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# AGRICULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS A STRATEGIC PATHWAY FOR ACHIEVING SDGS 1 AND 2: ENHANCING GLOBAL COOPERATION FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND FOOD SECURITY

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## Abstract

This study explored the role of agricultural diplomacy as a strategic tool for achieving SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). It examined the potential of diplomatic efforts to enhance global agricultural trade, technology transfer, and sustainable development, contributing to poverty reduction and food security. Despite progress, agricultural diplomacy remains underexplored in the context of the SDGs, particularly in developing countries, which faced challenges in leveraging diplomatic channels to address food insecurity and poverty. The study aimed to identify the impact of agricultural diplomacy on food security and poverty alleviation, assessed the effectiveness of diplomatic initiatives in supporting agricultural development, and proposed actionable policy strategies. The research questions addressed how agricultural diplomacy influenced global food security, poverty reduction, and sustainable agricultural practices. The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews from stakeholders in agriculture, trade, and diplomacy. Findings revealed that agricultural diplomacy can significantly enhanced food

**Keywords:** Agricultural diplomacy, Food security, Poverty reduction, Sustainable development, Poverty alleviation



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security through improved trade partnerships, technology transfer, and sustainable practices. However, challenges such as limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and political instability hindered its full potential. Policy implications suggested strengthening international partnerships, investing in agricultural infrastructure, and fostering inclusive policies to empower marginalised groups. The study recommended enhancing support for technological innovations, adopting climate-smart practices, and increasing financial investments in agricultural development. In conclusion, agricultural diplomacy held substantial promise for achieving SDGs 1 and 2. However, concerted efforts from governments, international organisations, and stakeholders are necessary to realise its full potential for sustainable development.

# Introduction

The pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has become a global imperative, with SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger) being central to the overarching agenda of sustainable development. These goals focused on eradicating poverty and ensuring food security for all, two challenges that are intricately linked to agricultural development. In many parts of the world, particularly in developing nations, agriculture remains the backbone of the economy, providing livelihoods for millions and playing a crucial role in poverty reduction and food security (FAO, 2020; United Nations, 2019). Despite significant advancements, the realisation of these goals remains a daunting task due to complex challenges, including inadequate agricultural systems, climate change, trade imbalances, and political instability. One critical, yet underexplored, dimension in the pursuit of SDGs 1 and 2 is the role of agricultural diplomacy. Agricultural diplomacy, defined as the use of diplomatic channels to enhance agricultural development, facilitate trade, and promote food security, represents an emerging area of international relations that has gained attention in recent years. This strategic approach emphasises the need for collaborative international efforts, leveraging diplomatic strategies to resolve agricultural disputes, foster partnerships, and develop policies that can strengthen global food systems (Nweke & Nwosu, 2021). Agricultural diplomacy is not simply about trade agreements or technical assistance but also about aligning international efforts to address the broader political, social, and environmental dimensions of agriculture and food systems.

As the global community faces interconnected challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, and poverty, the need for multilateral cooperation has become increasingly apparent. Diplomatic initiatives that focus on agricultural cooperation can lead to sustainable agricultural policies, improved trade regulations, and enhanced international aid, all of which are crucial for addressing the systemic issues preventing the achievement



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of SDGs 1 and 2 (McDermott et al., 2020). However, despite its potential, agricultural diplomacy remains a relatively under-researched field, with limited scholarly work examining how diplomacy can be strategically employed to advance these SDGs. This study sought to explore agricultural diplomacy as a critical strategy for actualising SDGs 1 and 2. It aimed to fill the existing knowledge gap by investigating how diplomatic efforts can foster international collaboration to address agricultural challenges, improve food security, and reduce poverty. By examining the intersection of agriculture and diplomacy, this research offered new perspectives on how international cooperation can be harnessed to create sustainable solutions to hunger and poverty.

Recent literature has highlighted the importance of cross-border agricultural collaboration to tackle issues such as trade barriers, resource scarcity, and climate change (Baldwin, *et al.,* 2021). However, these discussions often overlooked the diplomatic strategies necessary to overcome these obstacles on a global scale. In addition, the role of diplomacy in facilitating equitable agricultural trade agreements that benefited smallholder farmers, promote food access, and support sustainable farming practices remained insufficiently explored. By addressing these gaps, this research contributed to a more holistic understanding of the potential of agricultural diplomacy in fostering sustainable development. Through this study, the researcher aimed to provide insights that could inform policy recommendations for governments, international organisations, and non-governmental actors. Ultimately, the findings contributed to the evolving body of knowledge on the intersection of diplomacy, agriculture, and sustainable development, emphasising the importance of collaborative efforts to achieve global food security and poverty reduction.

**Statement of the Problem**

The achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger), remains a formidable challenge for many countries, especially those in the Global South. While significant strides have been made towards eradicating poverty and achieving food security, these goals are far from being fully realized. The persistence of hunger, food insecurity, and rural poverty can largely be attributed to inadequate agricultural systems, ineffective policies, climate change, limited access to resources, and weak global trade frameworks. Moreover, issues such as inefficient agricultural practices, land degradation, and political instability further complicate efforts to achieve these goals (FAO, 2020). Despite the importance of agriculture in achieving these SDGs, one critical yet under-explored dimension is the role of agricultural diplomacy. Agricultural diplomacy involves the strategic use of diplomatic channels to foster international cooperation, enhance agricultural development, and address global food security challenges. However, it remains insufficiently studied,


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particularly in terms of its potential to address the systemic issues hindering SDGs 1 and 2. Many international agricultural policies are fragmented, and trade agreements often do not account for the needs of smallholder farmers, the primary producers of food in many developing nations. Furthermore, the impact of diplomatic efforts in shaping agricultural trade, resource sharing, and technology transfer across borders is not well understood. While there have been discussions on improving agricultural systems through trade and policy reforms, the diplomatic aspects of these processes such as negotiations, global governance, and international agreements are often overlooked in academic literature. This gap limited the understanding of how diplomatic strategies can be leveraged to create coherent, international frameworks for sustainable agriculture, trade, and poverty alleviation. As a result, there is a pressing need to examine how agricultural diplomacy can be strategically utilised to address the multifaceted challenges of poverty and hunger on a global scale. This study sought to bridge this gap by exploring the role of agricultural diplomacy in the realisation of SDGs 1 and 2. Specifically, it aimed to examine how diplomatic efforts can foster international cooperation in the agricultural sector, promote sustainable farming practices, facilitate equitable trade, and ultimately contribute to the alleviation of poverty and hunger. The lack of comprehensive research on this topic made it essential to further investigate the intersection of agriculture and diplomacy as a means of accelerating progress toward these critical global objectives.

**Research Objectives**

The primary objective of this study is to explore the role of agricultural diplomacy in achieving SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). To achieve this, the study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the role of agricultural diplomacy in fostering international cooperation for sustainable agricultural development.
2. To assess the impact of diplomatic negotiations on global agricultural trade and its implications for poverty alleviation.
3. To identify the barriers to agricultural diplomacy in the context of SDGs 1 and 2, particularly in developing countries.
4. To propose strategic diplomatic frameworks for enhancing food security and poverty alleviation through global cooperation.

**Research Questions**

To guide the investigation of agricultural diplomacy and its role in achieving SDGs 1 and 2, the following research questions were addressed:

1. How can agricultural diplomacy foster international cooperation to promote sustainable agricultural development in developing nations?


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2. What is the impact of diplomatic negotiations on global agricultural trade, and how does this influence the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in developing countries?
3. What are the key barriers to effective agricultural diplomacy in the pursuit of SDGs 1 and 2, particularly in regions with high levels of poverty and food insecurity?
4. What diplomatic strategies can be developed to enhance food security and reduce poverty globally through international agricultural cooperation?

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in advancing the understanding of agricultural diplomacy and its role in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). Despite the critical importance of agriculture in addressing global poverty and food insecurity, the role of diplomacy in facilitating agricultural development and trade has received limited scholarly attention. By examining the intersection of agriculture and international relations, this research filled an important gap in existing literature, offering new perspectives on how diplomatic strategies can be employed to tackle the persistent challenges of hunger and poverty. One of the key contributions of this study is its potential to expand the knowledge base on agricultural diplomacy, a field that has been underexplored in the context of global development. By investigating how diplomatic efforts can promote cross-border agricultural cooperation, improve food security, and foster sustainable development, this study provided a deeper understanding of the ways in which diplomacy can influence agricultural policy, trade, and international cooperation. This fresh insight is crucial for academics, policymakers, and practitioners looking to develop more effective strategies for achieving the SDGs.

The study is also significant in its potential to inform policy at both the national and international levels. It offered valuable recommendations for governments, international organisations, and diplomatic bodies on how to utilise agricultural diplomacy to create stronger global partnerships that promote sustainable agricultural development and poverty alleviation. By examining successful diplomatic strategies and their outcomes, the research provided practical guidance for the formulation of policies that can support smallholder farmers, enhance food security, and ensure the long-term sustainability of food systems. Furthermore, the study's significance lies in its potential to contribute to the broader goal of sustainable agricultural development. By identifying the ways in which diplomatic strategies can address key agricultural challenges such as trade imbalances, resource scarcity, and climate change, this research offered actionable insights for creating more sustainable agricultural practices. These findings could lead to better global policies that support the equitable distribution of resources, promote fair agricultural trade, and ensure that food security is accessible to all, particularly in vulnerable regions.


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Lastly, the findings of this research directly support efforts aimed at achieving SDGs 1 and 2. By highlighting how agricultural diplomacy can be strategically used to address poverty and hunger, the study contributed to global efforts to eradicate these challenges. The research demonstrated how diplomatic engagement in agriculture can accelerate progress toward these critical goals, providing a new framework for international cooperation and collaboration in sustainable development. In conclusion, the significance of this study lies in its potential to reshape the conversation around agricultural diplomacy, offered valuable insights for policy formulation, and contributed to the achievement of global development goals. By exploring how diplomacy can be leveraged to enhance food security, reduce poverty, and promote sustainable agricultural practices, this research will have far-reaching implications for both scholarly understanding and practical policy initiatives aimed at fostering a more equitable and food-secured world.

**Scope of the Study**

This study focused on the role of agricultural diplomacy in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). The research examined how diplomatic strategies can be leveraged to enhance agricultural development, promote global cooperation, and reduce food insecurity and poverty, with particular attention to their impact on both developed and developing countries. While the study considered global agricultural diplomacy, it placed a significant emphasis on regions where food insecurity and poverty are most pronounced, such as sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. These regions are critical case studies for understanding the potential of agricultural diplomacy in addressing the challenges they faced in achieving these SDGs. The thematic scope of the study covered four primary areas: first, it explored agricultural diplomacy and international cooperation, investigating how diplomatic efforts can encourage collaboration between countries to tackle global agricultural challenges, such as sustainable farming practices, food security, and resource-sharing for agricultural development. Second, the study assessed global agricultural trade and policy, particularly focusing on the impact of diplomatic negotiations and trade agreements on international agricultural systems. It examined how these policies shaped food security and poverty reduction efforts and explored the role of international organisations in agricultural governance.

Third, the study identified and analysed the barriers to effective agricultural diplomacy, such as political instability, economic challenges, and institutional limitations in developing countries. It sought to understand the obstacles that hindered the successful implementation of diplomatic strategies and how these challenges can be overcome. Finally, the study proposed strategic diplomatic frameworks that can enhance agricultural diplomacy. These frameworks aimed to offer practical recommendations for

policymakers, international organisations, and other stakeholders to promote food security, reduce poverty, and foster international cooperation in agricultural development. The focus was on examining existing international frameworks, trade policies, and agricultural agreements that have a global impact. While the study acknowledged the importance of domestic agricultural policies and regional trade agreements, it primarily focused on broader international diplomatic strategies that influenced agricultural development on a global scale. The scope of the study does not extend to a detailed analysis of individual country policies or specific bilateral trade agreements but instead concentrated on the broader dynamics of international diplomacy and its potential to drive change in global agricultural practices. Ultimately, this study aimed to offer a strategic examination of agricultural diplomacy, contributing to the understanding of how diplomatic efforts can play a crucial role in addressing food insecurity and poverty, and in advancing the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2.

**Literature Review**

The concept of agricultural diplomacy, though relatively new in academic discourse, has gained increasing attention in recent years due to its critical role in addressing global food security and poverty challenges. Agricultural diplomacy refers to the use of diplomatic efforts to enhance agricultural development through international cooperation, trade negotiations, and policy coordination (Swinnen, 2020). This section reviewed relevant and recent literature on the subject, emphasising its significance for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). The role of agricultural diplomacy in fostering international cooperation has been extensively discussed in literature, especially regarding its potential to tackle food insecurity and poverty. According to Babcock, *et al.* (2021), agricultural diplomacy is a vital tool for addressing the global challenges of food security and sustainable agricultural development.

By facilitating dialogue among nations, agricultural diplomacy can help harmonised policies related to food production, trade, and the environment, ensuring that agricultural practices contribute to the reduction of poverty. Similarly, Mulenga, *et al.* (2020) emphasised that diplomatic collaboration between nations in sectors such as agricultural technology transfer, sustainable farming practices, and rural development is key to improving food systems in developing countries, where poverty and hunger are most prevalent. The importance of agricultural diplomacy in fostering cooperative efforts for agricultural development has also been underscored in several studies. For instance, Lobell, *et al*. (2019) highlighted the need for global cooperation to ensure that agricultural practices are aligned with sustainable development goals. They argued that agricultural diplomacy, by influencing trade agreements and international partnerships, can pave the

way for greater resource-sharing and knowledge exchange, thus enabling countries to improve agricultural productivity and resilience to climate change.

The impact of international agricultural trade policies on poverty and hunger is another central theme in the literature. In their analysis of agricultural trade liberalisation, Anderson & Valenzuela (2019) demonstrated how trade policies influence food security by either promoting or hindering access to food markets. They argued that trade policies crafted through diplomatic negotiations can either exacerbate or alleviate poverty in developing countries. Similarly, Muenchen, *et al.* (2021) asserted that international trade agreements, when structured appropriately, can enhance agricultural exports from developing countries, offering economic opportunities to smallholder farmers and contributing to poverty reduction. However, several studies also highlighted the negative impacts of certain trade policies on smallholder farmers in the Global South. According to the World Bank (2020), trade liberalisation has often led to market volatility and price instability, which disproportionately affects small farmers who rely on local markets. As such, agricultural diplomacy must be employed not only to facilitate trade but also to ensure that it benefits vulnerable populations and contributes to equitable economic development (Ogunleye & Akinbobola, 2020).

While agricultural diplomacy holds significant promise, various barriers hinder its full potential. Political instability, inadequate infrastructure, and institutional weaknesses are often cited as significant challenges in the literature. A study by Seitz (2020) argued that many developing countries struggle to engage effectively in agricultural diplomacy due to limited resources, weak political will, and political instability. This makes it difficult to establish the necessary diplomatic channels to engage in productive negotiations with other nations. Moreover, the study highlighted how conflicting national interests, such as domestic agricultural protectionism, can complicate international cooperation. Furthermore, climate change has been identified as a critical barrier to effective agricultural diplomacy. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 2021), the impacts of climate change, such as droughts and floods, disproportionately affect agricultural production in developing countries, making them more vulnerable to food insecurity. These challenges require robust diplomatic negotiations to align global policies on climate change with sustainable agricultural practices. Therefore, agricultural diplomacy must account for the broader context of environmental sustainability and resilience.

Several scholars have proposed strategic frameworks to enhance the role of agricultural diplomacy in advancing SDGs 1 and 2. One such proposal is the strengthening of international partnerships to promote technology transfer and innovation in agriculture. According to Kabbir & Vasilenko (2022), diplomatic frameworks should focus on building sustainable agricultural technologies that can improve crop yields, reduce dependency on

external food aid, and enhance the economic resilience of developing countries. Furthermore, diplomatic efforts must focus on creating multilateral agreements that prioritise food security, agricultural development, and poverty alleviation, while also addressing issues such as climate change and resource management (Swinnen, 2020). In their comprehensive review of international agricultural diplomacy, Thomas, *et al.* (2021) suggested that enhancing the capacity of developing countries to engage in international negotiations is crucial for strengthening their agricultural sectors. This can be achieved through training programmes for diplomats and policymakers, which would equip them with the skills needed to navigate complex international trade agreements and agricultural policy frameworks. Additionally, the authors stressed the importance of integrating gender considerations into agricultural diplomacy, as women in many developing countries played a central role in food production and poverty alleviation.

Despite the growing body of research on agricultural diplomacy and its role in global food security and poverty alleviation, several gaps remained in the literature that warranted further exploration. These gaps primarily revolved around the practical application of agricultural diplomacy in different global contexts, the integration of environmental factors like climate change, and the specific challenges faced by developing countries in utilising agricultural diplomacy to its full potential. Identifying these gaps is essential for advancing the field and ensuring that agricultural diplomacy can be effectively used to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). One notable gap in the literature is the scarcity of empirical research focused on the specific challenges and opportunities that agricultural diplomacy presents to developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. While some studies have addressed the broader role of agricultural diplomacy in global cooperation (Babcock, *et al.,* 2021), there is limited research that critically examined how these diplomatic efforts were implemented and experienced on the ground in lower-income countries. Most existing literature tends to focus on the theoretical aspects of agricultural diplomacy or case studies from more developed regions (Lobell et al., 2019). According to Seitz (2020), political instability, weak institutional frameworks, and the absence of adequate infrastructure in developing nations remain critical barriers to the effective use of agricultural diplomacy. However, the literature provided limited insight into how diplomatic frameworks can be tailored to address these specific obstacles in practice.

Another significant gap lies in the integration of climate change into agricultural diplomacy. While climate change has been identified as a crucial factor affecting food security (FAO, 2021), the existing literature often discussed these issues in isolation, without considering the broader diplomatic strategies needed to address them in the context of agricultural diplomacy. Research by Muenchen, *et al.* (2021) highlighted how

agricultural trade agreements and policies can be influenced by climate change, but there is a need for more in-depth analysis of how diplomatic efforts can help countries adjust their agricultural systems to climate variability. Studies like those of Swinnen (2020) offered some theoretical frameworks for agricultural diplomacy, but they rarely included specific, actionable strategies for aligning international agricultural policies with climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. This gap needed to be filled to ensure that agricultural diplomacy not only addressed food insecurity and poverty but also contributed to sustainable, climate-resilient agricultural systems.

The literature also tends to overlook the role of gender and social inequality in agricultural diplomacy, which is a critical consideration for achieving SDGs 1 and 2. Women played a central role in agricultural production, particularly in developing countries, but their contributions are often overlooked in policy discussions and diplomatic negotiations (Thomas, *et al.,* 2021). While gender-responsive policies have been advocated in some development contexts, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that explored how agricultural diplomacy can integrate gender equity to improve food security and poverty alleviation. According to Kabbir & Vasilenko (2022), gender considerations in agricultural diplomacy could lead to more inclusive and effective strategies, yet the literature on this topic remains sparse. The failure to adequately address gender dynamics within agricultural diplomacy frameworks limited the potential for these diplomatic efforts to achieve equitable development outcomes.

Another gap in the literature is the heavy focus on theoretical discussions of agricultural diplomacy with limited attention given to practical applications and real-world outcomes. While scholars like Anderson & Valenzuela (2019) have laid out theoretical frameworks for agricultural diplomacy, few studies have assessed the actual outcomes of these diplomatic strategies in achieving food security and poverty reduction. Furthermore, there is a need for more research that evaluated the impact of existing diplomatic initiatives in terms of measurable results in food security and poverty alleviation. As noted by Mulenga, *et al.* (2020), much of the current literature is abstract and does not sufficiently evaluate the effectiveness of agricultural diplomacy in achieving its stated goals. Finally, there is a lack of comprehensive research on the practical strategies for cross-border agricultural policy coordination. While agricultural diplomacy is often touted as a means to improve international cooperation, there is limited research on the specific mechanisms through which countries can effectively coordinate their agricultural policies. Research by Babcock, *et al.* (2021) and Thomas, *et al.* (2021) suggested that agricultural diplomacy can foster cooperation, but more detailed studies are needed on the specific diplomatic tools and frameworks that facilitate policy alignment between nations. The absence of research on this topic left a critical gap in understanding how agricultural

diplomacy can be used to harmonise policies across borders, particularly when countries have differing economic priorities and agricultural needs.

In conclusion, while the existing literature on agricultural diplomacy provided valuable insights into its role in global food security and poverty reduction, significant gaps remained in empirical research, climate change integration, gender equity, practical application, and cross-border policy coordination. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing more effective and inclusive agricultural diplomacy strategies that can contribute to the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2. As agricultural diplomacy becomes increasingly central to global discussions on sustainable development, it is essential to fill these gaps to ensure that diplomatic efforts lead to real-world solutions to food insecurity and poverty.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study was anchored on the dependency theory which emerged in the late 1950s and 1960s as a critical response to traditional economic theories that were unable to explain the persistent inequalities between developed and developing nations. Scholars such as Raúl Prebisch, André Gunder Frank, and Samir Amin were pivotal in developing this theory, which emphasises how the economic development of wealthy, industrialised nations often occurs at the expense of poorer, less-developed countries. According to the dependency theory, the global economic system is structured in such a way that developing countries remain dependent on the export of raw materials and natural resources, while developed nations control the production, technology, and trade of processed goods. This unequal relationship results in the continued underdevelopment of poorer nations, as they remain locked in a cycle of exploitation, limiting their ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency and sustainable growth. The theory is particularly concerned with the power dynamics that shaped the global economy, where wealthier countries exert control over trade, capital, and technology, and poorer nations become increasingly reliant on foreign aid, exports of raw materials, and international loans. Dependency theory argues that this structure perpetuates a system of inequality and that the development of the Global South is hindered by the policies and practices of the Global North. As such, the theory critiques the international capitalist system and advocates for changes that would enable developing nations to break free from dependency and pursue autonomous development.

When applied to the context of agricultural diplomacy, the dependency theory provides a critical lens for understanding the relationship between developed and developing countries in the agricultural sector. Agricultural diplomacy involves negotiations, agreements, and policies that influence trade, technology transfer, and food security. For developing nations, agricultural diplomacy can either reinforce existing dependencies or

provide opportunities to challenge these dependencies and foster greater economic autonomy. In many cases, agricultural diplomacy is shaped by the trade relationships between countries, where developing nations often serve as exporters of raw agricultural commodities such as coffee, cocoa, and maize, while wealthier nations control the processing and distribution of these goods. This global division of labour, where developing nations remain largely producers of raw materials, reinforces their economic dependence. Agricultural diplomacy can therefore either continue to perpetuate this dependency or offer a path for developing nations to diversify their agricultural sectors, negotiate better trade terms, and gain access to advanced technologies that can improve food security and reduce poverty. For instance, agricultural diplomacy can involve the negotiation of fair trade agreements or the establishment of cooperative frameworks that allow developing countries to have more control over their agricultural sectors. By focusing on the global power imbalances in agricultural trade and development, the dependency theory offers valuable insights into how diplomatic efforts in agriculture can challenge or perpetuate these inequalities.

The dependency theory is particularly relevant for analysing agricultural diplomacy for several reasons. First, it provides a historical context for understanding how trade and agricultural systems have developed in ways that benefit wealthier nations while leaving developing countries in a subordinate position. The theory critiques the existing global agricultural system, which often keeps developing countries dependent on agricultural exports that provide little value-added income. This is particularly pertinent when examining the role of agricultural diplomacy, as many developing countries are still locked into this cycle of raw material exportation and importation of processed goods. Second, the dependency theory offers a structural critique of global trade and agricultural systems, shedding light on the barriers that prevent developing countries from achieving sustainable development. Agricultural diplomacy can play a crucial role in either reinforcing or breaking these structural barriers. If agricultural diplomacy is conducted in a way that favours equitable trade and the transfer of sustainable technologies, it can reduce the dependency of developing countries and enable them to achieve food security and poverty reduction goals more effectively.

Furthermore, dependency theory highlighted the importance of addressing power dynamics in international relations, particularly in the agricultural sector. Through this lens, agricultural diplomacy can be seen as a tool for developing countries to negotiate better trade terms, secure access to innovative agricultural technologies, and ensure that their agricultural policies align with their own development needs rather than the interests of wealthier nations. The theory also justified a focus on the broader implications of agricultural diplomacy in relation to food security, poverty reduction, and development. By applying the dependency theory to agricultural diplomacy, we can

explore how diplomacy can either challenge or perpetuate existing inequalities and explore pathways that might enabled developing nations to achieve greater self-sufficiency and resilience in their agricultural sectors. Finally, the theory helped identified the key factors that must be addressed to achieve the SDGs, particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). It emphasised the need for developing countries to reduce their dependency on external agricultural aid and establish more equitable, self-sustaining agricultural systems. By applying this theory, the study can explore how agricultural diplomacy can act as a catalyst for achieving these goals, addressing the root causes of poverty and hunger that are linked to systemic inequalities in global agricultural systems. In conclusion, the dependency theory is an appropriate and valuable theoretical framework for analysing agricultural diplomacy in the context of sustainable development. It allowed for a critical examination of the global agricultural system and the role of diplomacy in either perpetuating or challenging the economic dependencies that developing countries faced. By applying this theory, the study can better understand the structural barriers to achieving SDGs 1 and 2, and explored how agricultural diplomacy can be harnessed to foster more equitable, sustainable agricultural systems that contributed to the long-term development goals of poorer nations. The theory's emphasis on power dynamics, structural inequalities, and the need for autonomous development made it particularly suited for analysing the potential of agricultural diplomacy to address food security and poverty issues in the Global South.

**Methodology**

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of agricultural diplomacy and its role in the achievement of SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). The mixed-methods approach allowed for triangulation of data, ensuring robust analysis through the integration of both numerical data and detailed personal insights. The quantitative aspect involved a survey of 400 participants drawn from key stakeholders involved in agricultural diplomacy, including policymakers, agricultural experts, diplomats, and representatives of international organisations. The target population is specifically drawn from government ministries of agriculture, trade, and foreign affairs in Nigeria, as well as relevant international agencies working on agricultural development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The survey utilised a structured questionnaire, designed to collect demographic data and insights into the participants' perspectives on the role of agricultural diplomacy in sustainable development. The sampling technique was stratified random sampling, ensuring that different sectors related to agricultural diplomacy were adequately represented. The sample population size of 400 was selected to balance precision and feasibility, providing sufficient statistical power for analysis. Demographic

information collected included age, gender, educational background, job role, years of experience in agricultural diplomacy, and geographic location.

The qualitative aspect also included in-depth interviews with 20 key informants, selected from the survey respondents, based on their expertise and involvement in agricultural diplomacy initiatives. These interviews were semi-structured, allowing for flexible conversation while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. The interviews focused on understanding the nuanced views of experts on how agricultural diplomacy has impacted the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2, the challenges faced in diplomatic negotiations, and the potential solutions to address these challenges. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine trends and correlations. Statistical tools such as SPSS or Excel was used to analyze the survey responses, and results were presented in tables and graphs. The qualitative data from interviews were analysed thematically using coding techniques, allowing the identification of key themes and patterns that highlighted the complexities of agricultural diplomacy in the context of sustainable development. By employing this mixed-methods approach, the study aimed to generate a well-rounded understanding of the subject, combining objective statistical data with rich, qualitative insights into the challenges and opportunities in agricultural diplomacy.

**Tables of Data Presentation**

**Table 1: Demographic Information of Survey Respondents**

| Demographic Variable | Frequency (N = 400) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Age Group** | | |
| **18 - 30 years** | 80 | 20% |
| **31 - 40 years** | 120 | 30% |
| **41 - 50 years** | 100 | 25% |
| **51 - 60 years** | 60 | 15% |
| **61 years and above** | 40 | 10% |
| **Gender** | | |
| **Male** | 240 | 60% |
| **Female** | 160 | 40% |
| **Educational Background** | | |
| **Bachelor's Degree** | 180 | 45% |
| **Master's Degree** | 120 | 30% |
| **PhD** | 50 | 12.5% |
| **Other (Diploma, etc.)** | 50 | 12.5% |
| **Job Role** | | |


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| Demographic Variable | Frequency (N = 400) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Policy Makers** | 100 | 25% |
| **Agricultural Experts** | 150 | 37.5% |
| **Diplomats** | 50 | 12.5% |
| **International Agency Staff** | 100 | 25% |
| **Years of Experience in Agricultural Diplomacy** | | |
| **1 - 5 years** | 120 | 30% |
| **6 - 10 years** | 150 | 37.5% |
| **11 - 15 years** | 70 | 17.5% |
| **16 years and above** | 60 | 15% |

**Table 2: Role of Agricultural Diplomacy in Achieving SDGs 1 and 2 (No Poverty & Zero Hunger)**

| Survey Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Agricultural diplomacy helps reduce poverty in developing countries.** | 180 (45%) | 120 (30%) | 50 (12.5%) | 30 (7.5%) | 20 (5%) |
| **Agricultural diplomacy improves food security in global markets.** | 160 (40%) | 130 (32.5%) | 70 (17.5%) | 30 (7.5%) | 10 (2.5%) |
| **Agricultural trade agreements promote poverty alleviation.** | 170 (42.5%) | 130 (32.5%) | 60 (15%) | 30 (7.5%) | 10 (2.5%) |
| **International agricultural cooperation has led to increased food availability.** | 150 (37.5%) | 120 (30%) | 80 (20%) | 30 (7.5%) | 20 (5%) |

**Table 3: Challenges and Opportunities in Agricultural Diplomacy**

| Challenges in Agricultural Diplomacy | Frequency (N = 400) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Lack of political will and support for agricultural policies** | 120 | 30% |
| **Insufficient funding for agricultural development programs** | 150 | 37.5% |
| **Barriers to market access and international trade restrictions** | 80 | 20% |
| **Limited technological capacity and knowledge transfer** | 50 | 12.5% |

| Challenges in Agricultural Diplomacy | Frequency (N = 400) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Opportunities in Agricultural Diplomacy** | Frequency (N = 400) | Percentage (%) |
| **Enhanced global partnerships and trade agreements** | 160 | 40% |
| **Transfer of agricultural technologies and innovations** | 140 | 35% |
| **Strengthening regional food security initiatives** | 100 | 25% |

**Table 4: Perceived Impact of Agricultural Diplomacy on SDGs 1 and 2 (No Poverty & Zero Hunger)**

| Impact Area | Very High Impact | High Impact | Moderate Impact | Low Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reducing poverty (SDG 1)** | 180 (45%) | 120 (30%) | 50 (12.5%) | 30 (7.5%) | 20 (5%) |
| **Improving food security (SDG 2)** | 170 (42.5%) | 130 (32.5%) | 70 (17.5%) | 20 (5%) | 10 (2.5%) |
| **Promoting sustainable agricultural practices** | 160 (40%) | 140 (35%) | 60 (15%) | 30 (7.5%) | 10 (2.5%) |

**Table 5: Correlation Between Agricultural Diplomacy and Achievement of SDGs 1 and 2 (Survey Data)**

| Variable | Correlation Coefficient (r) |
|---|---|
| **Agricultural Diplomacy and SDG 1 (No Poverty)** | 0.75 (Strong Positive) |
| **Agricultural Diplomacy and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** | 0.80 (Very Strong Positive) |
| **Agricultural Diplomacy and Food Security** | 0.70 (Moderate Positive) |
| **Agricultural Diplomacy and Economic Growth** | 0.65 (Moderate Positive) |

**Note:** These tables directly aligned with the research objectives and offered clear, organised data reflecting the respondents' demographic information (which is crucial for contexualising their responses), the role of agricultural diplomacy in achieving SDGs 1 and 2, the challenges and opportunities perceived by the respondents within agricultural diplomacy, the perceived impact of agricultural diplomacy on food security, poverty reduction, and economic growth, and the correlation analysis between agricultural diplomacy and SDGs 1 and 2, providing insights into the relationships. By ensuring alignment with the research objectives, these tables allowed for an effective data analysis and contributed valuable information to the study of agricultural diplomacy and its role in achieving sustainable development goals.



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**Discussion of Findings in the Data Presentation Tables**

This section interpreted and discussed the findings in line with the research objectives, aligning them with the data presented in the tables presented above. The discussion was structured around the research objectives, and the analysis drew on the data from the survey conducted with 400 respondents.

**Objective 1: To examine the role of agricultural diplomacy in the achievement of SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger)**

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that agricultural diplomacy played a significant role in the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2. A majority of respondents (45%) strongly agreed that agricultural diplomacy helped reduced poverty, with 30% agreeing to this statement. This suggested that respondents recognised the positive impact agricultural diplomacy can have on alleviating poverty, especially in developing countries. Similarly, 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that agricultural diplomacy improved food security, with 32.5% agreeing. This demonstrated a strong perception that international agricultural cooperation can significantly contribute to both poverty reduction and the improvement of food security, central elements of SDGs 1 and 2. The data also showed that agricultural trade agreements were seen as a key vehicle for promoting poverty alleviation, with 42.5% of respondents strongly agreeing that such agreements led to poverty reduction, and 32.5% agreeing. This aligned with existing literature, which posited that trade agreements within agricultural diplomacy often provided developing countries with better market access and opportunities for economic growth (Zambrano, 2020).

**Objective 2: To investigate the challenges and opportunities in agricultural diplomacy**

The findings in Table 3 highlighted the key challenges and opportunities associated with agricultural diplomacy. Among the challenges, the most prominent is "insufficient funding for agricultural development programmes," which 37.5% of respondents identified as a significant barrier. This is consistent with previous studies that emphasised the role of financial support in agricultural diplomacy (Bélanger & Filion, 2022). The challenge of political will and support for agricultural policies (30%) further underlined the difficulty in prioritising agriculture within national and international agendas, impacting the effectiveness of agricultural diplomacy. On the opportunities side, the most notable opportunity identified is "enhanced global partnerships and trade agreements," with 40% of respondents perceiving this as a key opportunity. This finding is crucial, as it aligned with the idea that agricultural diplomacy opened avenues for countries to forge stronger international partnerships, leading to trade agreements that benefited food security and economic stability (Smith & Turner, 2021). The transfer of agricultural technologies (35%) and strengthening regional food security initiatives (25%) were also seen as critical

opportunities, demonstrating the potential for agricultural diplomacy to improve food systems and infrastructure globally.

**Objective 3: To assess the impact of agricultural diplomacy on food security and poverty reduction**

The impact of agricultural diplomacy on food security and poverty reduction was assessed in Table 4, which showed strong perceptions of its impact. The data indicated that agricultural diplomacy is seen as having a high impact on reducing poverty and improving food security. For example, 45% of respondents believed that agricultural diplomacy has a very high impact on reducing poverty (SDG 1), while 42.5% viewed it as having a very high impact on improving food security (SDG 2). These results highlighted the significant role agricultural diplomacy played in addressing both food insecurity and poverty, which are core to the SDGs. Moreover, the correlation coefficients presented in Table 5 further supported these findings. A very strong positive correlation (0.80) between agricultural diplomacy and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) suggested that agricultural diplomacy is a key driver in addressing food insecurity. Similarly, the strong positive correlation (0.75) between agricultural diplomacy and SDG 1 (No Poverty) indicated its substantial contribution to poverty alleviation, reinforcing the view that agricultural diplomacy can be an effective tool in achieving these SDGs.

**Objective 4: To explore the effectiveness of international cooperation through agricultural diplomacy**

International cooperation is crucial in agricultural diplomacy, and the findings in Table 4 supported the notion that agricultural diplomacy is seen as an effective mechanism for international collaboration. The high impact ratings on food security and poverty reduction were indicative of the effectiveness of global partnerships and diplomatic efforts in addressing these challenges. As the data showed, 40% of respondents felt that agricultural diplomacy played a very high role in improving food security, and a similar percentage viewed it as having a very high impact on reducing poverty. These findings suggested that international cooperation through agricultural diplomacy enhanced food systems, addressed poverty, and strengthened the global trade network.

The challenges highlighted in Table 3 (e.g., insufficient funding and lack of political will) may, however, hindered the full realisation of this potential. Addressing these challenges could further enhanced the effectiveness of international agricultural diplomacy. The opportunities identified such as the transfer of agricultural technologies and strengthening regional food security initiatives suggested that international cooperation could play an even more significant role if these barriers were overcome. Also, Table 5 (Correlation of Agricultural Diplomacy with SDGs 1 & 2) demonstrated a high correlation

between agricultural diplomacy and the two SDGs, reinforcing the idea that international cooperation is a key factor in achieving these goals. The correlation of 0.80 for SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and 0.75 for SDG 1 (No Poverty) highlighted the significant role that agricultural diplomacy played in tackling food insecurity and poverty. This supported existing research that emphasised the importance of international cooperation and trade in fostering sustainable agricultural systems and reducing poverty (Bélanger & Filion, 2022).

However, the effectiveness of agricultural diplomacy depends on addressing key challenges such as political will and funding, which, as noted in Table 3, were significant barriers to the successful implementation of agricultural initiatives. The opportunities identified, including global partnerships and the transfer of agricultural technologies, suggested that overcoming these challenges could significantly enhanced the effectiveness of international cooperation. The findings clearly indicated that agricultural diplomacy is instrumental in advancing SDGs 1 and 2, as it is perceived to reduce poverty, enhanced food security, and foster international cooperation. The challenges and opportunities identified emphasised the need for more robust financial support and stronger political commitment to make agricultural diplomacy more effective. The positive correlations between agricultural diplomacy and the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2 further underscored its potential as a strategic tool for sustainable development. Thus, agricultural diplomacy held promise as a critical mechanism for addressing global hunger and poverty, although addressing its challenges is key to unlocking its full potential. These insights aligned well with the research objectives, offering a comprehensive understanding of the role of agricultural diplomacy in sustainable development and highlighting areas for improvement.

**Policy Implications**

The findings of this study underscored the significant role of agricultural diplomacy in achieving SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). Several policy implications arose from the research. First, there is a need to strengthen global partnerships. Governments should focus on trade agreements and collaborations that improve market access for smallholder farmers and enhance food security. Technology transfer is also crucial, with governments promoting the exchange of modern agricultural technologies to boost productivity and sustainability. Additionally, investing in agricultural infrastructure will help reduce food wastage and improve distribution systems. To overcome challenges in agricultural diplomacy, increased funding for agricultural development programmes is vital. Financial support is necessary for capacity-building, research, and policy implementation. Furthermore, political will is key to the long-term success of agricultural diplomacy, requiring governments to commit to clear agricultural strategies. Regional

cooperation should also be prioritised, as it can address shared agricultural challenges and align policies to improve food security.

In terms of enhancing the impact of agricultural diplomacy on poverty and food security, inclusive agricultural policies must be adopted. Special focus should be given to empowering women and youth in agriculture. Sustainable practices should be integrated into agricultural policies to ensure long-term benefits. Additionally, social protection measures such as food assistance programmes will help mitigate the effects of food insecurity. Finally, promoting international cooperation is crucial. Policymakers should strengthen multilateral frameworks like the FAO and WTO and encourage public-private partnerships to pool resources for agricultural development. Reducing trade barriers will also help improve market access for agricultural exports from developing nations. In conclusion, agricultural diplomacy can contribute significantly to achieving SDGs 1 and 2 by focusing on global partnerships, technology transfer, infrastructure, funding, political will, and sustainability. These strategies will enhance food security and reduce poverty globally.

**Conclusion**

This study underscored the essential role of agricultural diplomacy in advancing the goals of SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger). It revealed that strengthening global partnerships, facilitating technology transfer, investing in agricultural infrastructure, and implementing inclusive policies are key strategies to enhance food security and poverty reduction. By addressing challenges such as inadequate funding, political will, and regional cooperation, agricultural diplomacy can significantly contribute to sustainable agricultural development, particularly in developing countries. Overall, this study advocated for a more robust and integrated approach to agricultural diplomacy to realise these global goals. While the study offered valuable insights, it is limited by its sample population, which may not comprehensively reflected global agricultural diplomacy dynamics. The research also focused on specific case studies and regions, and as such, may not fully captured the diversity of agricultural diplomacy initiatives worldwide. Additionally, the study was constrained by time and resource limitations, restricting the depth and breadth of the analysis and the inclusion of certain emerging topics in agricultural diplomacy. Future research could expand on the role of agricultural diplomacy in addressing food security and poverty in specific regions, particularly focusing on sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where challenges related to poverty and hunger are most pressing. There is also potential for exploring the role of digital agriculture, innovation, and climate change adaptation in diplomatic initiatives, as these are rapidly becoming integral to global agricultural strategies. Moreover, further studies could investigate the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of agricultural diplomacy programmes,

examining their ability to adapt to changing geopolitical and environmental factors. Lastly, research into the impact of international trade policies and agreements on agricultural diplomacy could provide more insights into how global economic frameworks influence food security outcomes.

**Recommendations for Policy Implementation**

Based on the findings and research objectives of this study, the following policy implementations are recommended to effectively integrate agricultural diplomacy into the achievement of SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger):

1. **Enhancing International Agricultural Trade Partnerships:** Governments should prioritise creating international trade agreements that open markets for agricultural products from developing countries. This includes reducing trade barriers, ensuring equitable access, and eliminating tariffs that disproportionately affect agricultural exports from low-income countries. Bilateral and multilateral trade agreements should be designed to foster cooperation on food security, technology transfer, and agricultural development.
2. **Supporting Technology Transfer and Innovation:** To improve agricultural productivity and sustainability, governments should actively promote the transfer of agricultural technologies from developed to developing countries. This includes the establishment of public-private partnerships to develop and share innovations in irrigation, crop management, and climate-resilient agricultural practices. Furthermore, investment in agricultural research and development should be prioritised, ensuring that new technologies are accessible and affordable for smallholder farmers.
3. **Strengthening Infrastructure for Agricultural Development:** Policy makers must focus on investing in agricultural infrastructure such as transportation networks, cold storage facilities, and market access points. This will help reduce food waste, increase the shelf life of produce, and enhance food distribution efficiency across borders. Governments should allocate resources for building both rural and cross-border infrastructure to ensure effective food security management.
4. **Promoting Inclusive Agricultural Policies:** Governments must ensure that agricultural policies are inclusive, especially for marginalised groups such as women, youth, and rural communities. Targeted interventions are needed to provide access to land, credit, training, and markets for these groups, enabling them to fully benefit from agricultural diplomacy initiatives. Moreover, gender-sensitive policies should be integrated into agricultural programmes, promoting women's leadership and participation in agricultural decision-making processes.


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