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# **REVOLUTIONIZING NORTHERN NIGERIA'S AGRICULTURE: THE \$158.15 MILLION VALUE CHAIN INITIATIVE**

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On May 7, 2025, the Federal Government of Nigeria signed a landmark \$158.15 Million Financing Agreement for the Value Chain Programme in Northern Nigeria (VCN). According to Stanley Nkwocha, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media & Communications, the agreement marks the immediate start of a major agricultural initiative aimed at transforming farming and agribusiness in nine northern states.

This programme represents a strategic shift from subsistence farming to sustainable agribusiness, focusing on strengthening agricultural value chains and adding economic value to raw produce. For decades, Nigeria's agriculture especially in the north has suffered from weak infrastructure, low productivity, and poor market access. The VCN project seeks to reverse these trends by investing in infrastructure, supporting local processing, and improving farmers' access to finance and markets. Northern Nigeria holds vast potential for agricultural growth, with its extensive arable land and large farming population. However, most farmers earn little due to the lack of value addition. The VCN programme aims to change this by promoting local agro-processing industries. This will not only increase incomes but also create jobs across the supply chain from farming to packaging and distribution.

The initiative also supports the government's broader goal of economic diversification. By reducing dependence on food imports and oil revenue, Nigeria can build a more resilient economy. Furthermore, investing in agriculture in the north may help address the root causes of insecurity by creating jobs and reducing poverty.

The Value Chain programme is a timely investment in food security, economic empowerment, and regional development and its immediate implementation demonstrates strong political will and a clear development vision. If effectively managed, the VCN could reshape Nigeria's agricultural landscape and improve the livelihoods of millions and could serve as a model for agricultural reform across Africa.

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