

**Kwabena Gyimah-Brempong, Michael Johnson, and Hiroyuki Takeshima. 2016. *The Nigerian Rice Economy: Policy Options for Transforming Production, Marketing, and Trade*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. xiv+300 pp.**

This is an important publication on the consistent efforts of successive Nigerian governments since the emergence of civil rule in 1999 to revamp the country's rice production and wean the country off the consumption of imported rice. This quest for the transformation of rice production in Nigeria received increased impetus under the Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) of President Jonathan's administration. The ongoing rice revolution, which this publication seeks to project, falls within the broader initiative of the Nigerian government to diversify the country's revenue generating sources from the extant abnormal dependence on petroleum and allied products to completely new sources. This book is an elucidation on the series of policies that had been formulated to catalyze agricultural transformation with emphasis on rice production in Nigeria. The objectives of the authors for writing this book include the assessment of the policy challenges and opportunities for transforming and expanding the Nigerian rice economy among others (p. 17).

Beginning with a Foreword by Sheggen Fan, Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the book contains nine chapters and a rich collection of statistical and mathematical analyses, which are enclosed as appendices. Chapter one introduces the book giving a bird's eye view of its essence and components and providing a brief historical treatise on the country's economy and the evolution of rice policies. Chapter two presents detailed analyses of rice consumption and demand patterns in Nigeria, pointing out the urban/rural and regional preferences for different rice varieties. In chapter three, the constraints imposed on rice production systems in Nigeria by biophysical and economic environment are carefully analyzed in comparison with Asia while noting the comparative advantage that Nigeria has in rice production in West Africa. Chapter four examines empirically the policy options for inducing supply response in paddy rice production through an assessment of a number of representative farm budgets, price incentives, and other public sector interventions needed to promote output growth, drawing on lessons and experiences from other major rice-producing regions in the developing world. Chapter five examines the structure and conduct of postharvest processing, marketing channels, and competitiveness of domestic rice. Chapter six carefully interrogates the policy options for modernizing the rice milling sector. Chapter seven analyzes Nigeria's recent rice import policies in terms of their effectiveness and tradeoffs with regard to affecting the volume of import, domestic prices, and tariff revenues in the country. Chapter eight assesses the potential economy-wide effects of rice sector policies on sector output growth and competitiveness with imports, changes in the sector and overall food prices, rural income growth, and overall economic performance. Chapter nine which concludes the book summarizes the findings and discusses their broad policy implications along two key areas; how to increase rice yields through technology and market improvement, and policies to encourage domestic rice production of rice.

Throughout the book there is an emphasis on multi-stakeholders' roles in expanding the frontiers of rice revolution to encompass several non-governmental actors in rice production and every aspect of its value chain in rural and urban areas across Nigeria's regional divide was stridently emphasized. The formulation of rice policies which emplaced structures and

institutional arrangements for the encouragement of demand for locally produced rice, whose supply was also enhanced, was expected to create the right policy environment for discouraging rice importation even as the authors believe that increased tariffs and import bans have not succeeded in substantially reducing rice imports.

This book, however, is not without its shortcomings. First, there is too much of econometrics and modeling involved in the authors' attempt to empiricize their analyses through the utilization of scientific methodology for operationalizing the concepts and facts that are not amenable to quantitative analysis. It is not enough to import data from different sources and subject them to an analytical method of research without interrogating those data for relevance and accuracy. Second, there is no explanation for the high cost of local rice production, which is reflected in the high price of local rice and thus a disincentive for the consumption of locally produced rice and an incentive for rice imports. Third, our authors believe that increased public funding of the rice initiative would expand the supply base of the rice economy, but this presents its own problem of the likelihood of stultifying private sector investment in the rice initiative.

Overall, this book is an authoritative publication on the ongoing rice revolution in Nigeria. It is not just a reportorial account of developments in the rice subsector of the Nigerian Agricultural sector but a profoundly analytical and intellectual piece, which anchors its theorizing on empirical knowledge of the rice initiative in the country. Using scientific tools including econometrics and modeling, the authors demonstrate a keen interest in making valid projections on the effects and prospects of every policy initiative that the Nigerian government deploys to consolidate the palpable gains of its rice revolution. For its presentation of current and empirically verifiable facts and figures on how to transform the rice subsector of an economy, *The Nigerian Rice Economy* recommends itself to scholars, teachers, and policymakers with an interest in the development of agriculture in general and in the transformation of domestic rice production for increased competitiveness in particular

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**Barbara Casciarri, Munzoul Assal, and François Ireton (eds.). 2015. *Multidimensional Change in Sudan (1989-2011): Reshaping Livelihoods, Conflicts and Identities*. Oxford: Berghahn. 374 pp.**

*Multidimensional Change in Sudan* is a book useful to those who are just beginning to learn about Sudan as well as scholars who are more experienced and want to update their knowledge about the country's recent changes. Its geographical focus is the Republic of Sudan, also known as North Sudan since South Sudan's independence after 2011 referendum. A major contribution of the book is that it makes room for excellent scholarly contributions based on fieldwork carried out between 2006 and 2011 by both Sudanese and European researchers. The editors are aware of the importance of fieldwork and strongly reinforce the importance of conducting "deep, field-based and localized research" (p. 5) since "the rethinking of categories and of theoretical approaches [...] can be supported only by a sound underlying and contextualized set of empirical data" (p. 7).

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