

COMBATING HUNGER

NIGERIA'S PATHWAY TO
A RESILIENT AND
FOOD-SECURE FUTURE



Introduction: Addressing SDG 2 in Nigeria

SDG 2 aims to eradicate hunger and ensure access to safe, nutritious food for all. Nigeria faces significant challenges, with approximately 25 million people at risk of food insecurity and a dual burden of undernutrition and rising obesity rates¹.

Achieving Zero Hunger demands a comprehensive approach, tackling underlying causes like poverty, inequality, and limited access to education and healthcare. Prioritising sustainable agricultural practices, improving rural infrastructure, and supporting small-scale farmers are crucial steps.

The issue of food insecurity in Nigeria is complex, exacerbated by factors such as climate change, which leads to unpredictable weather patterns, and ongoing conflicts that disrupt agricultural activities and displace communities. These challenges underscore the urgent need for robust strategies to enhance food systems' resilience.

Furthermore, addressing nutritional deficiencies is paramount. This includes promoting diverse diets, strengthening nutrition education, and ensuring access to nutrient-rich foods, particularly for vulnerable populations such as women and children. A holistic approach to food security also involves fostering innovation in agricultural technologies and improving market access for farmers.

Ultimately, a concerted effort from all stakeholders—government, private sector, civil society, and international partners—is essential to build a resilient and sustainable food system in Nigeria, capable of feeding its growing population and ensuring a healthy future for all citizens

¹World Food Programme (2022). Nigeria | World Food Programme. Retrieved from: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/nigeria> Accessed 11/07/2023

NIGERIA FACES SIGNIFICANT HURDLES

25 MILLION PEOPLE



**AT RISK
OF FOOD
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**A DUAL BURDEN
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Zero Hunger in Nigeria: Current Landscape

Nigeria, often referred to as Africa's powerhouse due to its large population and economic potential, unfortunately, faces critical challenges in food insecurity and malnutrition. These issues are particularly acute among its most vulnerable populations, including women, children, and internally displaced persons. Several interconnected factors like organised violence, climate shocks, and climate change place Nigeria among the top five nations burdened with food crises, along with Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo².

An estimated 19.5 million Nigerians required immediate assistance in 2022, with conflict-affected regions on the brink of catastrophic food insecurity³. Over 50% of Nigerians are unable to afford a nutritious diet, and over 150 million people report moderate food insecurity across the nation, struggling to afford even a basic nutritious diet⁴, leading to widespread dietary deficiencies and health problems, leading to significant compromises in food quality and quantity⁵. The situation has been drastically compounded by the far-reaching economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and the broader global food supply crisis, which have disrupted supply chains, inflated food prices, and exacerbated existing regional food crises within Nigeria.



²Joint Research Centre (2024). Alarming number of people worldwide suffer high levels of acute food insecurity - European Commission. joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu. Available at: https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/alarming-number-people-worldwide-suffer-high-levels-acute-food-insecurity-2024-04-24_en

³Health Digest (2022). Flooding: Over 19.5 Million Nigerians To Face Increase In Food Insecurity. Retrieved from: <https://healthdigest.ng/flooding-over-million> Accessed 16/05/2023

⁴Olushola P. (2025). The Cost of a Healthy Diet: Over 50% of Nigerians Unable to Afford Nutritious Food. Cs-sunn.org. Available at: <https://cs-sunn.org/the-cost-of-a-healthy-diet-over-50-of-nigerians-unable-to-afford-nutritious-food/> [Accessed 2 Jul. 2025].

⁵CEIC. (2025). Nigeria NG: Prevalence of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity in the Population: % of population. Available at: <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/nigeria/social-health-statistics/ng-prevalence-of-moderate-or-severe-food-insecurity-in-the-population--of-population> [Accessed 2 Jul. 2025].

Doubling Productivity for Sustainable Food Security

Nigeria must embark on a transformative journey to significantly double agricultural productivity across all sectors to address food insecurity and build a resilient food system. This ambitious goal is central to achieving self-sufficiency and reducing the nation's reliance on costly food imports. Initiatives like the Agriculture Summit Africa have consistently emphasised the vision of "Engineering a Trillion Dollar Agricultural Economy," highlighting the immense potential within Nigeria's vast arable land and human resources to create a robust and globally competitive agricultural sector⁶.

Achieving this requires a multi-pronged approach. Key strategies include aggressive import substitution, where local production replaces imported food items, and strengthening local sourcing frameworks to ensure domestic industries and consumers prioritise Nigerian-made agricultural products. Furthermore, the standardisation of products, from cultivation to packaging, is crucial to meet both the stringent quality requirements of international markets and the diverse demands of the local populace, thereby unlocking new export opportunities and boosting domestic consumption.

Crucially, sustainable growth hinges on securing adequate long-term funding for farmers and agribusinesses. This involves creating accessible financial instruments, such as low-interest loans, grants, and agricultural insurance, that can de-risk farming activities. Introducing innovative risk-sharing structures between financial institutions, government bodies, and farmers will incentivise investment in agriculture, protect farmers from unforeseen market fluctuations or climatic shocks, and foster an environment where productivity gains are celebrated and sustained over time, ensuring food security for generations to come.



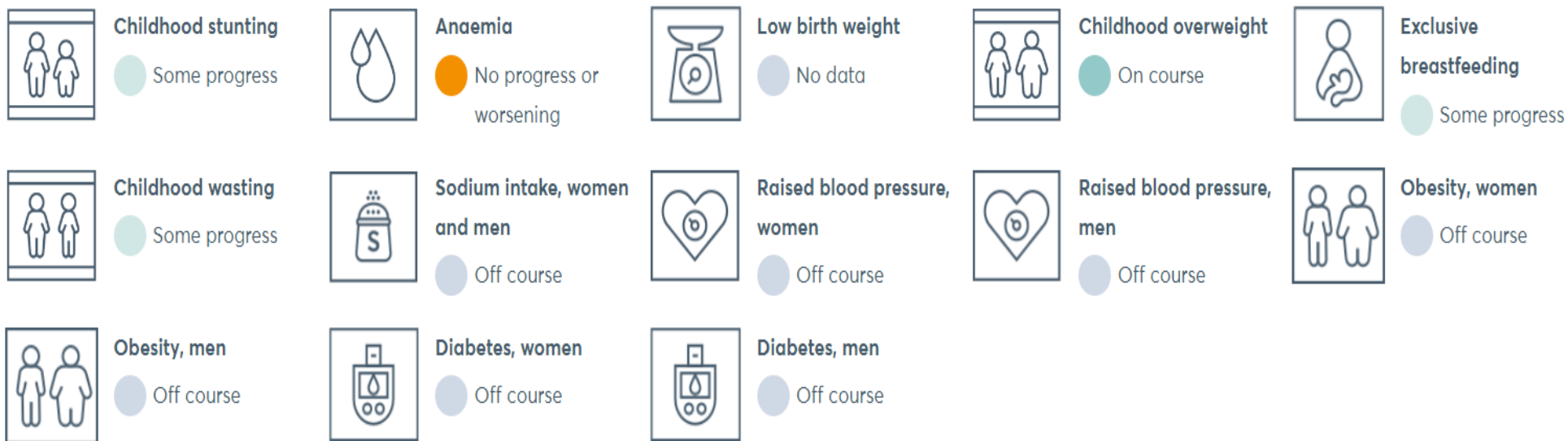


Figure 1: Nigeria's Progress towards the Global Nutrition Targets⁷.

Improving Nutrition in Nigeria: A Multi-Faceted Approach

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⁷Global Nutrition Report (2023). Nigeria Nutrition Profile - Global Nutrition Report. Retrieved from: <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/africa/western-africa/nigeria/> Accessed 11/07/2023



Genetic Diversity and Technology for Food Security

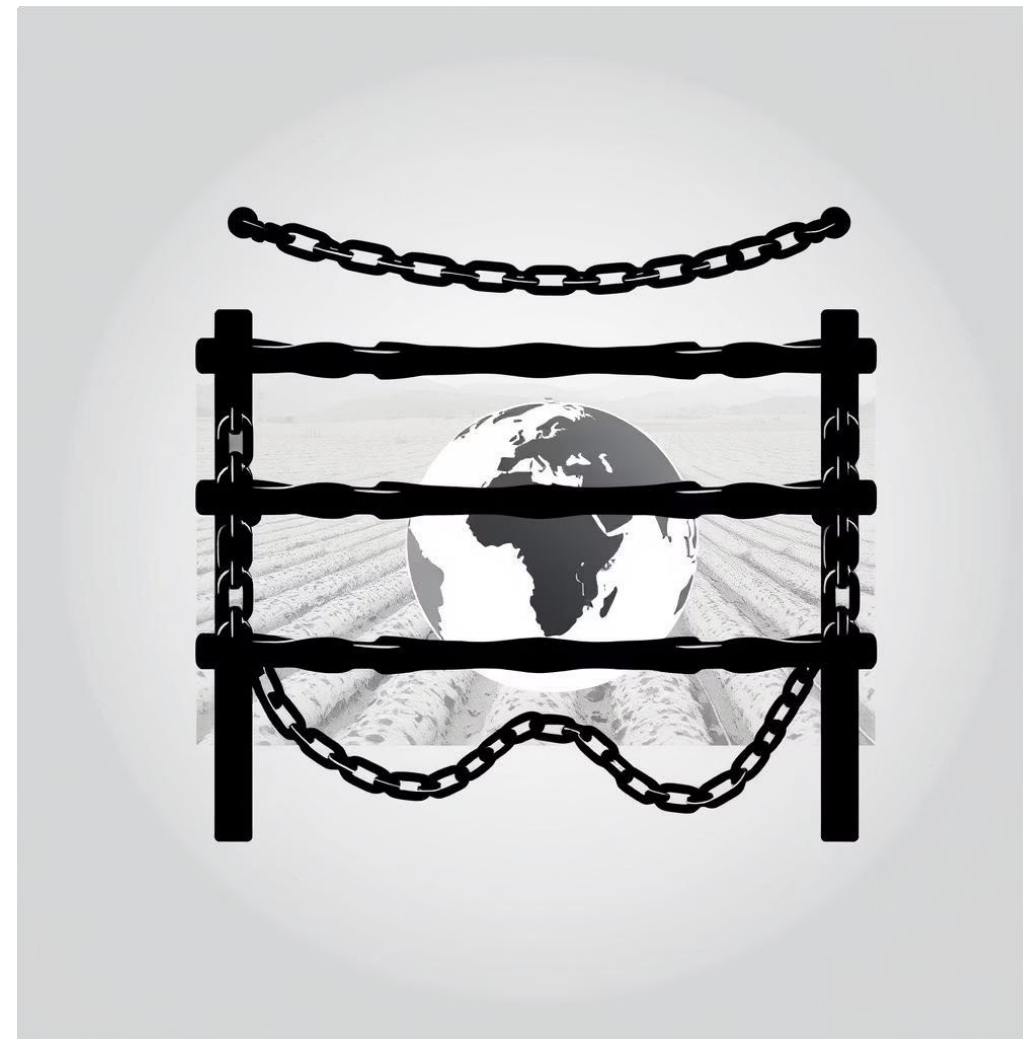
Promoting genetic diversity in crops and livestock is vital for enhancing resilience to environmental changes, pests, and diseases, increasing agricultural productivity. This involves conserving traditional varieties and indigenous breeds, which often possess unique traits like drought resistance, flood tolerance, or natural pest deterrents. By safeguarding this rich genetic pool, Nigeria can ensure its agricultural systems adapt to evolving climatic conditions and emergent biological threats, securing food supplies for future generations and supporting sustainable ecosystems.

Integrating technology into agriculture significantly boosts productivity and efficiency. Using GPS and sensor data, precision farming techniques allow for optimised application of water, fertilisers, and pesticides, reducing waste and environmental impact while maximising yields. Advanced crop monitoring systems, including drone imagery and satellite data, provide real-time insights into plant health and growth, enabling timely interventions. Smart irrigation systems deliver water precisely where and when needed, conserving this precious resource, especially in arid regions. Beyond field operations, digital platforms are transformative by providing farmers with crucial market information, weather forecasts, and agronomic advice. These tools empower farmers to make more informed decisions regarding planting, harvesting, and sales, leading to increased income, reduced post-harvest losses, and a more robust food supply chain.

Overcoming Challenges and Trade Restrictions

Achieving zero hunger in Nigeria is a multifaceted challenge, exacerbated by persistent food insecurity, which currently affects a staggering 22% of the population, leading to widespread malnutrition and vulnerability⁸. This complex issue is further compounded by the escalating impacts of climate change, manifest in unpredictable weather patterns, prolonged droughts, and severe floods that devastate crops and livestock. Additionally, widespread inefficient agricultural practices, often characterized by reliance on rain-fed farming, limited access to modern farming technologies, and unsustainable land management, contribute significantly to low yields and food waste. Limited access to essential resources, including improved seeds, fertilizers, credit facilities, and vital agricultural extension services, further constrains the productivity of smallholder farmers who form the backbone of Nigeria's agricultural sector.

Furthermore, restrictive trade policies, such as high import tariffs and complex non-tariff barriers, severely limit the accessibility and affordability of crucial food items, often disadvantaging the most vulnerable segments of the population. These restrictions can artificially inflate prices and reduce the variety of available foods, undermining efforts to ensure diverse and nutritious diets. Simultaneously, ongoing internal conflicts, particularly in the North-East and other volatile regions, continue to profoundly disrupt food supply chains, destroying farmlands, displacing millions of people from their homes and livelihoods, and severely hindering humanitarian aid efforts. The resulting insecurity prevents farmers from cultivating their land and accessing markets, leading to critical food shortages in affected areas. To effectively address these interconnected challenges and forge a path towards sustainable food security, Nigeria urgently requires a comprehensive and integrated approach. This must encompass robust policy reforms aimed at creating a more enabling environment for agriculture and trade, substantial investment in climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices, significant improvement in critical infrastructure like rural roads and storage facilities, and the expansion of effective social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable populations from economic shocks and food price volatility.



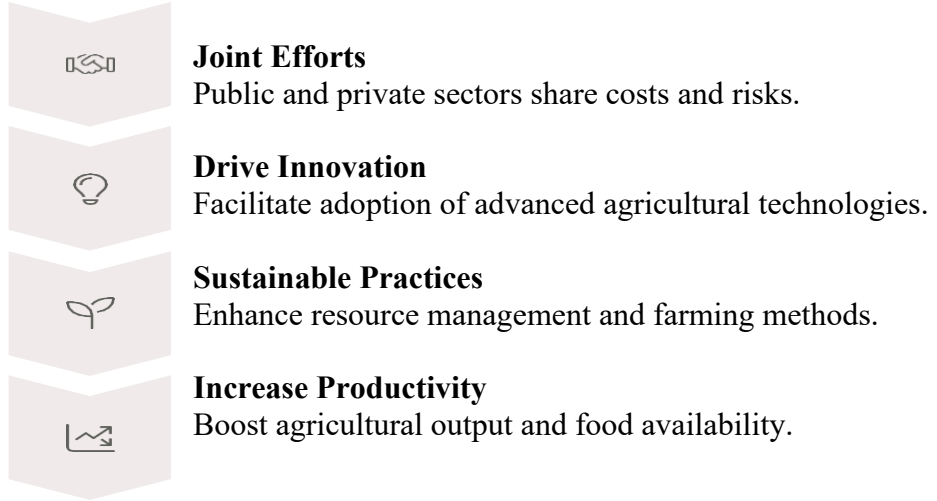
⁸ Global Hunger Index. (2023). Nigeria Country Score. Retrieved from: <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/nigeria.html> Accessed 11/07/2023



Public-Private Partnerships: A Collaborative Approach

Partnerships and collaborations are vital for achieving zero hunger in Nigeria, bringing diverse stakeholders together to address food security challenges collectively. Increasing food insecurity, triggered by climate change, market disruptions, and declining productivity, highlights the need for renewed collaboration.

Public-private partnerships (P3s) are effective, involving joint efforts between public and private sectors to share costs and risks, driving innovation and enhancing food security.



Collaborations enable knowledge-sharing and capacity-building, disseminating best practices and innovative approaches across the food value chain. This leads to comprehensive and sustainable solutions to combat hunger and malnutrition.



Conclusion: Building a Resilient and Food-Secure Future

Nigeria stands at a critical juncture in its pursuit of a food-secure future. Collective will and determination can pave the way for a transformative journey, overcoming challenges through resilience, collaboration, and innovation.

Partnerships, especially public-private ones, will drive innovation and sustainable agricultural practices. Good governance and visionary policies, promoting democracy, accountability, and transparency, will lay the foundation for comprehensive food security initiatives. By uniting efforts, Nigeria can unlock a brighter tomorrow for every citizen