

POLICY BRIEF

Fireside Chat on State Policy Response to Food Insecurity



Panelists

- » Garba Aliyu Gayari, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Zamfara State
- » Hon. Umar Abubakar Dan'akano, The Honourable Commissioner, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Nasarawa State, Nigeria
- » Dr. Yilkudi Nengak, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Plateau State
- » Sadi Ibrahim, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Kano State
- » Hon. Murtala Mohammed Dabo, The Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Kaduna State, Nigeria

Moderators

- » Adekemi Omole, Gender and Inclusion Lead, PIC
- » Prof. Oyinkan Tasie, Michigan State University

Credits: Michigan State University





This Policy Brief was developed by the Policy Innovation Centre (PIC) of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), drawing insights from discussions and outcomes of the Gender and Inclusion Summit 2024 (GS24). The content reflects evidence-based strategies, policy recommendations, and inclusive frameworks to advance gender equity and social inclusion in development initiatives.

Session Objectives

1. *To examine state-level policy responses to food insecurity.*
2. *To identify gaps in implementation and coordination.*
3. *To propose sustainable and inclusive solutions for improving food security across Nigeria.*

Background

Food insecurity, defined as uncertain or limited access to nutritious food, is a pressing challenge in Nigeria.²⁸⁸

Approximately 26.5 million people face acute hunger, with numbers projected to increase due to the lean season, conflicts, rising inflation, and the impacts of climate change.²⁸⁹ Nigeria ranks 110th out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index, indicating severe levels of hunger.²⁹⁰ Tackling food insecurity in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach that combines short-term relief with long-term strategies for sustainable development. By fostering collaboration, integrating inclusive practices, and addressing systemic barriers, states can create resilient food systems that ensure equitable access to nutritious food.

Normative Issue and Challenge

01. **Social Norms and Gender Stereotypes:** Entrenched stereotypes create barriers for women in agriculture, leading to unequal access to agricultural inputs and facilities, and perpetuating food insecurity.²⁹¹

Non-normative Issues and Challenges

01. **Representation in Policy Dialogues:** The underrepresentation of women in policymaking leads to inequitable resource allocation, ineffective food security policies, and unaddressed systemic challenges.²⁹²
02. **Operational Constraints:** Insufficient budgetary allocations and inadequate enforcement mechanisms reduce the efficacy of food security programs.²⁹³

03. **Insecurity:** Rising levels of insecurity in rural areas, particularly farmer-herder conflict, disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, restricting access to farmlands and resources.²⁹⁴

04. **Price Volatility of Staple Crops and Inputs:** The removal of fuel subsidies has led to a surge in food commodity prices, exacerbating the food insecurity situation.²⁹⁵

05. **Limited Access to Finance:** Despite initiatives like the Anchor Borrower's Programme by the Central Bank of Nigeria, many farmers still face challenges in securing adequate financing, hindering their ability to invest in improved agricultural practices.²⁹⁶

06. **Inefficiencies in Subsidized Input Distribution:** Ensuring that subsidized agricultural inputs reach the intended smallholder farmers remains a significant challenge, often due to bureaucratic hurdles and a lack of effective monitoring systems.²⁹⁷



Policy Recommendations



01. **Incentivizing Local Food Production:** Provide grants, loans, and tax incentives to local food producers, boosting agricultural output and access to nutritious foods.
02. **Tackling Root Causes:** Comprehensive approaches that address underlying issues and root causes are essential for long-term solutions to the path to food insecurity.²⁹⁹ Enhancing women's roles in agricultural policy can lead to more inclusive and effective food systems.³⁰⁰
03. **Market & Price Regulation Strategies:** Develop grain buffer stock programs to stabilize food prices and support transport infrastructure to reduce logistics costs that impact food prices.
04. **Support for Local Food Systems:** Invest in small-scale farmers, farmers' markets, and urban agriculture to build resilient food supply chains, increasing women farmers' economic returns and reducing food transportation costs.
05. **Enhance Inclusive Participation:** Ensure at least 40% of agricultural program beneficiaries are women and provide accessible farming tools and training for persons with disabilities.
06. **Strengthening Security Measures:** Implement strategies to secure agricultural zones and support commercial farming by collaborating with security agencies to ensure farmers can safely return to their lands.

Programmatic Recommendations



01. **Expansion of State Food Assistance Programs:** Enhance nutrition aid programs with increased funding, streamlined applications, and target outreach to underserved populations - women and marginalized communities.
02. **School Meal Programs:** Expand universal school meal programs, providing nutritious meals for all students in high-poverty areas, improving nutrition and educational outcomes.
03. **Nutrition Education:** Integrate nutrition education into public health and school curricula to promote healthier eating habits and reduce diet-related diseases.
04. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Foster multi-sectoral collaborations; PPPs have been effective in enhancing agricultural productivity and ensuring equitable access to resources.
05. **Support for Local Food Systems:** Invest in small-scale farmers, farmers' markets, and urban agriculture to build resilient food supply chains, increasing women farmers' economic returns and reducing food transportation costs.

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The state government is open to any partner wishing to develop the state through the agricultural sector. With this effort, we aim to address food insecurity in the state

– **Sadi Ibrahim**



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We are recruiting new [farm] extension workers, which, I mean, we know the push is for them to counsel and guide our farmers with proper agronomic practices for improved yield

– **Hon. Murtala Mohammed Dabo**



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[We are] creating an enabling environment for farmers and investors to expand their agriculture and related activities in the state

– **Hon. Umar Abubakar Dan’akano**



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Developing a farmer database helps us target support effectively, ensuring inputs reach those who need them most

– **Dr. Yilkudi Nengak**





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