



Tropentag, September 18-21, 2016, Vienna, Austria

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## Governance Challenges in an Emerging Bio-Economy: A Case Study of Maize Value-Webs in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Maize is one of the most important cereal crops in Nigeria. It is particularly important for the poorer citizens and smallholders for food security purposes. Agricultural policies in Nigeria have conventionally focused on enhancing food production. However, growing challenges of sustainable development require a shift in the conventional thinking of considering agricultural sector as only the supplier of food. It is increasingly becoming a “supplier of biomass”, which caters to multiple demands of food and non-food purposes. Recent advances suggest that it is pertinent to look beyond conventional value chains to a more holistic “value web” because the same crops find diverse usages in the biomass-based economy. As a result, recent governmental policies have been geared towards increasing the production of priority crops like maize in the country. For this, the government has employed the innovative Growth Enhancement Support (GES) scheme as a means of eliminating governance challenges in the procurement and distribution of inputs to smallholder farmers. The study employs focus group discussion and uses innovative participatory process net-mapping tool to elicit information about GES and found that governance challenges still persisted, preventing fair utilisation of resources made available by the government to the smallholder farmers. The study also found that corruption and leakages are rampant between redemption centres and before targeted farmers use the inputs. The study, therefore, suggests a more consistent support from both the federal and state governments to the sector and to the GES scheme. The study also suggests that the government should continue with the GES scheme while endeavouring to make consistent periodic reviews to block points of corruption and leakages. The Government should also provide more incentives for targeted smallholder farmers to use these resources.

**Keywords:** GES, governance challenges, participatory process net map, smallholder farmers, value-web