

CHRISTIAN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE: A CATALYST FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN TIVLAND, CENTRAL NIGERIA, 1980s – 2020

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Abstract

Agricultural economists, agribusiness scholars, historians, political scientists, economists, geographers, and scholars of various disciplinary orientations have comprehensively interrogated issues of agricultural production in Tivland in Central Nigeria. However, these intellectual inquiries have not x-rayed directly on the contributions of Christian Agricultural Cooperative (CAC) to agricultural production in Tivland. This paper thus serves as an intervention by focusing on the role of CAC as a catalyst to agricultural production in the study area between 1980 and 2020. With the aid of extant literature and oral sources in line with the interdisciplinary method, the paper discusses the phenomena under consideration. In doing this, the study traces the historical foundations of CAC in the study area. Besides, the paper examines the roles and challenges of CAC in agricultural production in Tivland within the study period. It is the opinion of this paper that weak leadership/poor management and paucity of funds were the major forces that weakened the CAC and agricultural production in the focal area. The study concludes that leadership and membership of this cooperative should be able to study and understand the doctrines or tenets of cooperative and also register with National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) to be able to receive assistance if the threat of failure arises.

Keywords: Christian Agricultural Cooperative; Agricultural Production; Tivland; Crops; and Livestock

Introduction

There is a strong nexus between Christian Missionary activities and agricultural production in Africa. This gave birth to concept of “the Bible and the Plough”. In the course of propagating Christianity, the missionaries brought different kinds crops to the native population of Africa including Nigeria. When a lot of Africans were converted to Christianity, majority of the missionaries left for their countries but a good number of them remained with the new converts to monitor the progress of their work and to continue with evangelism in Africa, Nigeria, Benue State, and Tivland in particular. They also partook in agricultural activities; their activities in Tivland became a concern of scholarly investigation as it constitutes an aspect of the Tiv economic history. The economic history of Tivland (including agricultural and cooperative issues) has received a lot of scholarly attention from scholars of different shades of life. Despite this fact, some aspects are yet to be explored by historians. One of these neglected aspects of the people’s economic history is the phenomena of CAC and agricultural from a historical point of view. This study, therefore, serves as

an intervention to bridge the historiographical aperture that exists in extant literature concerning the subject.

To achieve this aim, the essay raises some critical issues thus: What is the philosophical concern that prompted the establishment of CAC? What were the roles of CAC in agricultural production in Tivland between 1980s and 2020? What were the factors that limited CAC in its quest for agricultural production? These posers serve as the roadmap of the paper’s argument. The argument in this paper has been developed into six sections including the introduction. Section two examines the keyword. Section three explores the Tivland largely from the agricultural and Christian perspectives. Section four traces the history of the CAC in Tivland from 1980s to 2020. Section five mirrors the activities of the CAC in agricultural production. Section six concludes the paper and advances some policy options for the reformation of the cooperative under study.

Conceptualization of Key Variables

The basic variables conceptualized here are those that embedded in the title of this paper; these are cooperative and

agricultural production. The term “cooperative” is derived from the verb “to cooperate” and the noun “cooperation” (Aniodoh, 2011). The word ‘co-operate’ means ‘work together’. A co-operative is a business formed, owned, and controlled by a group of people who agree to follow special rules in running it (Ebonyi and Jimo, 2002). According to *Longman Business Dictionary*, “a co-operative society is a company, factory or organization in which all people working there, own an equal share of it”. Elucidating on this matter, Onuoha, (1996) posits that co-operatives (in their classical notion) are private people’s organization. They are not public institutions. They are not government agencies for the execution of government plans. Government *parastatals* are not co-operatives. Co-operatives belong to the private sector; they are for the common people, “a mechanism for defence, betterment, and emancipation to combat the conditions brought about by the ...economy. In this regard, the government wishing to promote co-operatives should limit themselves to such aid as is compatible with the self-help character of co-operatives or fix a time limit for their promotional intervention. They are not to become permanent arms or extension of government. Co-operatives are modern institutions. In this respect, the line between ancient and modern is drawn by the industrial revolution (c.1750–1850). In “ancient” times, institutions for joint action and mutual aid were numerous (Aniodoh, 2002). More so, Ijere (1991) cites The Commission for Africa in its study entitled “The Co-operative Movement in Africa,” where it defines a co-operative as:

Legally incorporated body with economic purpose common to all its members, a society of persons and services rather than of capital; open to all who may benefit by its activities; and democratically controlled by its members, with a provision in the rules for roughly equal contributions of capital member and equitable distribution to them of any profits arising from the undertaking. In conjunction with their economic purpose, co-operatives aim also at improving the general and technical knowledge of their members.

The above definitions, unfortunately, omit the social or community element in co-operatives, except where the improvements of member patrons are projected to replace this. The International Labour Organization (1992) has provided what is regarded as an internationally acceptable definition of co-operatives as:

Association of persons who have voluntarily joined together to achieve a common end and through the formation of a democratically controlled organization, making equitable contributions to the capital required and accepting a fair share of the risks and benefits of the undertaking in which members actively participate.

As thought-provoking as the preceding definition seems to be, it lacks merit because people formed cooperatives voluntarily not in all cases true) some people join cooperatives under compulsion, in most cases, they are compelled by their employer. Members contribute equally is also inaccurate in the sense that, in many cooperatives the rules guiding them make provision for minimum and maximum but not necessary on an equal basis. Even the interest is shared not on an equal basis but based on individual contribution. Thus, the working definition of cooperative society in this study is a group of people who come together (voluntarily or involuntarily) to contribute their quota for the progress of their personal and societal wellbeing.

Agriculture on the other hand, is a late Middle English adoption of Latin *gricoltura*, from *ager*, “field” and *cultura* “cultivation” or “growing” (Ulrich, Undated). Agriculture usually refers to human activities, although, it is also observed in certain species of ant, termite and *ambrosia* beetle (Chantrell, 2002). To practice agriculture means to use natural resources to “produce commodities which maintain life including food, fibre, forest products, horticultural crops and their related services” (Chantrell, 2002). Related to the above definition, agriculture is conceived as the production of food, fibre, feed and other goods by the systematic growing and harvesting of plants and animals. It is the science of making use of land to raise plants and animals. It is the simplification of nature’s food webs and rechanneling of energy for human and plant (Akinboyo, 2008). Agriculture, here, involves the production of crops on land, the keeping of livestock of various kinds, fishery production and the establishment and maintenance of forests. It, therefore, does not go beyond the production and maintenance of the above products. According to Halcrow (1980):

Originally, it applied to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock. As economies developed it has taken on a broader meaning. The word still applies to growing crops and raising livestock and the organization and management of farming and ranching. But now it also extends to firms and industries that manufacture farm machinery, produce fertilizer, market farm chemicals-all services and supplies used in modern farming...it includes a public supported sector or government service and regulations, scientific research and education, experiment stations and educational services and market news and economic analysis.

Agriculture as defined above has evolved from its traditional stage of cultivation of crops and raising and marketing of livestock, fishery to their marketing. And many of the crops are referred to as raw materials because of the processes they undergo in Industries to end up as manufactured goods.

Contextually, agriculture refers to the explosion of the sources of funds/grants by CAC to procure improved varieties and seedlings crops and animals empower farmers for the purpose of promotion agricultural production in Benue State and having a bumper harvest.

Understanding Tivland from the Agricultural and Christian Perspectives

Tiv people of Central Nigeria have a population of about 200 million. The Tiv made up about seven percent of the population of Nigeria. Tiv are found to constitute the major ethnic group in some Nigerian State such are Benue, Nassarawa, Taraba and a significant minority in Adamawa, cross River, Plateau, Niger States, and Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria (Sen, 2017). Agricultural crops that were valuable for consumption as well as for commercial purposes were cultivated. These includes; yam, cassava, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, millet, maize, okro, garden egg. Due to average quantity produced, these items were taken from the villages to the various village markets and towns for sale. The method of cultivation used was mixed farming which allowed the cultivation of these crops on one plot of land. The major implements used were the big hoe (*Ikyar*), small hoe (*Abya*), cutlas (*Ishom*), and axe (*Ijembe*) for clearing the bush, cutting down trees and tilling of the land. Labour was organised along the family level and each family had their plots of land to cultivate. The Tiv people practised large-scale collective farming called *Ihumbe*. This was because farming activities in the villages required more hands thereby making the hunger for land inevitable in Tiv history¹⁹. As the population continued to grow, land began to be scarce. The reason for population explosion could be attributed to the improved health care services and the introduction of new improved breed of food crops like mangoes, citrus, rice (Ityonzughul, 2013). The economic necessities that arose in relation to the ever increasing population made the colonisation of lands the most pressing demands of the people. Attachment to land is a social necessity even in animals. It is imperative for human beings to have land attached to them and the tendency to defend it.

Religiously, the Tiv people have three dominant religions, namely, African Traditional Religion, and Islam with has a few adherents in the area. The first religion practiced by the people before the advent of Christianity was the African Traditional Religion (ATR). The religious dimension of the Tiv life before the coming of Christianity was an ever present of everyday activities and interpretation of all experiences and behaviours. They are two basic systems of the religious rites, these are *tsav* (witchcraft) and *akombo* (ritual). *Tsav* has to do with life energy, the power what exist in nature, the unseen force which is necessary for the good generation and development of all living things and also for any inference with life and ordinary function of nature (Downes, 1971). The

people who possess *tsav* are known as *mbatsav*, and are believed to be responsible for the activities that bring about evil in Tiv land or society. To corroborate this position, Bur (1993:12) postulates that, “the Tiv traditionally believe in *tsav* and these these elders who possessed these super natural powers (*tsav*) are called *mbatsav*. They were believed to be responsible for good and bad that happened to Tivland”. Those who possess *tsav* were regarded as having an edge over the non- *mbatsav* people (empty chested). The *mbatsav* as have power ovr natural forces. For, example, they could cause rain to fall. *Tsav* was positive and creative in some respects. It could make yams grow bigger than normal; make women who are barren to become fertile; and make craftsmen acquire good skills. Many happenings were attributed to *mbatsav* . Negatively, *mbatsav* also impacted the Tivland. In this respect, Cassaleggio (1984:15) demonstrates that, “all calamities and also deaths are ascribed to the *mbatsav*, the power who possess. All men contain the rudiments of *mbatsav*”.

However, with the introduction of Christian in Tivland, these believe system became insignificant since people pay more attention to Christian rather than African Traditional Religion (ATR). Two major Churches exist in Tivland- the Catholic Church and the NKST (*Nongu u Kristu u Ken Tiv*). However, our emphasis in this paper is limited to the NKST, the founder of the Christian Agricultural Cooperative (CAC).The acronym NKST means the Church the Church of Christ in Sudan among the Tiv. The NKST is one of the nine reformed Churches which have a direct ministry to the Tiv people (Kombol, 2011). For a very long time, the Church was considered as local Church and some people were describing it as a “Tiv Church” because of attachment of Tiv on its name. To do away with this thinking, a committee was inaugurated to suggest a new name to make the Church gain a Universal membership. At the NKST synod meeting of July, 2012 a five-man committee submitted its report for change of name and it was officially adopted. The name “*Nongu u Kristu u Ken Sudan ken Tiv*” (the Church of Christ among the Sudan in Tiv) that was used for over a hundred years was therefore changed to “*Nongu u Kristu u i Ser u Sha Tar*” (NKST) which translates as the Universal Reformed Christian Church (A Resort for the Committee of Change of Name Presented to the NKST Synod General Meeting, 2012).

Historically, NKST was founded by the DRCM of South Africa on the 17th April, 1911; from 1911 to 1956, the Church was known as the Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM). The NKST became an indigenous Church on the 19th January, 1957, when it became self-propagating. It also spans through the Nigeria, Chad and Ghana with at least one organized congregation of the Church found in almost every state in Nigeria. The Church has its her quarters at Mkar, Gboko in Benue State, Central Nigeria. Members are predominantly Tiv speaking tribe but few other tribes in Nigeria also belong to

this Church (Pav, 2013). Tiv dominating the aforementioned Church and being the dominant agricultural workforce in Central Nigeria has made Church to engaged itself in the agricultural activities through the CAC which was situated at Mkar, Gboko, Tivland; the Cooperative started starting with a pig farm and it had expanded to cover other areas of agricultural sector thereby catalyzing the development of the sector in Tivland and even beyond.

Historical Foundations of Christian Agricultural Cooperative (CAC), 1980 – 2020

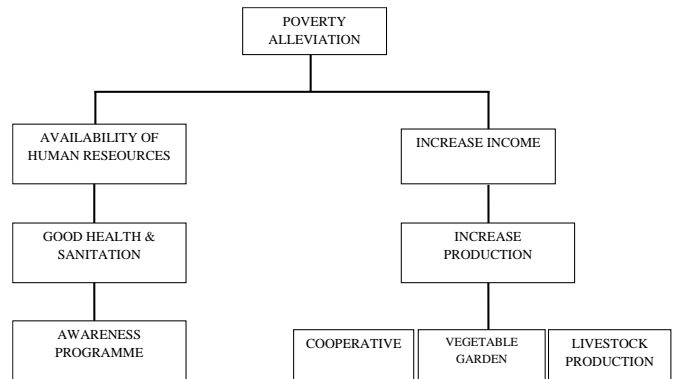
The history of CAC is traceable to the activities of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRCM) established in Tivland in 1911 (Makar, 1994). When the DRC missionaries first arrived in Tivland on April 17, 1911; they settled at Sai in the present Katsina- Ala Local Government area of Benue State, they had four boxes. These boxes were agriculture, evangelism, education, and health. The agricultural box contained seeds of fruit trees and vegetables, namely, mango, citrus (oranges), grape, and avocado, guava, cashew, and assorted vegetables. They also brought bananas and pineapples. They planted the first mango trees which are still standing for more than one hundred years and are still fruiting at Sai (Angwe and Avav, 2011).

The arrival of one of these missionaries, Dave Dykgraaf at Mkar marked the establishment of CAC. In 1980 Dave started a his personal piggery farm with two pigs (male and female) at the present site of the NKST General Secretary’s residence at Mbaamandev (Leepers’ Settlement) in Mkar. The Synod of November 1981 approved and acquired the present land between the NKST Hospital and the School of Health Technology for the piggery farm (Angwe and Avav, 2011). In the words of Angwe and Avav (2011) CAC was formed to:

Get the Church and the community to organize; form credit units where they can serve and borrow for emergency and establish their income – generating projects; obtains loans from the government through those cooperatives; train farmers on agricultural aspects and farming skills; use part of the interest to spread the world of God and to serve humanity in peace, love, honesty in dealing with a whole man.

The general objective of CAC is to alleviate poverty in the Church communities and to reduce the problem of food deficiency in the dry season. Besides, to achieve a good sanitation and improve the standard of living of the people (Oral interview with Lelaa, 2020). The objectives of CAC are summarized in the three below.

Objective Three of CAC



Source: Adopted (Modified) from, J. A. Angwe & T. Avav, “Impact of Missionaries on Tiv and Benue Agriculture” in T. Avar (ed.) *Centenary of Christianity in Tivland; Synopsis of NKST Contribution to Evangelism in Tivland*, p.146.

The above objective three depicts that, with the awareness programmes, the public will have good health and sanitation leading to the availability of human resources, therefore, alleviating poverty in the society. The right side of the three shows that the formation cooperatives will lead to increase in vegetable and livestock production in the society, which will increase the income thereby alleviating poverty among the Church communities. The CAC had diverse units, these units are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

There was swine farm; in 1981 the personal farm of Dykgraaf was established. In a very short time, there were thirty four pigs and eight boars to cross the females. In 1982, the piggery temporary house was constructed with pens capacity of over two hundred pigs. This was constructed formally in 1984, during which Dykgraaf could sell more than seventy winners to farmers per month. Another unit was the poultry farm; Dkygraaf erected a poultry farm with cages that can contain one thousand layers that can provide eggs to the church and communities around. He also raised five hundred broilers for sale everyday to farmers and consumers. The farm also sold cockerels on daily basis.

The CAC as established a rabbit unit in the farm. There were over fifty rabbits of different species such as America chinchilla and California, among others. This section also expanded and the interested persons equally benefited from it. Guinea pigs also constituted a farm unit. Up to fifty guinea pigs were kept. People patronized this unit for food and for medical laboratory experiments.

For healthy living of these livestock, drugs and vaccination unit of the farm was established for the treatment of livestock and the farmers. The chickens, swine, rabbits, and guinea pigs were treated from this section. Many communities also benefited from this unit of CAC. As time went on the Church (NKST) received a grant from foreign missionaries to finance this project. The staff of CAC were paid from the missionary account. The Mission Board abroad took care of the total labor cost. The equipment was also supplied by the Mission Board abroad on request. The drugs and vaccine were equally ordered to boost CAC. Additionally, they were some philanthropist and volunteers who assisted tremendously. Some of them were Lambert Hanes, Jimmy Vancly, and Red Becker; they donated almost everything that was needed and used their talents to assist for the growth of the CAC (Angwe and Avav, 2011). These donations actually boosted the cooperative under review and agricultural production in Tivland.

It is on record that by 1987, Dykgraaf left CAC and took up an appointment as a missionary at Kontangora with the Idachi people. He handed over Mr. Gideon Ami. Resignation of the said missionary was the beginning of the challenges of CAC. The CAC was incorporated in on November 1988 with a registration number 120637. The company's registered office address is the NKST Christian Agriculture Cooperative Farm site, Mkar- Gboko (<http://www.ng-check.com/nkst-christiancooperative>). Despite its incorporation, Ami had his salary through the sales of farm proceeds and also feed them farm animals since there was no grant come from the supporters again; all the CAC supporters fell out with Dykgraaf. It could also be that the new manager was inexperienced and unpopular and this contributed to the winding fortunes of CAC. The Church also felt that, it might be better if shares were sold to the public to raise fund enough to continue as it was done during the tenure of the former manager (Angwe and Avav, 2011).

The ideal of selling shares to the non-members was accepted and the company changed its nomenclature in 1989 (during the tenure the Manager, Ami) from Christian agricultural Cooperation to Christian Agricultural Company. However, the acronym CAC has remained the same but the meaning differs. With the change of name and mode of operation, the company's objectives were reset as:

1. To carry on the business of farm.
2. To produce, buy, sell, manufacture for market.
3. To engaged in all manner of agricultural services.
4. To carry on any of the business or general contracts.
5. To engage in transport business.
6. To carry on the business of building and civil engineering contracts.

7. To promote, acquire, established, build and manage or operate cinemas, housing, and housing estate.
8. To acquire in any part of the world, factories, building, mills, plants, and engines.
9. To search for mine, clay, gold, precious stones, oil, and other minerals to buy.
10. To erect, construct all factories and workers of all kinds.

It is glaring that, when the name of the company changed, its scope expanded to accommodate many new units for income. After resetting the company's objectives a Board of Directors was constituted to lead the company (Angwe and Avav, 2011).

Table 1: Board of Directors of Christian Agricultural Company

S/N	Name of the Member	Portfolio
1	Rev. D.H. Yawe	Chairman
2	Rev. I. Achineku	Member
3	Mr. Peter Zawua	Member
4	Evang. S.I. Ayua	Member
5	Rev.P.I. Gbashima	Member
6	Barr. P.I.V. Belabo	Company's Lawyer
7	Mr. G. Ami	Manager

Source: Angwe, J.T. and Avav, T. (2011). "Impact of a Missionaries and Benue Agriculture", in Avav. T. (eds.), *Centenary of Christianity in Tivland : Synopsis of NKST Contribution to Evangelism in Tivland*. Makurdi: Lamp and World Books, p. 146.

Even though, the company expanded in scope with had limited resource or paucity of funds, this was what led Ami to handover to Mr. D.A. Saaku in 1990. Despite the fact that share were sold, much of the sum realized were used for the registration of the company and other logistics. Saaku could not manage the company very well and worst of it all, he had engaged in an unfaithful fertilizer agreement with the NKST Asukunya which made them to claim the Company's pickup van. Saaku was sacked by the Board of Directors and Mr. Terseer Samu who was the Company's Secretary was appointed the Manager in 1990. He served between 1990 and 1991 and resigned due to lack of funds to run the Company.

The Board of Directors reported the matter to the NKST Synod in November, 1991 and Rev. J.T. Angwe, the then Missionary at Shikaan, was appointed to manage the Company. His appointment to effects on January 01, 1992 and the Company started reviving but when he left for abroad to further his studies the Company started collapsing again. On the completion of his studies Angwe returned home and managed the Company until in 1998 he was chosen to serve as the resident Pastor at NKST Yaaya and he handed over to Mr. Dzungwenen Lelaa (one of our informants) who manages the Company even as at the time of this study.

Lelaa (2020) noted that, under his leadership the CAC was converted into a public limited and in 2011 the company was handed over to the University of Mkar, Mkar, Gboko-Nigeria for effective management and better positioning. As at the time of this study, the company has ten staff members only.

Impact of CAC on Agricultural Development in Tivland, 1980s – 2020

The impact of CAC to the agricultural production in Tivland was legion; these impact are discussed one after the other. First and foremost provide a source of income to both members and the non-members alike. An oral interview with Lelaa (2020) shows that, the Company of bred a lot of animals and sold in return for money. Some of these animals were slaughtered and sold in pieces, usually in kilograms while others were measured alive and sold based on their weight. A lot of people in the state who were owners of animal farms and abattoirs used to patronize the CAC very well; others usually purchased for their family consumption. For example, Ekenedele Chukwu Farms in Anambra State used to make a lot of purchases from the CAC animal Farm. They were much concern in buying piglets, wieners, and exotic. The life ones were sold on the range of 35-40 kilogram (two months old) at the cost of N 1000 while the big/mature ones- both males and females cost about N 70, 000. The chickens were also sold according to what they weighed; they were usually sold between N 1000 and N 1500 respectively (Oral interview with Lelaa). Through rearing of animals the CAC in a way boosted the use of inorganic manure in Tivland. This is because a lot of native farmers who could not afford to buy organic fertilizer came from different parts of Tivland to buy the duns; through this processes the Company also generated some money.

Besides, the CAC was able to made available feeds, drugs and vaccines available to farmers. CAC sold assorted vaccines and drugs to the interested farmers including feeds. The feeds were sold to farmers and also used for the feeding of the Company's animals. The drugs were also sold and used in the same way. The drugs of the Company were gotten from two sources; others were purchased from Jos while others were supplied from abroad (Oral interview Lelaa, 2020).

CAC also created another impact by offering cooperative education to farmers in Tivland. According to Angwe and Avav (2011) the Company's Manager held at least one meeting (seminar or workshop) in every three months with primarily to educate farmers, this was to train them and equip them with new farming technological innovations. During such meetings weeds and best control chemicals, new seedlings, drugs, powders, and vaccines, among others were

distributed to farmers; and they were taught how to apply them on crops or livestock.

The company had assisted the native farmers to procure hybrids seeds. These seeds were gotten from different reputable agricultural research institutes across the country. If left alone these local farmers would not have been able to visit those centres of place an order for those seedlings because of high cost and illiteracy (Oral interview Tyoyila, 2020). However, because of the zeal of the CAC to offer farm services to the indigenous people they procured and sold to them on cheaper rates and sometime and sometimes free of charge.

The CAC also impacted positively on tree crop production in Tivland and beyond. Seedlings of improved trees were distributed to farmers. Workshops were also organized to train them on grafting and nursing of the young trees. The most prominent grafters were: Mr. Tsekar Thura and Utuhwa Ushongo from the present Ukum Local Government Area and Mr. Kumaden from Ukan clan in the present Ushongo Local Government Area. This first team of horticulturalists later trained many more people on the job those trained facilitated the spread of the tress crops in the Tiv axis of Central Nigeria.

It was the first batch of the DRC missionaries that brought the citrus and mango trees to the Tivland. They planted twelve mango trees one withered and died but the remaining eleven are still thriving despite the fact, which they have produced more than one hundred years. The Tiv people have many mango and citrus orchards nowadays. With the help of CAC as a training centre, these tree crops covered the whole Tivland. It is important to mention that, the financial status of many farmers who adopted tree crop farming improved significantly (Oral interview Kase, 2010).

Several farmers from in Tiv-speaking areas of Benue State have adopted tree crop farming at the onset of the missionary have large plantations of citrus and mango. The Local Government Areas in which mission station were established early have the highest number of tree crops. A recent UNDP survey identified such local government areas too have reasonable citrus and mango trees. Many citrus farmers taped the advantage from the CAC and have established their citrus orchards as shown in table 2 above.

Table 2: Sample of Citrus Farmers in Benue State in 1980s – 2010

S/No	Name of Farmer	Local Government Area	N _o of Stands
1	Vaaswem Gbenda	Gboko	3000
2	Rev. G. O. Uva	Gboko	7000
3	Toochi Genyi	Gboko	2000
4	J. I. Orngu Dwem	Gboko	2500
5	Nguyilan Wombo	Buruku	2500
6	P. I. Anzenge	Ushongo	4000
7	Hon. A. Anemba	Ushongo	4000
8	Adaaku Aboshim	Ushongo	3000
9	I. Aatsar	Ushongo	2500
10	Tyoor Kuma Chelen	Konshisha	5000
11	Rev. Y. Amachigh	Ukum	5000
12	Aterume Afati	Ukum	2000
13	Tse-Ubur	Ukum	2000
14	Zaki Afanga	Ukum	2000
15	Tse-Akundo	Ukum	2000
16	Chia Ayeri	Gwer-West	2000
17	Tor-Audu Uhembe	Gwer-West	2000
18	Igba Akaa	Gwer-West	2000
19	Chia Yough	Gwer-East	2000
20	Tsekar Ikpanor	Guma	2000
21	Tyoor G. Tyav	Guma	500
22	Tyovenda Igber	Vandeikya	4000
23	Iyonguhime Yua	Vandeikya	5000
24	Zenda Ikyaave	Vandeikya	6000
25	Akua Asen	Vandeikya	6000

Source: Adopted (Modified) from, J. A. Angwe & T. Avav, "Impact of Missionaries on Tiv and Benue Agriculture" in T. Avar (ed.) *Centenary of Christianity in Tivland: Synopsis of NKST Contribution to Evangelism in Tivland*, p.156.

Table 2 above shows that a lot Tiv people have citrus farms especially in Gboko, Vandeikya, Buruku, Ushongo, Kuma, and Gwer East local government areas of Benue State; but it should be noted that all areas of Tivland now have citrus in commercial quantities. In fact, in Southern Tivland citrus farming has become their major occupation since it attracts more proceeds to them when compare to any other crop.

Challenges of the Christian Agricultural Company (CAC), 1980s – 2020

The challenges that hampered the activities of CAC during the period under review were multifarious. These challenges ranged from paucity of funds and manpower, poor management, and lack of modern equipment, among others. To enhance a profound understanding of these issues the study treats one after the other. Firstly, is the paucity of funds. During the formative years of CAC, the company received grants from a foreign body to improve boost the company her production. The company was viable but when the grants were stopped the CAC began to suffer. Production and other activities of the CAC were redundant; in fact the whole company activities of the Company were scrambled. Absence of production meant that the company's income internally generated revenue was scaled down making it weaker and weaker.

Associated with the paucity of funds was insufficient man power. The company under review was beset with insufficient fund since there were no funds to continue paying salaries of the workers, as a result of this, the CAC lay off many workers. It was possible to down-size the labour force to be able to pay the few ones that were to continue with the job. Lack of sufficient staff members implies that the CAC was not be able to continue with massive production and animals that needed close attention would also die because of lack of proper care arising from insufficient staff members.

Relatedly, there was a challenge of lack of modern equipment. The CAC is an agricultural company and agricultural companies and agriculture generally needs modern agriculture especially in this era of globalization. However, most of the agricultural modern facilities were lacking in the company. There were near absence of some modern storage facilities like barns, silo, refrigerators that were available are also not enough to accommodate all the companies produce. The challenge of storage was aggravated by epileptic power supply. The unstable power supply in turn occasionally paved the way for the waste of company's perishable products including different kind of meat. These post-harvest loses were actually on the disadvantage of the company.

Besides, the company was bedevilled by lack of effective management. Management is key to whatever business we do; good management promotes the company's activities but a poor one runs it. Lack of proper management is one of the major problems that hindering the development of companies especially in developing countries including Nigeria. A lot of companies have folded up as a result of this menace; some have scaled down their production activities. The managers of the CAC did not did not attended cooperative colleges and institutes neither received managerial education at university level or higher institutions and as a result of that they lack good management skills and this was not healthy with the development and progress of CAC, the resultant effects is that the company as at the time of this study operated on skeletal basis and on hardly heard of its existence again even though it has not completely folded up. Due to the above and related challenges it is fairly accurate to state that the company has marginally contributed to agricultural development in Tivland.

Conclusion

This paper acknowledged with evidence that the CAC served as the catalyst to agricultural production in Tivland between 1980 and 2020. By so doing, it traced the establishment of the CAC to the farming activities of a DRCM (NKST) Missionary named Dave Dykgraaf at Mkar, Gboko in Tivland who established his personal farm but later donated willingly to the NKST mission and it later became a cooperative an agricultural company and much later a limited liability

company. The paper emphasized that the CAC has promoted agricultural activities in the area under review through the establishment of orchards and animal farms, supply of improved varieties of crops, and farming inputs to farmers, among others. Through these services, farmers in Tivland took advantage of the situation and boosted (excelled) their agricultural activities. However, it noted that the CAC was bedevilled with some debilitating challenges these changes spanned from paucity of funds, insufficient manpower, lack of modern equipment, and lack of effective management of the company. Due to the aforementioned challenges and what is obtainable on ground, it is fairly accurate to state that CAC contributed marginally to agricultural development in Tivland during the period under consideration.

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