farm settlement scheme was initiated by some regional governments in Nigeria and was a critical element of Western Nigeria Policy of Agricultural and Natural Resources of 1959 (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The main objective of this scheme was to settle young school leavers in a specified area of land, making farming their career thereby preventing them from moving to the urban areas in search of white-collar jobs (Olatunbosun, 1964). These settled farmers were also to serve as models in good farming systems for farmers residing in nearby villages to emulate. Land was acquired by the State Government from local chieftains and native authorities. Each settler was to receive six to eight hectares of land, of which one and a half hectares were for subsistence crops. Enterprises on the settlements included cash crops and livestock products. Primary school leavers (most of them aged between 11 and 14 years) were recruited and trained in farm institutes for two to three years and eventually settled on the farms. The settler’s initial contributions lay in the provision of part of the labour necessary for establishing the holdings. All the expenditure was borne by the Government, while the settlers were expected to acquire complete ownership by repayment of that component of Government’s investment which included the settler’s house and the establishment of his/her farm unit. The primary objectives of the FSS both in the Western and Eastern parts of Nigeria were to provide employment and income for school leavers, arrest the wave of rural migration to the towns, increase agricultural productivity, and demonstrate modern techniques of farming and to solve the land tenure problem, a major constraint to agricultural development (Ambali and
Unfortunately, the scheme went into oblivion with the few available ones in jeopardy because some of the settlers were too young and inexperienced in farming thus causing a high percentage of drop-outs among the settlers (Amalu, 1998), shortage of fund, politicking with the programme, lack of understanding of the meaning and implication of the scheme by some settlers who assumed that through their participation in the scheme they would eventually get paid job. Most settlers left the settlement, discouraged by the hard life on the settlement, the crop failures, the size of their debts and the authoritarian behaviour of the staff, a compulsory saving scheme and delays in paying the food allowance (Roider, 1968). Thirdly, the cost of establishing a viable farm settlement was too high in terms of cash and staff (Amalu, 1998).

In addition, expenses made on the scheme were incurred mainly on installation of infrastructure like construction of houses, schools, markets, roads for the settlers which did not directly bring about an increase in agricultural output by the participants as targeted (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The Civil War also played a major part to the failure of the scheme. Many resources that should have been used for the scheme were diverted for military purposes thus hindering the farm settlements in meeting up their planned targets.

In Lagos State, the following guidelines are stipulated by the government in running of farm settlements in the State (Lagos State Department of Agricultural Services, 2013).

- To select applicants for the FSS, a team of experienced Senior Ministry Officials shall be set up for the purpose of conducting an interview with applicants every time the need arises.
  - Any potential settler in the State should be aged between 21 and 40 years.
  - In order to ensure easy understanding of directives and trainings, all settlers to be recruited should have at least the West African School Certificate (WASC) or its equivalent.
  - Preference would be given to married applicants due to the likelihood of being more responsible and possible access to family labour.
  - All successful applicants would be compelled to undergo 3-month training at the Government-owned training institution before being settled in the settlement and such training would be at the expense of the successful applicant.
  - Each settler in the farm settlement is to be allocated a minimum of one (1) hectare of land depending on the enterprise. This size is to ensure that settlers are able to operate on a scale large enough to earn adequate income to fend for his family all-year-round.
  - The one hectare should be inclusive of the area accommodating all farm structures except the settlers’ residence.
No settler should on any account embark on the growing of permanent or cash crops.

The settler's residential buildings are to be constructed by the Government.

Ownership of the buildings shall on no account change from the Government to the settlers and under no circumstance shall the settlers be allowed to alter either the design or structure of the buildings.

Renovation and maintenance of the settlers' houses, where and when necessary shall be settlers' responsibilities.

Where there is a need for any other farm structure to be erected by the settlers, approval should be sought from the Ministry through a letter.

Each settler is expected to spend 10 years on the settlement after which he/she will be entitled to re-apply for another 10 years’ tenure subject to approval of the Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture.

Within this period, the Ministry will assist all settlers in the area of counselling, production, access to credit facilities as well as investment. All these are aimed at ensuring that the settlers live a comfortable life after leaving the settlement.

On attaining the age of 59 years, the settlers will be compelled to put forward the name and other information about their recommended successor to the Ministry.

When the settler attains the age of 60 years, the recommended successor will be invited for an interview using the laid down guidelines for recruitment in the farm settlement scheme.

Where the recommended successor falls short of the requirement, further actions as determined by the director of agricultural services in the Ministry will be taken.

If successful, the settler is to go through the requisite training and return as a full-fledged settler now replacing his/her predecessor (that is, the original settler who recommended him/her).

The settlement shall be cooperative in nature. This means that all settlers must be members of their settlement’s Multipurpose Cooperative Society and non-compliances with this are to be penalized with eviction.

**Materials and Methods**

The study area

The study was carried out in Lagos, Nigeria. Lagos sometimes referred to as Lagos State to distinguish it from Lagos Metropolitan Area is a state located in the southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria with Ikeja as the capital city. The
Metropolitan area of Lagos includes: Ikeja (which is the capital of Lagos State), Agege and Mushin. As for the land area, Lagos State is the smallest state in Nigeria with 356,861ha of land of which 75,755 ha is wetland and 169,613ha is designated for agriculture. Out of the portion originally earmarked for agriculture, only 30% is currently cultivated (National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The state is still the epicentre of Nigeria’s economic and social development. The state contains Lagos, the nation’s largest urban area with a population of 9,113,605 (NPC, 2006) and estimated to be over 21 million in 2016 by the National Population Commission of Nigeria surpassing Cairo as Africa’s largest city. Lagos State is bounded to the North and the East by Ogun State. In the West, it shares boundaries with the Republic of Benin. Behind its southern borders lies the Atlantic Ocean. About 22% of its 3,577 km² are lagoons and creeks. Lagos is a port which originated on islands separated by creeks (Lagos State Government, 2017).

The state government’s policy on agriculture hinges on enhanced food production, expanded employment opportunities and sustained growth in strategic crop production and animal husbandry. Agricultural practices in the state include animal and crop productions. Animal production includes fish farming and livestock. Crops that are produced are coconut, rice, cassava and vegetables.

Sampling procedures and sample size

Two-stage sampling procedures were used to select the respondents in the study. The sampling frame consisted of the lists of farm families in five communities that spread across Lagos State. This was obtained from the Lagos State Ministry of Agriculture (LASMA) and Lagos State Agricultural Development Authority (LASADA). In the first stage, five communities with the farm settlement were purposively used (Imota in Imota local council development area of Lagos State (formerly in Ikorodu LGA), Igboye, Araga, all in Epe Local Government Area (LGA), Ajara in Badagry LGA, and Ododunyan in Ikorodu LGA). The second stage involved the random selection of farmers proportionate to the size of the farm families in each of the selected community. In total, one hundred and thirty (20 from Imota, 26 from Igboye, 27 from Araga, 24 from Ajara, and 33 from Ododunyan in Ikorodu) farmers were selected and used for the study.

Method of data collection

Primary data were mainly used in this study, and the data were collected using a well-structured questionnaire. The information obtained from the sampled farmers included their socioeconomic characteristics such as farming experience, household size, educational status, farm size, sex, marital status among participants.
in the farm settlement scheme and challenges facing farmers to participate in farm settlement schemes in the study area.

Method of data analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The descriptive statistic was used to examine the socioeconomic characteristics and to ascertain the constraints encountered by farmers in participating in FSS, while inferential statistic used the logit regression model to determine the factors influencing farmers’ decision to participate in FSS.

The logit regression model is a unit or multivariate technique which allows for estimating the probability of occurrence of an event by predicting a binary dependent outcome from a set of independent variables. This was used to determine the factors affecting farmers’ participation in FSS. There are two reasons for choosing the logit model for this study instead of linear probability and probit models according to Rahman and Alamu (2003). The logit model ensures production of probability of choice within the (0, 1) range. This is an advantage over linear probability model and it is easier and more convenient to compute than the probit model. The logit model is based on the cumulative logistic probability function and it is computationally tractable. According to Gujarati and Porter (2009), it is expressed as:

\[ Z_i = \log \left( \frac{P(Y=1)}{1-P(Y=1)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \ldots + \beta_n X_n + U \]  

Equation 1 states that the log of the odds ratio is a linear function of the Bs as well as the Xs where

- \( Z_i \) = the logit (log of the odds ratio). The stimulus index which ranges from minus infinity to plus infinity;
- \( P \) = probability with a value ranging between zero and one and it is non-linearly related to \( Z_i \). As \( Pi \), the probability goes from 0 to 1, the logit \( Zi \) goes from \(-\infty \) to \(+\infty \). Although the probabilities lie between 0 and 1, the logits are unbounded (Gujarati, 2012). If \( Zi \), the logit, is positive, it means that when the value of the explanatory variables (Xs) increases, the odds of participation increase, whereas if it is negative, the odds of participation decrease.
- \( Y_i \) = Willingness of the ‘i’th farmer to participate in the farm settlement scheme (1 willing to participate, 0 otherwise),
- \( X_1 \) = Sex (0 = males, 1 otherwise),
- \( X_2 \) = Age of the farmer (years),
- \( X_3 \) = Marital status (1 if married, 0 otherwise),
- \( X_4 \) = Educational level of farmers (years of schooling),
- \( X_5 \) = Farming experience (years),
- \( X_6 \) = Extension contacts (number of visits),
\(X_7 = \) Parental background in agriculture (1 parent is into agriculture, 0 otherwise),
\(X_8 = \) Security of land under the farm settlement scheme (1 if secure, 0 otherwise),
\(X_9 = \) Type of crops to grow (1 for agreement to grow arable crops, 0 otherwise),
\(\beta_1 - \beta_n = \) coefficients of stimulus variables,
\(\beta_0 = \) constant term,
\(u = \) error term.

**Results and Discussion**

Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents

Table 1 shows the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents. The majority (66.9%) of the farmers are males. This offers an opportunity for farmers to participate in FSS because males have more time and resources and are more independent than females in less developed nations like Nigeria. About 77.7% of them are within the age range of 30–50 years, with an average of 42.1. This age range is usually more active and can be an asset to farmers’ participation in FSS although the age restriction to participation in FSS was found to be 21–40 years (Lagos State Department of Agricultural Services, 2013). Sixty-two (62%) earned an income range of ₦140,001 – ₦200,000, with a mean of ₦194,832 ($618.51) per month. This income level was quite low given the high cost of input used by farmers. This may discourage farmers from participating in FSS. To improve this, there may be a need to increase the size of land allocation to the participants from 1ha to more than 5ha in order to make them at least medium-scale farmers. Most (60%) of the farmers had more than 10 years of farming experience, with an average of 14.6 years. This shows that the farmers had enough experience and knowledge which should help the farmers to participate effectively and sustain FSS compared to the early FSS that failed because the settlers were too young and inexperienced in farming causing a high percentage of drop-outs among the settlers. The minimum farm size of 1ha and maximum of 4ha with a mean value of 2.1 ha under the farm settlement scheme is too small for commercial farming within FSS.
Table 1. The distribution of socio-economic characteristics of respondents.

| Farmers characteristics | Freq. % | Farmers characteristics | Freq. % |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|
| **Sex**                 |         | **Household size**      |         |
| Male                    | 66.9    | 1-5                     | 76.2    |
| Female                  | 33.1    | 6-9                     | 23.8    |
| **Age (year)**          |         | (Mean 4.8)              |         |
| 30–40                   | 46.2    | Livestock               | 21.5    |
| 41–50                   | 31.5    | Mono-cropping           | 19.2    |
| 51–60                   | 22.3    | Mixed cropping          | 72.3    |
| (mean = 42.1yrs)        |         | Mixed farming           | 6.2     |
| **Farming system**      |         |                         |         |
| *Represents multiple-choice responses, $1 is equivalent to $315.*

Awareness and participation of farmers in the farm settlement scheme

The majority of the farmers (86%) were aware of the scheme while 14% of them were not aware of the scheme as indicated in Table 2. However, out of those that were aware, only 41.1% participated in the scheme as indicated in Table 2. Thus 58.9% of the farmers did not participate in the scheme although aware of the scheme based on the guideline stipulated by the state government and other constraints (Table 3).
Table 2. The distribution of farmers according to their awareness of FSS.

| Awareness            | Number of respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes                  | 112                   | 86.2       |
| No                   | 18                    | 13.8       |
| Total                | 130                   | 100        |

Participation level

| Participation level | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Participated in FSS| 46        | 41.1           |
| No participation in FSS | 66    | 58.9           |
| Total              | 112       | 100.0          |

Constraints associated with participation in farm settlements schemes

Participation in the farm settlement scheme is constrained majorly by administrative bottlenecks in the selection of participants for the scheme. For instance, apart from the interview for Lagos FSS, the potential settler must be between the ages of 21–40 years, has at least West African School Certificate (WASC) or its equivalent. Inadequate capital is another constraining factor. All successful applicants are compelled to undergo 3-month training at the government-owned training institution before being settled in the settlement at their own expense. Interference from management authority (State Ministry of Agriculture) and restriction on what the settlement should be used for are other major constraints. For instance, all settlers must be members of their settlement’s Multipurpose Cooperative Society and no settler on any account is allowed to embark on the growing of permanent or cash crops. In addition, most of the respondents viewed the allocation of 1ha plot size to each settler as being too small for commercialization.

Table 3. Constraints to participation in the farm settlement scheme.

| Constraints*                                      | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Rank |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|------|
| Inadequate capital                                | 80        | 61.5           | 2<sup>nd</sup> |
| Poor road network to the farm settlement site     | 61        | 46.9           | 6<sup>th</sup> |
| Administrative bottlenecks                        | 105       | 80             | 1<sup>st</sup> |
| Interference from management authority            | 78        | 60.0           | 3<sup>rd</sup> |
| Small farm size allocation                        | 64        | 49.2           | 5<sup>th</sup> |
| Regular meetings by settlers                      | 39        | 30.0           | 7<sup>th</sup> |
| Locations of the farm settlement                  | 67        | 51.3           | 4<sup>th</sup> |
| Limitations to the number of things in which the farm settlements can be put into use | 78 | 60.0 | 3<sup>rd</sup> |

*Multiple responses.
Factors affecting participation in the farm settlement scheme

The parameters of the logit regression model were estimated using the SPSS statistical package. The Chi-square statistic of 65.246 (p < 0.1) showed that the model gave a good fit for the analysis. The result of the logit regression in Table 4 shows that the educational level of the farmers, farming experience, extension contacts and security of land in FSS were significant variables that directly influenced their participation in the FSS at the 5% significance level in the study area. The variable such as education is positive because settlers need to be able to understand some directives and trainings that will be given in the farm settlement.

Table 4. Results of the logit regression analysis on factors affecting farmers’ participation in the farm settlement scheme.

| Variables                          | Coefficient | Standard error | t-value | Marginal effect |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Constant                           | -2.32***    | -0.8815        | 2.632   | 1.80            |
| Sex (X₁)                           | 25.145      | 196.4453       | 0.128   | 12.34           |
| Age (X₂)                           | -1.356      | 1.5658         | -0.866  | -0.70           |
| Marital status (X₃)                | 23.737      | 17.6615        | 1.344   | 16.32           |
| Education (X₄)                     | 1.324**     | 0.6477         | 2.044   | 1.40            |
| Farming experience (X₅)            | 2.334**     | 1.0396         | 2.245   | 1.21            |
| Extension contacts (X₆)            | 3.454**     | 1.5475         | 2.232   | 0.68            |
| Parental background in agriculture (X₇) | 1.233  | 0.8671         | 1.422   | 0.55            |
| Types of crops to grow on the site (X₈) | 0.152 | 10.6294        | 0.0143  | 0.14            |
| Land security in FSS (X₉)          | 2.223**     | 1.0526         | 2.112   | 0.11            |
| Log-likelihood function =          | -55.248     |                |         |                 |
| Chi-square                         | 65.246      |                |         |                 |

***significant at1%, ** significant at 5%.

Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that the majority (86%) of the respondents were aware of the Farm Settlement Scheme in Lagos State, but only 41% of the respondents participated in the scheme as they were constrained/discouraged by the administrative bottlenecks in becoming a settler, inadequate capital, poor road networks and limitations to the number of things in which the farm settlements can be put into use. The result of the logit regression analysis showed that socioeconomic variables (the educational level, extension contacts, farming experience and security of land under the scheme) had a positive and significant
influence on the participation of the farmers in FSS. To ensure the survival and continuity of FSS, farmers who are yet to participate need to be properly sensitized on the importance of FSS through the agricultural extension agents. Provision of good infrastructure in all the farm settlement areas will remove the constraint of poor infrastructure discouraging some farmers from participating in the FSS. Lagos and other countries interested in developing their rural areas through farm settlement schemes can borrow from the experience of the Kenyan three-level FSS models. The high-density scheme in the models is meant for the landless and unemployed with little or no capital or agricultural knowledge, the low-density schemes, exclusively for experienced farmers with working capital and the ‘yeoman scheme’ for the wealthy and experienced farmers. The model serves as an example of the possibility of participating in FSS (especially by the landless and unemployed youth) without capital. Education and farming experience are very crucial for participation and survival of FSS. These can be achieved through training and retraining of would-be participants and those who are participating in the scheme.

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POLJOPRIVREDNIH NASELJA U DRŽAVI LAGOS, NIGERIJA:
LEKCIJE ZA BUDUĆE PROGRAME RURALNOG RAZVOJA

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Rezime

U svojoj odlučnosti da obezbede hranu i radna mesta za Nigerijce, i apelu mladim obrazovanim ljudima da postave obrazac za poljoprivredu, mnoge vlade su ponovo uvele Shemu poljoprivrednih naselja (SPN)/Shemu zapošljavanja diplomaca (engl. Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS)/Graduate Employment Scheme) koja je jednom bila napuštena. Jedan od glavnih izazova koji vode do neuspeha programa u Nigeriji je nesposobnost da se shvati uticaj faktora na učešće i ograničenja takvih programa. Ovim istraživanjem analizirane su odrednice učešća poljoprivrednika u SPN-u u Lagosu s ciljem da se izvuku neke lekcije za buduće programe ruralnog razvoja. Stotinu i trideset (130) poljoprivrednika uzorkovano je putem dvofaznih procedura uzorkovanja. Podaci su prikupljeni pomoću upitnika i analizirani korišćenjem deskriptivne inferencijalne statistike, kao što je model logističke regresije. Rezultati su pokazali da su oko 67% ispitanika bili muškarci i da je 72% u braku. Glavni ograničavajući faktori za učešće u SPN-u su administrativna uska grla, neadekvatan kapital i uplitanje vlade. Logističkom regresijom je pokazano da su nivo obrazovanja, poljoprivredno iskustvo, kontakti sa savetodavnim službama i sigurnost zemljišta u okviru SPN-a bile značajne varijable (P<0,5) koje su direktno uticale na verovatnoću učešća poljoprivrednika u SPN-u u Lagosu, Nigerija. Poljoprivredno iskustvo je od presudne važnosti za opstanak SPN-a. Stoga se preporučuje da se odrednice učešća i ograničenja za učešće poljoprivrednika procene u bilo kom programu ruralnog razvoja kako bi se spoznale neophodne mere protiv neuspeha. Napor ka poboljšanju kontakta sa savetodavnim službama u vezi sa SPN-om ohrabriće dalje poljoprivrednike da učestvuju u SPN-u.

Ključne reči: nedostatak hrane, poljoprivredni sistemi, zemlja, komercijalna poljoprivredna operacija.

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