

## Research Article

# Insecurity and Food Crisis in Nigeria: A Study of 2009-2022

Asor Gbamwuan

Ph.D, Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, KolaDaisi University, Ibadan, Nigeria.

## I N F O

**E-mail Id:**

a.asor@gmail.com

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## A B S T R A C T

One of the challenges that face Nigeria between 2009 and 2022 is insecurity. Within this short period, Nigeria experienced various dynamism of security problems including Boko-Haram insurgency, Banditry, cattle rustling, farmers-herders squabbles, separatist movements, militancy, religious bigotry et cetera with gross implications for the socio-economic development of the nation. Against this backdrop, the study establishes the nexus between insecurity and the food crisis in Nigeria as a social problem that truncates national economic growth and development. The study's methodological approach is evidence-based from a desk review of extant literature which has been corroborated with primary sources for objectivity. The study revealed that Boko-Haram terrorism, banditry, farmers-herders conflicts have distorted agriculture production by peasant farmers, government programmes, policies. The result is increased hunger and malnutrition, escalation of food prices, unemployment, social vices. To stem this tide, the study suggested the adoption of current technology to fight insecurity by the government, recruitment and training of the Nigerian military, re-evaluation of the existing government agricultural policies.

**Keywords:** Security, Insecurity, Food Crisis, Agricultural Policies, Nigeria

## Introduction

Food is one of the most important necessities of life. Without food, no living creature will survive. Globally, nations strive to prevent food crises by adopting policies that could stimulate agricultural production and ensure adequate food. In the United States of America (USA), the New Deal legislation of the 1930s was meant to burst agriculture production and such policies have continued in new forms up to 2022. The USA agricultural production policies are still anchored on:

Tariffs to provide support to producers. Some US programs have elements that supplement domestic demand, extend export demand, reduce supplies, provide subsidies for some inputs. And while many would argue that these policies are less distortive to production and trade, the level of support

to the sector (agriculture) remains relatively large. Total spending for producer support programs, conservation programs, crop insurance is estimated to be more than \$200 billion over fiscal years (FYs) 2016 through 2025. For mandatory nutrition programs the estimate exceeds \$1.0 trillion (Glauber and Effland, 2016:1).

The USA has different types of agricultural policies like those that restrict imports; restrict supply through acreages and production controls; restrict supply through marketing quotas and price discrimination; enhance domestic demand; export promotion; market price support; support to producers through direct payments; input subsidies; disaster assistance and crop insurance; et cetera (Glauber and Effland, 2016; WTO, 2016a; USDA, Agriculture Marketing Service, 2016a; Fishback, 2016a). These policies, therefore,

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contributed significantly to stable food prices and also increase agricultural production for the past 70 years.

In the United Kingdom (UK), about 70% of the total area is utilised for agriculture [some 17.4 million hectares] (Downing and Coe, 2018). Therefore, as of 2018, the UK had 61% self-sufficient in all foods and 75% sufficient in indigenous foods (Downing and Coe, 2018). The UK government policies on the agricultural sector from 2018 and 2022 focused on four main areas which Downing and Coe (2018:9) note:

i. Developing a coherent policy on food and a new metric for food quality. This is intended to integrate the needs of “agriculture, businesses, other enterprises, consumers, public health, the environment.” It complements the Food Sector Council announced in the Industrial Strategy. ii. Giving farmers and land managers the time and tools to adapt to the future to avoid a “precipitate cliff edge” but also to “prepare properly for the changes which are coming.” iii. Developing a new method of providing financial support for farmers which moves away from subsidies for inefficiency to public money for public goods. iv. Ensure that “we build natural capital thinking into our approach towards all land use and management so that we develop a truly sustainable future for the countryside.

Food stability in the UK stems from government policies that target agricultural productivity. In Africa also, there are government policies that could accelerate agricultural production. However, these policies are not consciously implemented as a result of leadership deficits. Besides, African countries are caught up in the cobweb of climate change, conflicts, dramatic economic slowdowns, downturns with great implications for Sustainable Development Goal 2 [SDGs] (FAO, 2021). Against this backdrop, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO, 2021:1) established that:

In 2020, 281.6 million Africans were undernourished, an increase of 89.1 million since 2014. Of the total number of undernourished; 125.1 million people live in Eastern Africa, followed by Western Africa (75.2 million), Central Africa (57.1 million), Northern Africa (17.4 million), Southern Africa (6.8 million). Africa accounts for 55 percent of the global rise in the number of undernourished over the 2014 to 2020 period. In addition, Eastern and Western Africa account for 83 percent of the Africa-wide increase over the 2014 to 2020 period.

Nigeria is one of the countries in West Africa that faces a food crisis in contemporary times. The country has been engulfed by Boko-Haram terrorism, farmers-herders conflicts, banditry, communal violence, political violence, Islamic fundamentalism/religious bigotry, riots et cetera. (Atim and Gbamwuan, 2022; Onwuzuruigbo,

2020; WANEP, 2020; Okoli, 2019; Okoli & Ugwu, 2019; Ogbonnaya, 2020). Therefore, this study examines some of the above-mentioned conflicts vis-à-vis food security challenges in Nigeria from a span of 12 years (2009-2021).

The study is a radical departure from the avalanche of scholarly works that focus on security challenges in Nigeria without giving adequate attention to their impact on food security. For instance, some such studies include Nnoli (2003); Rotberg (2003); OUSD (2007); Rabasa (2007); Brosché and Elfversson (2012); George-Genyi (2013); Najjar (2014); Gbamwuan (2016); Kazeem (2018); Okoli (2019); Okoli and Ugwu (2019); Folade (2019); Ojo (2020); Onwuzuruigbo (2020); WANEP (2020); Ogbonnaya (2020); and Rufa'i, 2021; et cetera. Therefore, this study filled in this vacuum. The study methodology is a desk review of extant literature which has been triangulated with primary sources to achieve objectivity. The study is presented in sequential and coherent parts.

### Conceptual Backdrop

The examination of insecurity and food crisis in this study is critical for elaborate analysis and objective discussion. Insecurity is an all-encompassing word of which the food crisis is a part. In absence of security; there is a state of insecurity be it physical, social, or mental insecurity among others. In line with this point, Achumba, Igbomereho, Akpor-Robaro cited in Gbamwuan and Agidi (2022:3) disclosed that:

Insecurity is a state of being subject to danger, expose to risk or anxiety lack of institutional capacity resulting in government failure; pervasive material inequalities and unfairness; ethnoreligious conflicts; conflict of perceptions between the public and government; weak security system; loss of socio-cultural and communal value system porous borders; rural/urban drift; social irresponsibility of companies; unemployment/poverty; terrorism.

This implies that the concept of insecurity covers political, social, economic, cultural, psychological dimensions. When citizens are insecure, the burden of the blame lies on the government. This is because the government owns its citizens the major responsibility of protecting them. The government according to the Social Contract Theory as articulated by Hobbes (1588-1679), Locke (1632-1704), Rousseau (1712-1778), Kantian (1972), Gauthier (1986), others has the responsibility to protect the citizens and provide them with social facilities while the citizens adhere strictly to their social responsibilities (IEP, 2022).

In Nigeria, the primary responsibility of the government to protect the citizens is compromised on the altar of selfish and corrupt leadership (Agbor, 2011; Agbor, 2012; Ezirim, 2010). Imhonopi and Ugochukwu (2013:78) in line with this argument rightly declare that ‘Nigerian leaders

seem to be infamous for whatever is mediocre, corrupt, insanely violent and morally untoward'. These categories of visionless leaders have compromised the security of the country leading to where Nigeria has found herself today. Nigeria has been trapped in economic insecurity which is the root of other forms of security problems in the country. Onoja (2014:15) laments.

Of these forms of insecurity, the one that is most common and triggers consciousness of other forms of insecurity is economic insecurity. Economic insecurity spawned other forms of insecurity into existence. In simple terms, economic insecurity is the absence of jobs, basic health care, accessible drinking water, education, life-enhancing opportunities, creating policies that cater to the short, medium, long-term needs of the different cadre of the population. It is the absence of basic economic and social infrastructure that would avail citizens of the opportunity to cater to their welfare. The non-provision of these has created conditions of political, cultural, psychological exclusion detrimental to security.

Nigeria is not devoid of food crisis as a result of communal violence, Boko-Haram extremism, herders-farmers squabbles, activities of bandits. Therefore, what is a food crisis? According to Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO] (2013) cited in Eme et al, (2014:7), the food crisis is:

A situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and active and healthy life. It may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity, poor conditions of health and sanitation, inappropriate care and feeding practices are the major causes of poor nutritional status. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal, or transitory.

In the context of this study, the FAO's definition is inadequate on the premise that it underscores only the economic causes of the food crisis. Other numerous factors could cause a food crisis including war, activities of insurgency, terrorism, epidemics, environmental and climatic factors et cetera.

**Corroborating this view, Haile (2016), Abubakar and Dano (2018) cited in Oji and Anih (2021:166) averred that**

low agricultural productivity, lack of agricultural policies, country's internal crisis (farmers/herders crisis), poor infrastructure and high transport costs, lack of appropriate marketing strategies, frequent extreme weather events, high – disease burden including HIV/AIDS, weak financial support systems, lack of safety net systems and political conflicts. The greatest challenge facing food security in

Nigeria too is poverty and crisis from political instability.

**Obonyilo (2015:5) reinforces the above argument in extenso**

Unseasonable droughts in grain-producing nations and rising oil prices. Oil prices further heightened the costs of fertilizers, food transport, industrial agriculture. Other causes of the food crisis may be the increasing use of biofuels in developed countries, increasing demand for a more varied diet, meat in particular, across the expanding middle-class populations of Asia. These factors, coupled with falling world food stockpiles have all contributed to the dramatic worldwide rise in food prices. The long-term causes of the food crisis remain a topic of debate. These may include structural changes in trade and agricultural production, agricultural price supports and subsidies in developed nations, diversions of food commodities to high-input foods and fuel, commodity market speculation, climate change.

In nutshell, very fundamental to this study, food insecurity exists when people lack sustainable physical or economic access to enough safe, nutritious, socially acceptable food for a healthy and productive life. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal, or temporary. Food insecurity and malnutrition result in catastrophic amounts of human suffering. (Fawole, Ilbasmis, and Ozkan, 2015). It is in this wise that this study examines insecurity and food crisis in Nigeria during the period under review.

**Historicizing Insecurity in Nigeria from 1999 and 2021**

Insecurity in Nigeria did not start in 1999. The history of Nigeria from the colonial to post-independence era is synonymous with insecurity. The Trans-Atlantic Slave trade was characterised by brutal conquests of feeble groups and also created ethnic and tribal wars in Nigeria. The Yoruba Wars in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were fought partly for slave hunting and these created a lot of problems for the old Oyo Empire leading to its collapse in the final analysis (Samuel, 1976). The Usman Dan Fodio Jihad of 1802 as well instilled fear, especially amongst the ethnic minority groups who could not stand the fierce battles of the jihadists (Robin, 1977). These are a few among several instances of insecurity during the pre-colonial and colonial eras.

In the post-independence era, the country witnessed coups and counter-coups that were hinged on primordial politics and ethnic chauvinism, the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 led to thousands of people's deaths. The country also witnessed a series of human rights violations at the hands of military administrators, the likes of Chief M.K.O. Obiola; Kenule Beeson Saro Wiwa, the Ogoni liberation fighter; Chief Alfred Rewane, the leader of Afenifere; Chief Abraham Adesanya, Alex Ibru, the publisher of the

Guardian Newspaper were either assassinated or narrowly escaped assassination (Gbamwuan and Agidi, 2022). From the forgoing narrative, the resurgence of the democratic dispensation in 1999 was a reassurance to the Nigerian citizens that at last the awaited security that accompanies democracy has been restored. Unfortunately, the crop of insensitive leaders in the country undermined the security, economic viability, development of the nation. This can be seen against the backdrop of the trajectory and dynamics of the security challenges that face the nation today.

Boko-Haram insurgency which emerged in 2009 is a product of dissatisfaction against the Nigerian state. Its leader Ustaz Muhammed Yusuf (1970-2009) expressed this dissatisfaction with an ideology that 'Western Education is Forbidden' hence the meaning of Boko-Haram (Shuaibu and Salleh, 2015). Yusuf was hostile to democracy, Christianity, the secular education system, vowing that: 'this war that is yet to start would continue for long' if the political and education system was not changed (Duyile, et al, 2020:241). Ustaz Muhammed Yusuf's activities were a threat to the Nigerian government and this led to his assassination in 2009. The assassination of Ustaz Muhammed Yusuf in police custody, his father-in-law and sect financier, Ustaz BujiFoi (Borno State former Commissioner of Religious Affairs), other members draw a battle line between the Boko-Haram group and the Nigerian state. With the emergence of the group's new leader, Mallam Abubakar Shekau, [Yusuf's second-in-command], the battle became fiercer (Chothia, 2014).

The frequency, lethality, sophistication of Boko Haram's attacks increased dramatically under its erstwhile leader Mallam Abubakar Shekau, allegedly as a result of increased cooperation with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). Apart from these networks, Boko-Haram went into alliance with Bandits whose strongholds are in the North-Western and some parts of North-Central Nigeria. In his 15<sup>th</sup> inaugural lecture series of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Rufa'i (2021:32) argued in extenso that In 2018, Boko Haram fighters from the Northeast were sent by the Shekau faction to support bandits in the Northwest. Eventually, they became integrated with the bandits and abandoned the course of Boko Haram. The reason is that banditry is not ideologically based and gives freedom to individual fighters. Moreover, there is what may be called bountiful wealth in banditry. Dogo Gide later allied with Boko Haram in the last quarter of 2019. Thus, from his base in the forest of Wawa in Niger state, Gide was recruiting members for this group and ensuring the group has a stronghold in Zamfara state. In light of this, assistance is often given to armed groups in Zamfara in form of fighters and equipment. Alhaji Shehu Shingi from Zurmi is the major Boko Haram link with the bandits.

What is extracted from the above piece is that Boko-Haram and bandits have a close link spread to the rest of Nigeria. This affiliation has underscored the dynamics of terrorism and insecurity in Nigeria in contemporary times. Bandits occupied ungoverned spaces with different leaders. Rufa'i (2021:24-25), chronicles the names of these bandit's leaders and their jurisdictions of operation comprehensively Abubakar Abdallah (alias Dogo Gide) operated in Kaduna and Niger; Yellow Jan-Bros operated in Birnin Gwari Forest and Giwa Areas of Kaduna State; Tsoho Manjagara operated in Giwa Local Government, Kaduna State; Alhaji Bodere and Ahaji Beleri operated in Sabon Birni, Giwa LGA, Kaduna State; Yellow Ashana operated in Sabon Garin, Gyadam, Kaduna State; Ali Kawaje also called Ali Kachalla operated in Birnin Gwari, Kaduna State and Kagara LGA, Niger State; Alhaji Isiy, Buhari General, Gannaie operated along Kaduna-Abuja Highway, Kaduna State; Alhaji Ado Aleru operated in Yan-Kuzo in Chafe LGA as well as some parts of Kastina and Zamfara states; Lanke, Umar Bengo, Yahaya, Kabir operated in Dan Rumfa village in Jibya LGA; Auwalun Daudawa operated in Safana, Dan-Musa, Batsari LGAs, Katsina State; Dangotte Bazamfare operated along Katsina and Zamfara borders; Alhaji Auta, Ardo Na - Shaware, Ardo Nashama, Alhaji Shingi operated in Birnin Magaji LGA, Zamfara State; Dankarami operated in Zurmi LGA, Zamfara State; Alhaji Shehu Rekep and Alhaji Halilu Tsafe, operated in Maru and Anka LGAs, Zamfara State; Manu D. O operated in Birnin Gwari and Giwa Areas, Kaduna state; Saleh piya-piya operated in Anchau, Kaduna State; and Bello Turji operated in Shinkafi/Isa, Sabon Birnin. Unlike Boko-Haram, bandits in Nigeria operate in ungoverned spaces of their sphere of influence. Their power is determined by the sophistication of their weapons and the followers they have. The activities of bandits include kidnapping, killings, arms smuggling, cattle rustling, forced marriages, collection of farming and grazing levies, Gender-Based and Sexual Violence (GBSV), including assault, rape, forced prostitution, gang rape, what have you. Apart from the above, farmers-herders conflicts have taken over the area of Central Nigeria leading to the deaths and displacements of thousands of farmers. Although, other fertile parts of Nigeria are not exempted from these conflicts. The causes of farmers-herders conflicts are socio-economic. According to Atim and Gbamwuan (2020), competition over land resources is the primary factor. This is because Nigeria's population has kept rising while land resources are scarce. For example, in 1960 the population growth rate was 1.60%, in 1970 was 1.80%, in 1980 was 2.00%, in 1990 was 2.20%, in 2000 was 2.40%, in 2010 was 2.60%, in 2020 stood at 2.80%. However, the landmass of the Nigerian state is fixed (World Population Review, 2022). Arising from population increase in Nigeria generally, Central Nigeria becomes a hotbed for contestation on land and water resources between farmers and herders.



Furthermore, the adoption of dry season farming in Central Nigeria in the 21st Century contradicts the common practice of transhumance and nomadism carried out by the Fulani herdsmen during the 19th and 20th Centuries. Amnesty International (2018:13) made this analysis in the following way.

Both farmers and herders said the problem began when the farmers started practicing dry-season farming (the specific time could not be ascertained), which meant the grazing area for cattle started to diminish. Also, water bodies that the herders relied upon for their cattle became contentious, because the farmers needed them for irrigation. This was especially noticeable in Adamawa State. In addition, farmers now also rear cows and not just draught oxen, meaning their cattle need grazing areas too, making the competition stiffer

Arising from the above factors, there is also increasing desertification in the North-Eastern and North-Western areas of Nigeria which traditionally were home to herdsmen (Atim and Gbamwuan, 2022). Added to this is the increasing number of herds in Nigeria as a result of porous borders. There are over 1,497 illegal routes linking Nigeria with neighbouring countries like Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Togo, Mali (Rufa'i, 2021). Unchecked illegal routes serve as easy access by neighbouring herdsmen into Nigeria. Therefore, Central Nigeria becomes a battle of 'survival of the fittest' as Charles Darwin established in his thesis 'On the Origin of Species' in 1858 (Live Science, 2022).

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that the activities of Boko-Haram, Bandits and Farmer-herders conflicts have made the Nigerian space highly insecure for the conduct of farming, rearing of animals. The effect is food crises as shall be demonstrated qualitatively in the proceeding section of this study.

### Insecurity and Food Crisis in Nigeria: Evidence-Based Nexus

The Nigerian food crisis began when the country's attention was shifted from agriculture production to oil exploration in the 1970s till date. The situation has worsened and

Nigeria moved from the status of an agriculture exporter to an importer of agricultural goods with a net expenditure of over 1.3 billion nairas annually up to 2017 (Etim, Duke, & Ogbinyi, 2017). With the emergence and new dynamics of security challenges in Nigeria in 1999 and 2021 [Boko-Haram terrorism, cattle rustling, farmers/herders conflicts, banditry], the food crisis has been rife. Northern Nigeria generally produces grains (sorghum, millet, rice), legumes (cowpeas and groundnuts), vegetables (tomatoes, onions, peppers), cotton that feed the entire nation. However, with the emergence of Boko-Haram terrorism in 2009, there has been a sharp reduction in the production of this agricultural produce as captured in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that before Boko-Haram terrorism in the Northern part of Nigeria, agriculture productivity was high. However, agriculture productivity continues to dwindle within the years of the Boko-Haram conflict. The reason for this is not hard to locate arising from the fact that farmers were hit hardest as they were cut off from their farms. Also, traders were limited in their market participation due to fear of attacks, lack of transportation, low or unreliable supplies of crops to the market. Some traders also abandoned their businesses altogether due to the conflict. This led to food shortages across other parts of Nigeria with resultant hunger crises (Kimenyi, et al, 2014). Available statistics provided by the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) on food insecurity in Nigeria has continued to increase since 2013 (ranked 86 among 107 countries with a 33/100 score) and reached a disturbing rank of 94 (with a 48.4/100 score) among 113 countries behind Ethiopia, Niger and Cameroon in 2019 [GFSI overall ranking table shows that the closer to 100 scores the better] (Ayinde, Otegunrin, Akinbode, Otegunrin, 2020).

Reinforcing the above arguments, records from FEWS NET (2020), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)/World Bank (2018), Otegunrin et al. (2019), International Office of Migration (IOM-DTM) assessment, USAID (2017) show that food crisis in Nigeria during the period under study anchored on new forms of insecurity. Otegunrin, et al (2020:813) was more forthcoming when they asserted that.

**Table 1. Agriculture Productivity Decline in Nigeria, 2009 and 2013**

Production (metric tones)				
Identification Number of Farmer	Crop	Typical Harvest before Conflict (2004-2008)	Typical Harvest during Conflict (2009-2013)	Percentage change
1	Cowpea	1.0	0.3	-70
2		2.0	0.5	-75
1	Maize	2.8	0.4	-86
2		4.8	1.0	-80
3		15.0	2.2	-85
1	Sorghum	0.8	0	-100
4		20.0	6.0	-68

3	Rice	3.0	1.5	-50
4	Millet	5.0	1.1	-78

Source: Kimenyi, M. et al, (2014). The Impact of Conflict and Political Instability on Agriculture Investment in Mali and Nigeria, Brookings: African Growth Initiative Working Paper 17, p.18.

Chronic and seasonal food insecurity persist in every part of Nigeria, escalated by frequent high food prices, the impact of conflict related to insurgency, armed banditry, communal, pastoralist/farmer crisis, kidnapping, cattle rustling, climate change. Among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, Northeast, North-Central, South-South are the three zones most affected by conflict events the reoccurring conflict events are terrorism in the Northeast (73%), land or resource access in the North Central (55%) and cultism/criminality in the South-South (36%) in October 2018, over 1.8 million persons were displaced across Borno, Yobe and Adamawa state with Borno state remaining the epicentre of Boko Haram conflict hosting over 1.4 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) 3,188 persons, including 2,707 civilians and 481 security operatives, were reportedly killed in 2019 between August and October 2019 over 2 million people were displaced in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states in the northeast while in January 2020, ACLED reported 507 fatalities throughout Nigeria. Agriculture, a major source of livelihood for people in these areas, other income-generating activities were disrupted leading to reduced household income and limited access to food.

Corroborating the above argument, statistics from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) indicated that.

19.5 million Nigerians are facing food insecurity, including 1.2 million in an emergency over 1.7 million children under five years of age are expected to suffer from acute

malnutrition through to August 2022 – a 34 percent increase compared to the same period in 2021 (Oluwale, 2022).

A report from the UN shows that Borno, Adamawa, Yobe which are Boko-Haram torn zone are badly affected with food insecurity accounting for 4.1 million people. Therefore, the major trigger of food insecurity in the Northeast during the period under review is Boko-terrorism.

In the north-west and north-central Nigeria, the activities of bandits and farmers/herders conflicts have constituted new waves of security challenges.

This is because the activities of these groups have pushed a good number of farmers out of their farms and this has constituted a drastic decrease in food crops like yams, cassava, grains. This scenario has been captured in Table 2.

Table 2, projected the food crisis in Nigeria in 2021 which was caused by banditry and farmers/herders conflicts in North-West and North-Central. It could be inferred from the above table that Niger and Katsina have the highest levels of food insecurity (16%). This is followed by Zamfara (15%) which is the epicentre of Banditry, Benue (5%) the centre of farmers/herders conflicts. The percentages of food crises in Kebbi and Nasarawa have not been confirmed by the IFRC, in 2021. It is in line with this analysis that the UNHCR reported that '94% of the key informant interviews (KIIs) mentioned not having sufficient food in Katsina State, Sokoto State (88%), Zamfara State (78%), reasons for their response include the inability to access their farms due to banditry'.

**Table 2. North-West and North-Central Hunger Crisis, 2021**

Region	Locations	Total Population	ICP Phase 3+ in the lean season	Population by Sector Needs
North-West	Katsina	8,708,355	1,384,925 (16%)	By most vulnerable were targeted via an integrated approach with food security, health, WASH, PGI and DRR, NSD – based on 5% of the total affected
	Kebbi	4,440,050	To be confirmed	
	Sokoto	5,748,004	299,291 (5%)	
	Zamfara	4,838,804	710,893 (15%)	
North-Central	Benue	6,473,877	347,724 (5%)	
	Nasarawa	2,523,395	To be confirmed	
	Niger	6,318,008	1,029,284 (16%)	
			Approx. 4m	

Source: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Emergency Appeal, North-West and North-Central Nigeria/ Hunger Crisis, p.5.

Arising from the foregoing, insecurity has pushed most Nigerians into refugee camps at the expense of their daily farming activities in the Northern part of Nigeria. The resultant effects have been a shortfall in food production and a steady escalation of food prices. A summary of this scenario has been made by the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), thus.

Selected Food Price Watch for the month of August 2022 shows that the average price of 1kg of beans (white, black eye, sold loose) rose on a year-on-year basis by 12.94% from N 457.98 in August 2021 to N517.23 in August 2022. Also, on a month-on-month basis, this declined to 5.51% from N547.38 in July 2022. The average price of Bread Sliced 500g increased on a year-on-year basis by 33.12% from N366.69 in August 2021 to N488.14 in August 2022. On a month-on-month basis, the average price of this item increased by 0.38% in August 2022. Similarly, the average price of 1kg beef (boneless) rose by 26.09% on a year-on-year basis from N1,698.18 in August 2021 to N2,141.18 in August 2022. In addition, the average price of Groundnut oil: 1 bottle, specify bottle stood at N1, 087.64 in August 2022, showing an increase of 33.83% from N812.70 in August 2021. On a month-on-month basis, it rose by 0.88% from N1, 078.17 in July 2022. The average price of 1kg Yam Tuber on a year-on-year basis, rose by 32.12% from the value recorded in August 2021 (N305.48) to N403.63 in August 2022. On a month-on-month basis, it increased to N403.63 in August 2022 from N389.75 in July 2022 indicating a 3.56% increase. In the same vein, the average price of Palm oil: (1 bottle, specify bottle) increased by 34.08% from N668.71 in August 2021 to N896.63 in August 2022. It also grew by 0.67% on a month-on-month basis.

The increase in food prices and food shortage has generated a food crisis in Nigeria. This is because every part of Northern Nigeria which produces food and cash crop has been affected by one conflict or the other. Therefore, a decrease in food production has led to food shortages and high prices for food products as this study has shown. To survive the food crisis, people have adopted several majors including eating one or two square meals in a day, intake of poor quality food with gross implications for healthy living. Today, Nigeria is placed second in the global malnutrition burden with 17 million undernourished children (Obinna and Busari, 2022), while it is the first malnourished country in Africa.

### **Government Policies and Programmes to Cheek-Mate Food Crisis in Nigeria during the Period under Review**

From 1960 to 2009 the various administrations adopted a series of initiatives targeted at increasing food production. Unfortunately, most of these policies and programmes were not viable because of policy inconsistency, corruption,

poor implementation strategy. On this note, Akindele and Adebo (2014:55) observed that: 'the failure of Nigeria to experience rapid agricultural and economic development is due to the failures of the various agricultural programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation, the Green Revolution, RBDAs, Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) to achieve their aims and objective'.

With the return of Nigeria to democratic governance in 1999, the attention to burst agriculture production as one of the cardinal points of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) led to the formulation and implementation of the National Agricultural Policy (NAP) in 2002. NAP was a comprehensive document manned by national and state stakeholders and international partners. At the federal level, this comprehensive plan was contained in the section of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), while at the state level was the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) (Awe and Rufus, 2017). The policy objective of NAP was:

Promotion of self-sufficiency in food and raw materials for industries; recognition that agriculture is business, hence a private sector concern where the role of government is to facilitate and support private sector initiatives; promoting reliance on local resources; diversification of the sources of foreign exchange earnings through increased agricultural exports arising from the adoption of appropriate technologies in food production and distribution, which specifically responds to the needs of women, bearing in mind that they constitute over 50% of the labour force in agriculture (Awe and Rufus, 2017:30).

One of the pitfalls of NAP was its very objective that lay emphasise private sector engagement as an enterprise leading to agricultural commercialisation. Besides, the programme failed to reposition peasant farmers' production capacity to enhance food security. To remedy these loopholes, the Musa Umaru Yar' Adua's administration (2007-2009) brought in seven-point agenda. Out of these points, Agriculture was one of the targets to take Nigeria into vision 20:2020. In line with this, the government redirected its attention to 'obviate the technical and structural problems of agriculture in the following aspect; Development activities, Animal vaccine production, Veterinary drug manufacture, Agrochemicals manufacture, Water management, Agricultural Development, Supportive activities, Input supply and distribution and Credit and micro-credit (Awe and Rufus, 2017:31). But again the fundamental problem in which agriculture was seen as an enterprise and must be carried out by the private entrepreneurs for economic sustainability was upheld.

Jonathan Goodluck (2009-2015), Muhamadu Buhari (2015-2022) did not deviate much from what Musa Umaru

Yar' Adua started in 2007 and 2009. Their policies and programmes favour agriculture productivity as an enterprise driven solely by the private sector. Jonathan Goodluck for instance introduced the Agriculture Transformation Agenda (ATA) in 2011. Lokpobiri, (2019:50) recounted the achievements of ATA, thus:

It focused on how to make Nigeria's agriculture more productive, efficient, effective by setting a target of creating 3.5 million jobs by 2015, generating foreign exchange, reducing spending on food imports. Among its key achievements was a restructuring of the fertilizer procurement system through the Growth Enhancement Scheme which registered smallholder farmers and provided targeted input subsidies to about 12.5 million farmers between 2011 and 2014. In addition to granting farmers access to fertilizer and seedlings, commercial banks were engaged to finance the Scheme and boost lending to agriculture from 1% to 6% of all formal credit by 2015. The ATA policy created special funds to support farmers, revived the Bank of Agriculture, established the Nigerian Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) and the Fund for Agricultural Finance in Nigeria (FAFIN). Staple crop processing zones for cassava and rice paddy were designated across the country, there were concessions for moribund government warehouses

and storage assets. New higher-yielding crop varieties of Cocoa and rice were introduced, leading to an increase in domestic food production by an incremental 20.1 million tons in 2014.

Although, ATA was promising in nature but was confronted with myriads of challenges including poor policy implementation. The Goodluck Johnathan administration also put in place the Youth Empowerment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP), which has been sustained by the Muhamadu Buhari administration on the banner of Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) (2016-2020). The YEAP targeted empowering youths in the production of Rice, Aquaculture, Poultry, Maize, Tomatoes, Wheat, Sorghum, Apiculture, Soya bean, Cassava, Groundnut, Oil Palm, Snailry, Grasscutter, multiple value chains like wielding and fabrication, repairs, maintenance.

The APP Policy aimed at solving the problem of food shortage and increasing the exportation of agricultural produce for accelerated economic development. Unfortunately, these policies and programmes have been truncated for various reasons including corruption, lack of implementation will. The new trajectories of security challenges in the country compounded the realisation of these policies and programmes. The effect is the disparity between production and demand for agricultural produce as captured in table 3.

**Table 3. Gaps in Nigeria's Demand and Supply of Staple Food Items in 2016 and 2022**

Crop	Demand (in tons)	Supply (in tons)	Observations
Rice	6.3 million	2.3 million	Insufficient supply chain integration remains an issue
Wheat	4.7 million	0.06 million	Driven by demand for various types of wheat (white, hard, durum), etc. for bread, biscuits, semovita
Maize/Corn	7.5 million	7.0 million	Limited imports are required but can shift due to feeding demand
Soya Beans	0.75 million	0.6 million	Animal feed and protein cost alt. driving demand
Chickens	200 million birds	140 million birds	The gap is filled by illegal imports that enter the market at a lower price point than domestic producers; the gap is also a moving target based on fast food/QSR demand
Fish	2.7 million	0.8 million	Fall off in ocean catch and weakness in aquaculture yields due to the cost of fish feed a constraint on growth
Meat/ Diary	2.0 million	0.6 million	Driven by insufficient milking cows and low yields (15-25 liters/day versus the norm of 35 – 40 liters NZ/US)
Tomatoes	2.2 million	0.8 million	Actual production is 1.5 million tons but 0.7 million ton is lost post-harvest
Yams	39 million	37 million	The limited gap today but volumes expected to rise in the planning period
Oil Palm	8.0 million	4.5 million	Refers to fresh fruit bunch (FFB) from which oil is extracted at a 10% - 15% efficiency rate
Cocoa	3.6 million	0.25 million	Demand is global demand which will rise to 4.5 million by 2020



Cotton	0.7 million	0.2 million	Demand is for seed cotton and could rise to 1.0 – 1.5 million tons subject to the textile sector revival
Sorghum	7.0 million	6.2 million	Demand will rise further as the use of feed grows in 2016 – 2020. Import of malt extracts and glucose syrup is currently used to manage the gap, hence a commercial threat for Nigerian farmers

Source: Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development 2016

Table 3, clearly shows how agricultural policies failed to yield viable results during the period under review. The demand for food commodities supersedes the supply of food production in 2016 and beyond. The reasons for this are not too hard to locate besides poor policy implementation, corruption, misappropriation; there are also rising security challenges in Nigeria with different forms like banditry, book-haram terrorism, farmers-herders squabbles. The security threat on rural farmers has driven millions out of their rural farms to urban centres with gross implications for unemployment and increasing crimes.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has drawn a linkage between the current state of the food crisis in Nigeria (2009 and 2022), from the trajectories of insecurity problems. This is because the dominant agricultural-producing states in Nigeria are caught up in the cobweb of one form of security challenge or the other. The states produced wide varieties of agricultural produce including tubers, cereals, grains, fruits and vegetables, cotton, cattle, dairy products et cetera. Arising from these security problems, government agricultural policies and programmes have failed to produce viable results since 2009 and 2022. The impact of this is felt in numerous dimensions including food shortage, rising prices of foods, hunger, malnutrition, increased importation of food from other countries. Apart from these isolated points, it is also clear that insecurity has stimulated rural-urban drift leading to increase youth unemployment and social ills in Nigerian urban settlements. It is against the backdrop of these challenges that this paper made some suggestions aimed at taming this tiger. First, the government should straighten its efforts to fight insurgency, banditry, farmers-herders conflicts using novel forms of security gadgets like drones. Drones are used for anti-aircraft target practice, intelligence gathering, surveillance, traffic monitoring, weather monitoring, fire fighting, drone based-photography, videography, agriculture, delivery services among others. Drones' capability in fighting the current security challenges in Nigeria is not in doubt given the diversity of functions it performs. Besides, drones are flying robots with sensors to detect and destroy the target enemy. Drones can be gotten from industrialised nations like the United States of America, Britain, Russia, China, Germany, et cetera, can serve as a potent force protecting rural farmers and herders from terrorism, banditry, cattle rustling, other forms of insecurity in the country.

Second, the Nigerian government urgently needs to train its security personnel on the current trend of information and communication technology to fight crimes. This train should incorporate the dynamics of civil-military relations to enhance effectiveness. Third, there is also the need for the government to reinforce the security personnel with adequate manpower, weapons. Currently, Nigeria has a total population of over 200 million people while the Nigerian army strength is barely 223, 000. This means, with the gigantic population of Nigeria and with over 300 ethnic groups cut across the different religious divides the country is low. For instance, Nigeria's military is behind Morocco whose total population is 37.34 million people with an estimated army strength of 246, 000 people. Egypt is another example, the country has a total population of 104.3 million people while her military strength stood at 836, 000 people four times more than Nigeria the 'giant of Arica'. This logic simply implies that the current figure of the Nigerian military is grossly below expectations to match the security challenge of over 200 million people. The engagement of the Nigerian youth in the security apparatuses of the country will go a long way in reducing unemployment. While the maintenance of law and order by the security personnel would create a serene society for agriculture production on one hand and the execution of agricultural programmes and policies on the other hand. Lastly, the Nigerian government should critically re-evaluate the existing agriculture programmes and policies to achieve their targeted aims and objectives instead of adopting nomenclatures without viable results.

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