



© Azure Studios/CARE.

State Of Emergency Declaration On Food Security: A Policy Brief

August 2023



OUTLINE:

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT
3. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION
4. THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION ON FOOD SECURITY
5. POLICY ENVIRONMENT ON FOOD SECURITY
6. CARE CASCADE PROJECT
7. CONCLUSION
8. RECOMMENDATIONS
9. BIBLIOGRAPHY/FURTHER READING



INTRODUCTION:

The food security situation in Nigeria has been critical in recent times, with 17 million people estimated to be critically food insecure in 2022.¹ According to October Cadre Harmonise², a government led and UN supported food and nutrition analysis that is carried out twice a year, an estimated 25 million Nigerians are likely to be food insecure between June and August of 2023 (lean season).

The food security situation has over the years been impacted especially by violent conflicts, including the insurgency in the North East; armed banditry in the Northwest; perennial farmer – herder conflicts in the North Central, South West, and increasingly across the country; and separatist agitation in the South East among others.

Other factors contributing to the food insecurity

situation include rising inflation, rising poverty, and rising unemployment, engendering and compounding a cost-of-living crisis, with deleterious effects on the conditions of living of citizens, and their ability to access food.

Natural disasters, in particular, the rising incidence and frequency of floods, in large part a consequence of climate change impact, continue to affect food production and the availability and affordability of food. For instance, according to the report of the National Emergencies Management Agency [NEMA], the 2022 floods led to the destruction and washing away of over 675,000 hectares of farmland. One can only imagine the extent of the impact of this scale of destruction of farmlands on agricultural activities and food production across the country. Farmers, the majority of whom are small scale farmers, lost not only crops and harvests, but also farm animals, poultry, fishery, and farm implements to the raging floods.

It is important to also factor in the effects of unemployment and poverty rates on the capacities of citizens, and therefore their ability to access food.

In its Global Economic outlook report H1 2023, KPMG, estimated unemployment rate in Nigeria at the end of 2022 at 37.7%, while estimating that this would rise to 40.6% in 2023, and 43% in 2024³. KPMG also noted that according to Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], unemployment had risen from 23.1% in 2018 to 33.3% in 2022, the last year for which NBS has released official unemployment rate.



● 1. UNICEF Press Release 16th January, 2023. Abuja, Nigeria. ● 2. Final Fiche Report for November 2022: Cadre Harmonise results for identification of risks areas and vulnerable populations in 26 Nigeria states and the FCT. 1st December, 2022. ● 3. Reported in Punch Newspapers of 11th April, 2023



At the time of the release of the 2020 Q4 unemployment rate by NBS, it had also indicated in its report that, while national unemployment and underemployment rates stood at 33.3%, and 22.8% respectively; youth unemployment and underemployment rates had been, 42.5% and 21% respectively at the end of 2020⁴.

The implication of these figures is that **national composite unemployment rate [combined unemployment and underemployment rates] stood at 56.1%**, that is about half the population of people in the working age, and who are able to and willing to work.

“The corresponding composite unemployment figure youth [aged 15 to 35 years], was 63.5% over the same period; that is more than 3 in 5 youths who were in some condition of unemployment.”

The corresponding composite unemployment figure youth [aged 15 to 35 years], was 63.5% over the same

period; that is more than 3 in 5 youths who were in some condition of unemployment.

With respect to the poverty rate, the World Poverty Clock indicates that 71 million Nigerians are currently living in extreme poverty, the largest number globally⁵; While the NBS, had in a press release on 17th November 2022, presenting highlights of the 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index [MPI], revealed that 63% [133 million people] – that is about 6 out of every 10 Nigerian are multidimensionally poor, with 65% [86 million] and 35% [47 million] of the poor living in the North and South of Nigeria respectively. The NBS also reported that the MPI is higher in rural areas, (72%), than in urban areas, (42%); confirming that a much higher proportion of people in living rural areas, compared to those living in urban areas are multidimensionally poor. The implication is that location matters with respect to poverty and unemployment⁶.

Why do these rates [unemployment and poverty rates] matter? They matter because the ability to earn a living impact on one’s ability to access the basic necessities of life, including in particular food; just as being poor affects one’s quality of life and relative capacity to live an enhanced life.

● 4. Reported in Daily Post of 21st April, 2023. ● 5. Reported in Vanguard Newspapers of 18th June, 2023. ● 6. NBS Press Release, 17th November, 2022.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

In part against this background, and in the context of a food security situation compounded by recent increases of 192% [initially] and 217% [subsequently] in the price of fuel, that on the 14th of July, 2023, the federal government declared a state of emergency on the food security situation in the country.

It unveiled a comprehensive intervention plan on food security, affordability, and sustainability, taking decisive action to tackle food inflation. **The intervention plan stated 12 key action points,**



Immediate **release of fertilisers and grains** to farmers and households.



Deployment of **concessionary capital/funding** to the agricultural sector.



Synergy between the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources for **irrigation and all-year-round farming**.



Improvement of **transportation and storage facilities** for agricultural products.



Creation of a National Commodity Board for **price assessment and maintenance** of strategic food reserves.



Increase of **revenue from food and agricultural exports**.



Increased **security measures** for farms and farmers.



Improved **facilitation of trade by working** with Nigerian Customs.



Central Bank's role in **funding the agricultural value chain** to be enhanced.



Massive **boost in employment and job creation** in the agricultural sector.



Activation of **500,000 hectares of land** for farming and river basins for continuous farming.



Commitment to ensuring every Nigerian has access to affordable food.

There however are concerns that are being expressed in various quarters about the government's ability and [political] will to deliver on these commitments in a timely manner. This is because any potential failure could compound the current situation for many, and push many vulnerable communities, including women, girls and small-scale farmers, further into poverty, as well as into food insecurity and malnutrition.

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION:

General Overview:

The Food And Agriculture Organisation [FAO] of the United Nations [UN], in its latest Crop and Food Situation Quarterly Global Report (QGR), No2, July 2023, had categorised Nigeria's food security situation under "Widespread lack of access;" and reported thus: 'Conflict in northern areas, high food prices, macroeconomic challenges;

- About 24.86 million people are projected to face acute food insecurity during the June to August 2023 lean season, including about 1.14 million people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency), which is above the 19.45 million people estimated to be acutely food insecure in 2022. The increase, however, mainly reflects an expanded geographical coverage of the CH analysis.

- Acute food insecurity is mostly the result of worsening insecurity and conflicts in northern states, which, as well as impeding farmers' physical access to their lands and disrupting agricultural activities, led to the displacement of about 3.57 million people as of April 2023.

- Macroeconomic challenges, marked by persistent high inflation, depreciation of the naira on the parallel market, high fuel prices and the lingering impacts of cash shortages following the introduction of new banknotes at the start of 2023, have aggravated the food security conditions of vulnerable households¹³.

The QGR covers countries requiring external assistance for food, including 45 countries globally, with 33 in Africa, 9 in Asia, 2 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 1 in Europe.

The QGR further reported fluctuations in prices of coarse grains, finding that 'In Nigeria, prices of maize and millet registered seasonal increases of 5 to 20 percent between January and April 2023. On a yearly basis, prices of these cereals were up to 25 percent higher, reflecting market disruptions due to insecurity, persistent shortages of cash and a currency depreciation that pushed up

production and distribution costs. By contrast, sorghum prices were generally stable and below or near their year-earlier levels in April 2023¹⁴. Importantly, it is noteworthy to underscore that this was the situation, and the general trend before the more than 200% rise in fuel prices in June 2023, and the expected consequent likely impact of this on price of food and food price inflation rate.

"The QGR covers countries requiring external assistance for food, including 45 countries globally, with 33 in Africa, 9 in Asia, 2 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 1 in Europe."

Food Hunger:

Furthermore, according to projections from the WFP¹⁵, as food insecurity continues to spike in Nigeria, over 25 million people will face acute food hunger at the peak of the June to August lean season. Quoting the WFP Country Director, Premium Times reported that 'in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe [BAY] States, **4.4 million people are projected to face acute hunger** during the lean season, along with some 2 million children projected to be acutely malnourished in the North East states alone, during this period, an increase from the 1.74 million Children as at the end of December 2022 [14.94% increase]¹⁶. In the BAY States, and across the North East in general, the projection for the number of people who will be acutely food insecure is thus over 6.4 million. And this was before the fuel price hikes of June 2023.

From this projection [of 25 million people], the implication is that 8 million more people than the estimated 17 million as at December 2022, will be facing acute hunger in August of 2023, and increase of 47.06%.

The 2022 floods which damaged an estimated 675,000 hectares of farmland had led to diminished harvests and increased the risk of Food insecurity¹⁷.

Of the 17 million faced with acute food hunger at the

● 13. Crop Prospects And Food Situation: Quarterly Global Report. No.2; July 2023. FAO - UN. ● 14. Ibid. ● 15. Reported in Premium Times of 15th June, 2023. ● 16. UNICEF; Press Release, 16th January, 2023.



end of 2022, according to UNICEF, 6 million were children under 5, who are acutely malnourished, and who live in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states in the North East; as well as Sokoto, Katsina and Zamfara States in the North West of Nigeria¹⁸.

According to the UNICEF Press Release, ‘the northwest region, around Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states, is an increasing food insecurity and malnutrition hotspot. An estimated 2.9 million people are currently [January 2023] critically food insecure (Cadre Harmonisé Phase 3 or worse.) This figure is projected to increase to 4.3 million, an increase of 1.4 million people (**48.28%**) in the lean season [June – August 2023] if urgent action is not taken¹⁹’.

The most affected are displaced populations, and households living in poverty. Of these, women, and children are the most impacted given their elevated levels of vulnerability among these population.

Unfortunately, the available data is not gender disaggregated, hence we have no way of definitively knowing the exact nature of the impact and effects of the food insecurity crisis on women and girls, differently from men and boys.

However, given the context where due to the exigencies of conflict and natural disaster, the most vulnerable segment of the population has conventionally been women and girls (and among these widows and orphans), and women headed households, and against the background of patriarchy, it can be reasonably assumed that women and girls will be exposed to elevated levels of risks under the current conditions.

What this situation reflects, is a significant gap in the architecture of the response to the crisis, one that has the capacity to undermine effective targeting, and the

realization of the overall goals of any response.

General and Food Inflation:

With respect to inflation rate and food inflation, both rates have continued to sustain their rises over the last several months.

Inflation rate for June 2023 rose to **22.79%** from **22.41%** in May (an increase of 0.38%), the highest rate since September 2005; but Year on Year this was 4.19% higher than 18.60% of the previous year, 2022. Meaning that on the average, goods and services cost 4.19% higher at the end of June 2023 than they cost at the end of June 2022.

Food inflation rate on the other hand rose from **24.82%** in May 2023 to **25.25%** in June 2023; with average annual rate of food inflation over the twelve months ending June 2023 at **24.03%**, being **5.41%** higher than the rate for the previous twelve months ending June 2022, which stood at **18.62%**.

Again, the implication of this is that the food cost on the average were 5.41% higher at the end of June 2023 than they were at the end of June 2022.

Thus, according to the figures released by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)²⁰, the inflation rate in Nigeria has been rising steadily since January 2023, reaching a 17-year high of 22.79% in June 2023.

Here is a table showing the monthly inflation rates and the changes from the previous month:

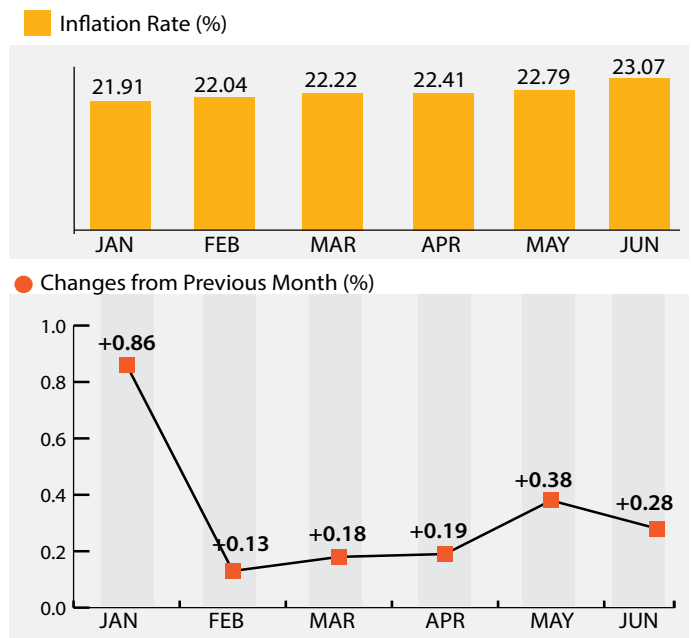


Table 1: Monthly Inflation Rate

● 17. NEMA 2022. ● 18. UNICEF; Press Release, 16th January, 2023. ● 19. Ibid. ● 20. CPI [Consumer Price Index] and Inflation Report; June 2023; NBS.

Furthermore, figures released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)²¹, similarly indicated that the food inflation rate in Nigeria has been rising steadily since January 2023, reaching a 17-year high of **25.25%** in June 2023.

Here is a table showing the monthly food inflation rates and the changes from the previous month:

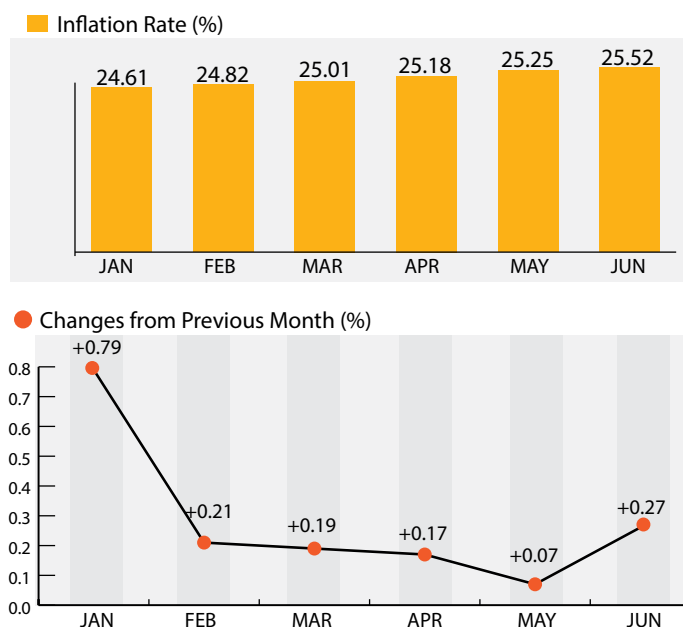


Table 2: Monthly Food Inflation Rate

For years now, the trajectory of inflation [CPI] and food inflation have been tracking up, showing a relentless increasing tendency, Nevertheless, all of these have been before the fuel price hikes of June 2023. The real impact of these hikes on inflation and food inflation will not be statistically revealed until the respective rates for July are released, since these would be based on data for the month of June.

Nevertheless, we do expect there to be significant impact on both rates, thus in turn significantly impacting food insecurity levels in Nigeria.

We know from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as well as from market surveys and observations, that a major contributing factor to price of goods and services in general, and food prices in particular, is the cost of transportation of food across the food value chain - the cost of transportation of inputs and farm labour to the farm; the cost of transportation of farm produce to storage facilities, and or markets; the cost of transportation of

processed food to markets, etc among others.

So, while for instance there have been two fuel price hikes in June, from N195 per liter to N540/N570 (an increase of 177%/192%); and then to N620 per liter (an increase of 217% over the N195 per liter at the end of May 2023); the impact of these increase on transportation has ranged from anything from 100% to 200% increase in transportation cost.

In Mile 12 Market in Lagos for instance, a 50kg bag of foreign parboiled rice which sold for N31,000 rose in price to N36,000 after the fuel price hikes, an increase of 20% in price; while a carton of Titus fish which sold for N30,000 at the end of May rose to N40,000 after the fuel price hikes, a 33% price increase.

Traders indicated that the cost of transport for buses of different sizes from Mile 2 to Mile 12 rise from N700 to N1,500 (114% increase); and from N1,000 to N3,000 (200% increase); explaining that they had to pass the cost to their customers.

On the basis of the foregoing, we can expect very significant impact of the fuel price hikes, combined with other factors, including insecurity, floods, etc, on both the inflation and food inflation rates; and consequently, a worsening of the cost-of-living crises, and a more or less severe impact on food insecurity levels among the population.

The tables below, track increase in the price of some selected staple foods over the months of April, May, June and July 2023; as we as comparison in the cost of transportation for some selected modes of transportation between January 2023 and July 2023.

As indicated, the prices fluctuated during these months due to factors like seasonal trends, supply disruptions, currency depreciation, and inflation.

All figures in Naira/per Kg





COMMODITY	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
 Maize	200	220	210	200
 Rice	500	520	510	500
 Beans	450	470	460	450
 Millet	250	270	260	250

Table 3: Monthly Commodity Prices²²

● 21. CPI [Consumer Price Index] and Inflation Report; June 2023; NBS. ● 22. World Food Program [WFP]. July 2023

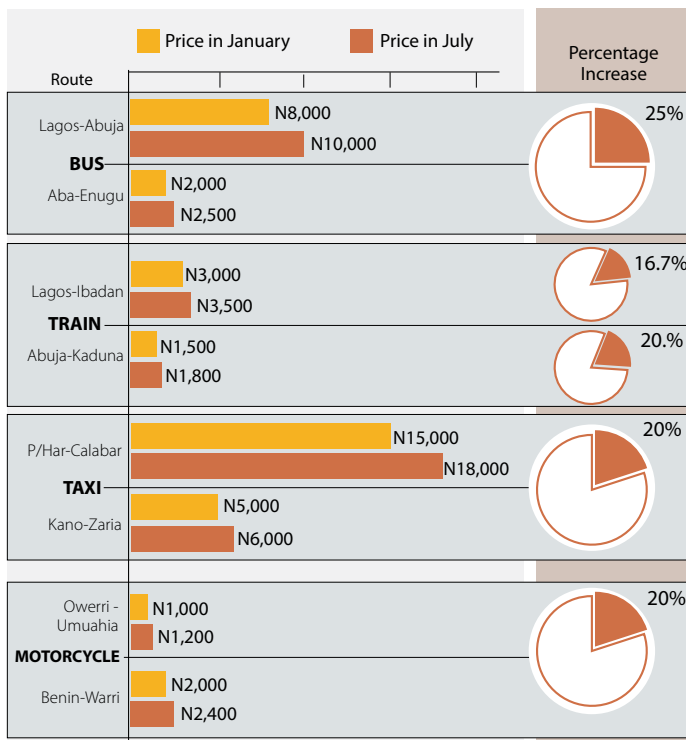


Table 4: Selected Transport Cost²³

[Please note that the percentage increase has been

calculated using the formula: **$((\text{New Price} - \text{Old Price}) / \text{Old Price}) * 100$**].

We have to understand this against the background of the fact that there are 62 million people (15 million households) on the National Social Security Register, and that this is a register of the most vulnerable households and most vulnerable people, who are living under the official poverty line in Nigeria. This is the population that is potentially the most at risk of being severely impacted by the current situation and context.

THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION ON FOOD SECURITY:

Writing in the Business Day of July 24th 2023, Michael Ojo, a Food and nutrition security expert, alluded to data from the preliminary report of a soon to be published National Food Consumption and Micronutrient Survey [NFCMS]. The preliminary report which was released in September 2022, according to him, underlies the start situation with respect to food insecurity, and showed that 4 out of every 5 Nigerian households [80% of households] sampled were food insecure [that is they were going without some meals]; while 1 in 5 households [20% of households] were severely food insecure [that is they were going without eating for a whole day because of lack of money or other resources]²⁴.

The implication of this, along with previous analysis, is that well before the 14th July declaration of a state of emergency on food security, by the Federal Government of Nigeria, a real emergency was already full blown in

Nigeria's food security situation.

That said, government, should be commended for finally recognizing how dire the situation is, and for making a commitment to addressing the situation.

“From what we know about the causes and drivers of food and nutrition insecurity, it is clear that the achievement of three key goals and outcomes are central to reversing the current situation.”

Central to the intervention plan of the FGN in declaration of emergency on food security, are the 12 key action points around which government is committed to orient its

● 23. World Food Program [WFP]. July 2023. ● 24. Food and nutrition security in Nigeria: an emergency before the declaration. By Michael Ojo; Business Day; 24th July, 2023.

programs and policies. These are;

- i. Immediate release of fertilisers and grains to farmers and households.
- ii. Synergy between the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources for irrigation and all-year-round farming.
- iii. Creation of a National Commodity Board for price assessment and maintenance of strategic food reserves.
- iv. Increased security measures for farms and farmers.
- v. Central Bank's role in funding the agricultural value chain to be enhanced.
- vi. Activation of 500,000 hectares of land for farming and river basins for continuous farming.
- vii. Deployment of concessionary capital/funding to the agricultural sector.
- viii. Improvement of transportation and storage facilities for agricultural products.
- ix. Increase of revenue from food and agricultural exports.
- x. Improved facilitation of trade by working with Nigerian Customs.
- xi. Massive boost in employment and job creation in the agricultural sector.
- xii. Commitment to ensuring every Nigerian has access to affordable food.

From what we know about the causes and drivers of food and nutrition insecurity, it is clear that the achievement of three key goals and outcomes are central to reversing the current situation, and ensuring enhanced food and nutrition security in the country.

These are

- (a) ensuring adequate supply of food [that is production and availability];
- (b) enabling physical and economic access to food [that is location and the resources to access food]; and
- (c) and making sure that the food is nutritious and safe for consumption [that is the quality and safety of the food]²⁵.

In order to be able to achieve the desired outcomes and impact of the declaration, it is important that a holistic and integrated food systems approach and strategy should be adopted and implemented.

For instance, government wants to make available and activate 500,000 hectares of land for farming and for River basins for continuous farming. This is laudable, but it focuses on activating land that is not currently being utilised for farming; yet there are **650,000 hectares of already activated farm lands washed away and damaged by the 2022 floods**. It would seem to make better sense to ensure a dual focus on rehabilitating these farmlands in the short to medium term, while also simultaneously activating the new farmlands in the short term.

Such a twin pronged approach is important given the need to restore the livelihoods, and restore the productivity of farmers impacted by the floods as quickly as possible; While also opening up access to new farmlands for farmers urgently. Besides, it is important in opening up and activating new farmlands, to integrate lessons from previous susceptibility to floods from the damage to the 650,000 hectares of farmland, into the process of opening up and activating the new 500,000 hectares of farmlands, and the rehabilitation of the farmlands damaged during the flood disaster; in order to prevent, and or mitigate against a recurrence of the impact of flood disasters, given the increasingly perennial nature of floods in the country.

From the foregoing, it would be necessary to ensure that policies and strategies for agriculture, food production and nutrition, should be climate smart, while also being flood proof, and enabling flood resilience.

Again, while there is a necessary focus on ensuring security of farms and agricultural production given the context of violent conflicts and armed banditry; there

● 25. Ibid

“Achieving optimum impact with either of these two interventions, require being in possession of reliable and accurate data”

seems not to be a recognition of the necessity to invest in flood prevention and mitigation measures to ensure that farmlands and farming and other agricultural practices are protected against and or safeguarded from the devastating effects of flooding, given the perennial and increasing incidence and intensity of flooding in the country.

One key gap in addressing the current situation is the availability of reliable data, yet without reliable data it is almost important to plan, and or achieve the desired effect from any planned intervention. The emergency declaration includes the provision of subsidized fertilisers to farmers,

as well as the release and distribution grains to vulnerable households from the national grain reserves. Achieving optimum impact with either of these two interventions, require being in possession of reliable and accurate data. What is population of farmers in the country? How is this differentiated into various agricultural categories of crop farmers, poultry, fisheries, animal husbandry, etc among others? What percentage of farmers are small scale, medium scale and large-scale farmers? What percentage of each of these are women and men?

For the emergency program to be impactful, it must prioritise, and focus on data - its collation, storage, analysis, and management. Given this, An agricultural census is long overdue in the country.

Overall, seeing that none of the measures identified as intervention actions are essentially new, or have not been undertaken before; a business-as-usual approach to the implementation of the state of emergency program will



© Azure Studios/CARE.

simply not yield different results.

What is required in the immediate is for the articulation of an actual, integrated framework and strategic plan for delivering this program. Such a framework should of necessity be multidisciplinary, multisectoral, and multistakeholder in character, essence, and in practice.

While on the supply side, the immediate focus should be on actions to address supply shortages from loss and wastage due to poor post-harvest storage and handling practices, and the severe lack of cold storage and temperature-controlled logistics for moving fresh produce

“For the emergency program to be impactful, it must prioritise, and focus on data - its collation, storage, analysis, and management. Given this, An agricultural census is long overdue in the country.”

across the country; the emergency focus should not just be on food, but equally on affordable, safe, and nutritious food delivered in an environmentally sustainable ways²⁶.



POLICY ENVIRONMENT ON FOOD SECURITY:

There are a number of policy frameworks already in existence in the country with respect to Agriculture in general, and Food and Nutrition Security in particular.

A number of the most recent and relevant ones will be highlighted here with the objective of demonstrating the extent to which they are in alignment with, or depart from the policy propositions inherent to the emergency declaration on food security. This is of utmost importance given the trajectory of policy summersaults and inconsistencies that have become the hallmark of governance over the previous decades.

A case in point is the National Agriculture Investment Plan, 2011 to 2014, which appears neither to have been reviewed nor updated since it lapsed. The specific objectives include:

(1) increasing incomes of rural farm households through increases in agricultural productivity, diversification and sustainable use of natural resources;

(2) enhancement of food security of consumers through improved availability of food and access to a variety of foods and increase income of producers attained through efficient marketing;

(3) enhancement of farmers’ and consumers’ access to support services such as extension, credit, nutrition and health education; and

(4) fostering the participation of the poorer section of the rural population in the development of the community. The targeting mechanism is in favour of vulnerable groups as well as actual food insecure people. The primary concern is the poor small-scale producers and entrepreneurs, particularly women, youth and the physically challenged. Clearly defined eligibility criteria are in place to forestall elite capture²⁷.

It is not clear the extent to which the policy is still operational. Nevertheless, the importance of developing, implementing and operationalizing an investment plan to

● 26. Ibid ● 27. NAIP On FAOLEX Database

support a policy cannot be over emphasised.

In this regard, it would be important to ensure that National Investment Plans are developed for the National Food Systems Transformation Pathways Strategy, the National Agricultural Transformation and Innovation Policy [NATIP], and the recently announced State Of Emergency On Food Security Plan.

It is important that policy makers and policy implementers not only identify, recognise and understand the degree of alignment with, and or departure of new policy directions and previous policies over the same. Relevant, and or similar subject matters, or sectors.

National Food Systems Transformation Pathway;

In 2022, after a series of multistakeholder consultative processes, leading to, and beyond the 2021 Global Food Systems Summit, Nigeria formally adopted a National Food Systems Transformation Pathway document.

Subsequently, on April 20th, 2023, the National Steering Committee on the National Food Systems Transformation was inaugurated by the Federal Minister of State For Budget and National Planning. The National Steering committee is multistakeholder and multidisciplinary, including state and non-state actors, as well as regional representatives to reflect the diversity of Nigeria’s food systems, and representatives of subnational governments.

The Steering Committee is expected to provide leadership for the implementation of all the 78 recommendations for transforming Nigeria’s food systems.

The Ministry of Budget and National Planning, being the coordinating Ministry, has constituted a multi-sectoral and multi stakeholder implementation Task Team including all relevant stakeholders and development partners to serve as a think tank for effective implementation of all the 78 priority recommendations that will serve as game changer to Nigeria’s food systems from the farm to folk and finally to waste.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Steering Committee, among others, include: provision of leadership for Zonal coordination of the implementation of the Food Systems Transformation Pathways in all the 36 states including FCT; Lead advocacy to the State Governors and Governors Forum in each geopolitical zones as well as Head of potential philanthropic private sectors and Hon. Ministers of stakeholder MDAs at the Federal level.



© Azure Studios/CARE

The Committee is also expected to: Galvanize both political and financial support for implementation by critical stakeholders in each geopolitical Zones including the private sector and potential donors in the six zones and recommend the review of the priority actions in the Food Systems Transformation Pathways as may be required by the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub²⁸.

The National Steering Committee is also expected to lead the development of a National Implementation Strategy for the National Food Systems Transformation Pathways. As recently as July 25th, 2023, while chairing a side event at the UN Food Systems Summit in Rome, Vice President Shettima had reaffirmed Nigeria’s commitment to successfully implementing her National Food Systems Transformation Pathways. He informed that the country had been able to mobilise \$500bn in funding and investment towards this objective.

The Vice President made the disclosure while chairing a high-level meeting on the first day of the UN Food Systems Summit declared open in Rome, Italy, by the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres.

In a statement by his media office, Vice President Shettima said the funds were mobilised “through domestic resources, multilateral development banks, international financial institutions, climate funds leading agro-businesses,” and would be used for “Innovation finance for food system transformation; development of Nigeria’s agro value chain and Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones

● 23. Federal Ministry Of Information And Culture; Inauguration of National Steering Committee of National Food Systems Transformation Pathways’ 21st April, 2023

programmes.²⁹”

The National Food Systems Transformation Pathways document emphasised the expectations of Nigerians as being; “that food systems that will deliver several outcomes, including higher incomes and reduced poverty among smallholder farmers; and enable farmers to spend more money on their children’s education. Through improved food systems, it is expected that women will have greater access to food production resources and/or processing inputs, increased control over resources, greater involvement in decision making, and increased assets ownership. Improved food systems will lower prices of nutritious foods, increase affordability, and increase availability of foods during their off seasons. Also, there will be guidelines that educate the public about healthy diets and guide healthy food choices as well as formulations by industry, who must appropriately label and profile nutrient contents of packages to guide consumers about products that meet healthy diet guidelines. The food systems improvements will facilitate healthier diets, resulting in improved immunity and reduced incidence of both communicable and noncommunicable diseases, evidenced by lower volumes of patients visiting health facilities.³⁰”

Furthermore, the document identified the Food Systems Actions Alignment with other National Roadmaps and Global Solution Clusters in the following way;



“Key progress milestones will include significant improvements in crop yields, reductions in national costs of healthy diets, and reductions in poverty headcount ratio.”

‘The outlined actions for transforming Nigerian food systems complement existing efforts to improve development outcomes, including the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, the Agricultural Policy, the National Policy on Food and Nutrition, National Health Policy, National Policy on Food Safety, among other frameworks. Solution clusters of global food systems game changers that particularly align with the identified pathways for Nigeria include clusters around the Action Areas of promoting food security and reducing hunger; cross-cutting actions; enabling, inspiring, and motivating people to enjoy healthy and sustainable options; manage sustainably existing food production systems; rebalancing agency within food systems; localizing food systems; and food systems resilience. Other aligned solution clusters that are not situated within these priority Action Areas include fortifying staple foods and crops. Key progress milestones will include significant improvements in crop yields, reductions in national costs of healthy diets, and reductions in poverty headcount ratio³¹.

National Agriculture Technology and Innovation Policy [NATIP]: 2022 TO 2027³²

The Mandate, Vision and Mission of NATIP are articulated as follows:

MANDATE

“Ensuring food security in crop, livestock and fisheries, generating agricultural employment and services, promoting the production and supply of raw materials to agro industries, providing markets for the products of the industrial sector, generating foreign exchange and promoting rural socio-economic development”

● 29. Reported in Leadership Newspapers of 25th July, 2023. ● 30. Nigeria’s National Food Systems Transformation Pathways Document. ● 31. Nigeria’s National Food Systems Transformation Pathways Document. ● 32. NATIP is the current overarching national policy framework for the agricultural sector in Nigeria, and one of its main goals is to enhance food production and ensure food security

MISSION

“Organizing and managing the agriculture sector and facilitating

Agribusiness for increased food security and employment along commodity

value chains and agro-industrial development to earn foreign exchange and

contribute to socio-economic development of the country”

VISION

“Growing Nigeria’s agriculture sector, driving income growth, accelerating food and nutrition security, generating employment, and transforming Nigeria into a leading global food market with wealth for farmers”

NATIP Specific Interventions: NATIP is built around Ten Specific Intervention Pillars. These are;

- I. Synergy and MDA alignment**
- II. Knowledge creation and transfer**
- III. Rapid Mechanisation**
- IV. Establishment of Agriculture Development Fund**
- V. Revitalisation of Extension Service Delivery**
- VI. Livestock Development**
- VII. Strengthening Value Chains for priority crops**
- VIII. Fisheries and Aquaculture; Marine and Inland Fisheries Development**
- IX. Market Development**
- X. Partnerships for Securing Agricultural Lands and Investment [PSALI]**

Furthermore, there are a further eleven proposed cross cutting Interventions, including:

- A. Development Of Rural Infrastructure**
- B. Nutrition**
- C. Standardisation for Export**
- D. Promoting Digital and Climate-Smart Agriculture**
- E. Strengthening Agricultural Land and Insurance**
- F. Data and Information Management**
- G. Access to quality Agricultural Inputs**
- H. Sustainable use of Agricultural Land and Water Resources**
- I. Women and Youth in Agriculture**
- J. Cooperatives Revitalisation**
- K. National Food Reserve and Food Security**

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the 12 State of Emergency on Food Security Intervention Action Points, have been derived from, and align with recent existing national policy frameworks and processes in Agriculture, and food security and nutrition.

What is required is to ensure sustained commitment towards implementation, and a deliberate and intentional approach towards a whole system, integrated and mutually reinforcing; rather than parallel and autonomous sectoral approach to implementation.

It is also important to point out that none of the 12 intervention action points of the state of emergency program on food security, on their own, no matter how well implemented, can lead to the realisation of the desired goal of reversing the precarious food insecurity situation in the country. Similarly, none of the various policies on their own, in the absence of a coordinated and integrated approach to implementation, can enable the realisation of the objectives and goals of the respective policies.

CATALYSING STRENGTHENED POLICY ACTION FOR HEALTH DIETS AND RESILIENCE [CASCADE] PROJECT:

CASCADE is a multi-year (2022-2027), multi-country program funded by Government of the Netherlands, and implemented By CARE.

Its Expected Outcomes are:

- **Increased access to and consumption of healthy diets among households, particularly women of reproductive age and children U5**
- **Increased resilience of households to economic shocks**
- **Increased resilience of households to climate change-related shocks**

The Implementing sites in Nigeria are: **Bauchi, Jigawa, Kebbi and Nasarawa**

Target Populations:

1.1 million women of reproductive age (15-49 years), and children under the age of 5 years.

Identified Policy challenges for Advocacy Interventions include:

- **Proliferation of policies which are not mutually reinforcing or are not well implemented at sub-national or local government levels;**
- **Capacity constraints in service delivery to addressing surge in food insecurity.**
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment are frequently neglected in the development and implementation of food and nutrition policies.**
- **Urgent action is required to reduce acute malnutrition levels by significantly scaling up and intensifying treatment and protection activities to reach additional populations affected.**

The Sustainability Approach for the project is built around:

1. **Strengthen M&E structure in the state government agencies to take ownership, measure effectiveness and areas for improvement even after programme closure;**
2. **Promote integration of interventions into existing government programmes with budget lines to ensure government ownership;**
3. **Private sector will continue to better align its efforts to existing nutritional guidelines and develop more accessible, affordable and nutritious products**
4. **Build capacity and resilience of households to access and utilize nutritious diets**
5. **Strengthened coordination platforms including government accountability and oversight of private sector and other actors**

CONCLUSION:

All available data and information paint a precarious and deepening context of food and nutrition insecurity in the country. Assuming a population of 200 million, 25 million people facing acute food hunger is 12.5% of the population. This is a very significant proportion of the population. The situation is even more stark if we consider the data from the National Food Consumption and Micronutrients Survey; with 80% of sampled households being food insecure, and 20% of households being severely food insecure.

Furthermore, with a vulnerable population of 133 million who are multidimensionally poor, and 15 million vulnerable households [62 million people] on the National Social Security Register; and against the background of relentless and sustained rise in unemployment rate, and inflation and food inflation rates; particularly in the context of the added pressure on prices occasioned by the subjection of fuel pricing to market forces leading to recent hikes [and potentially continuous hikes] in fuel prices; the tendency for the food and nutrition security to further rapidly deteriorate, is real, and is a clear and present danger.

In all the instances where differentiated data is available, women, children, and female headed households have constituted the bulk of the at risk and directly impacted segments of the population. Age-old patriarchal and cultural systems and norms, along with gender and social inclusion blind policies and practices, have combined, and continue to put women and girls, and children, in general, but particularly from poor and marginalised backgrounds, in precarious conditions, enabling their vulnerable status.

Against this background, the CASCADE program is well placed and suited to play a meaningful and strategically impactful interventionist role drawing attention to the right priorities, and promoting and facilitating policy harmonization and alignment, as well as synergy and coordination in the policy making and implementation processes around food and nutrition security Nationally, and at the subnational levels [in project states for instance], through robust citizen led and multistakeholder advocacy.

Finally, although the State Of Emergency On Food Security in Nigeria program, along with relevant extant policies on Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security recognise some of the key factors causing and driving food

insecurity, and provide policy proposals to address these; the State of Emergency Program is silent on the main factor compounding food insecurity, increasing food prices and rising food inflation rate.

“It is evident from the current situation in the country that these two domains – the food and nutrition, as well as the transport systems are interconnected., and mutually dependent.”

Without addressing the question of the price of fuel and rising cost of transportation, it will be difficult, if not near impossible to reverse the food and nutrition insecurity situation in the present context.

Just as there is the urgent and inherent need to improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of food; there is also a similar urgent and inherent need to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of transportation for food and the entire food systems ecosystem, as well as for human beings as producers, distributors, utilisers and consumers of food.

It is evident from the current situation in the country that these two domains – the food and nutrition, as well as the transport systems are interconnected, and mutually dependent.





© Azure Studios/CARE.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. The Federal Government of Nigeria needs to as a matter of urgency develop through a participatory and multistakeholder approach, a comprehensive National Implementation Strategy And Action Plan to drive the implementation of the State Of Emergency On Food Security Program; ensuring alignment with relevant policies; enabling synergy and coordination between and among MDAs, enhancing coordination between executive and legislative arms of government; as well as between and among National and subnational governments.

b. Federal Government of Nigeria to undertake a national process audit of all national policies on agriculture, food and nutrition, and all other relevant thematic and sectoral policies, with a view to ascertaining their degree of alignment, their implementation status; as well as the level and nature of coordination and synergy among the implementing institutions.

c. There is an urgent need to undertake an agricultural

census, and to establish a mechanism for data generation and collation, and management.

d. As agriculture and food and nutrition are on the concurrent legislative list, there is an urgent need to ensure and enhance alignment in policies and synergy among respective institutions. The National Agriculture Council, The National Health Council, The National Steering Committee on Food Systems Transformation Pathways Implementation, along with other similar and relevant platforms that include national and subnational, as well as non-state actors representation should become more active and vibrant, and should be become fully engaged in driving the implementation of the programs to address, redress and reverse the food and nutrition insecurity situation in the country.

e. In order to ensure that agricultural, and food and nutrition policies and strategies are fully implemented and their objectives realised; it is important not only to

ensure the alignment of policies; but also, to ensure that these policies and plans are accompanied by National Investment Plans, that outline, the expected cost of policy implementation, and the expected sources of resourcing and financing policy implementation, among others.

“CASCADE should advocate for gender audit of all agricultural, food and nutrition, and food security policies at federal and subnational levels”

f. In order to ensure inclusive and effective response to the unfolding food insecurity crisis in the country, The Federal Government in conjunction with the subnational governments should consider undertaking comprehensive, systematic and periodic rapid assessments of the food security situation, in a manner that reflects the differential effects and impact of the crisis and its causes on women and men, and on girls and boys. In this regard, government should ensure the collation, availability, management and utilisation of gender disaggregated data, in addition to demographic reflection.

To CARE through the CASCADE Project

g. CASCADE should orient to support the development and implementation of the National Food Systems Transformation Pathways Strategy at National [the National Steering Committee] and subnational levels [in the project

states].

h. CASCADE should support national and subnational level advocacy towards the implementation of NATIP in general; and particularly the implementation of the following NATIP Specific Intervention Pillars: Synergy and MDA Alignment; Knowledge creation and transfer; and Revitalisation of Extension Service Delivery.

i. CASCADE should support national and subnational level advocacy towards the implementation of the following NATIP Cross Cutting Interventions: Data and Information Management; Access To Quality Agricultural Inputs; Women And Youth In Agriculture [enabling participation of women and girls supported by the CASCADE project in project states for instance]; Cooperatives Revitalisation [enabling participation of women and girls supported by the CASCADE project in project states for instance]; And National Food Reserve and Food Security.

j. CASCADE should consider facilitating the establishment of a platform of civil society and communities to monitor perform citizen oversight role in the implementation of State of Emergency On Food Security intervention program; as well as in the implementation of NATIP, and the National Food Systems Transformation Pathways Strategy.

k. CASCADE should advocate for gender audit of all agricultural, food and nutrition, and food security policies at federal and subnational levels; as well as for prioritization of understanding of the gender dimension, and the mainstreaming of gender into policy processes.



BIBLIOGRAPHY/FURTHER READING:

1. **Crop Prospects and Food Situation; Quarterly Global Report [QGR].** No. 1, March 2023. FAO-UN.
2. **Crop Prospects And Food Situation: Quarterly Global Report [QGR].** No. 2, July 2023. FAO-UN.
3. **Determinants of food security in Nigeria: Empirical evidence from beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries rice farmers in the Kano River irrigation project:** Abdulazeez Hudu Wudil Et All. Published in Frontiers in Sustainable Food Security [FSFS]; 15th February, 2023.
4. **Food and nutrition security in Nigeria: Emergency before the declaration.** Michael Ojo; Business Day, July 24th, 2023.
5. **Food insecurity in Nigeria: Food Supply Matters.** IMF eLibrary. 2023.
6. **GAIN Policy Brief: Nigeria on the path to Food systems Transformation.** Joyce Akpata and Michael Ojo. May, 2022. GAIN.
7. **National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy [NATIP]:** 2022 – 2027. Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development [FMARD]. 2022.
8. **Nigeria National Pathways to Food Systems Transformation.** 2021.
9. **Nigeria Food Security Outlook: Famine Early Warning Systems Network [FEWSNET]:** May to June 2023. FEWSNET. USAID. 2023.
10. **Nigeria Food Security Outlook: Famine Early Warning Systems Network [FEWSNET]:** June 2023 to January 2024. FEWSNET. USAID.
11. **Nigeria Situation Report:** OCHA. May 2023.
12. **Final Fiche Report: Cadre Harmonise, Nigeria.** 1st December 2022.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was led by **AYODEJI AJAIYEGBA [JAIYE GASKIA]** of Thinkact Consults. Funded by CAlyzing Strengthened Policy aCTION for HeAlthy Diets and resilieNCe (CASCADE).

With funding from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **CARE** and **GAIN** are implementing the 4.5-year (2022-2026) CASCADE programme across six countries (Nigeria, Benin, Mozambique, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda). The programme aims to strengthen nutrition systems that contribute to ending malnutrition for 1.1 million women of reproductive age and children under the age of 5. In Nigeria, the project is being implemented in Bauchi, Jigawa, Kebbi, Nasarawa States.





care®

For more information, contact

Hussaini Abdu, PhD | Country Director, CARE Nigeria

email: hussaini.abdu@care.org