

Body Canvasses Separate Micro-Finance Bank For Women Farmers

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ABUJA - Small Scale Women Farmers Organisation in Nigeria has called on the Federal Government to establish a separate micro-finance bank run by and for women only, to address gender disparity among other challenges.

Mrs. Sarah Yapwah, the National President of the organisation, made the call in an interview with newsmen in Abuja.

According to her, the way agriculture-related policies are being implemented in the country does not favour women.

She advised that government should emulate the Government of India to address the bottlenecks in the present process.

“In India, the government has established a micro finance bank for women only and it is a woman that is charge.

“Our government can do the same for us because of all the monies they have released to various commercial banks to assist farmers.

“These monies have not gotten to the hands of most women farmers because of the bottlenecks but with the micro-finance bank for women, I know we will be able to access it.”

She argued that micro- finance banks were more effective than public banks in giving loans to alleviate poverty.

Yapwah said that her organisation had met with members of the legislature to present its case, so that government policies in the agriculture sector could begin to favour women.

The president also said that the organisation was working alongside the Nigeria Incentive Based Risk-Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) of the CBN, to facilitate access to loans for its members who had applied.

She commended the efforts of Actionaid Nigeria, an NGO, for consistently building the capacity of smallholder farmers through organisations like hers and also advocating for their interest at various local and international fora.

She said that the agency had also facilitated various training programmes on agricultural and agronomic practices for smallholder farmers, thereby empowering them, adding that government should emulate such the gesture.