



AISHA BUHARI FOUNDATION



FUTURE ASSURED



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH



Federal Ministry of FINANCE, BUDGET & NATIONAL PLANNING

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION

'Harnessing Innovative Financing Options for Nutrition – Unraveling the Bottlenecks'

18th August, 2020 | #FundNutritionNG

KEY NOTE SPEAKER



HE, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo
Vice President of Nigeria
Chairman, National Council on Nutrition

HOST



HE, Dr. Mrs. Aisha Buhari
Founder, Aisha Buhari Foundation

SPECIAL GUESTS



HE, Muhammad Yahaya
Executive Governor, Gombe State



Sen. Yahaya Oloriegbe
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health



Zainab S. Ahmed
Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning



Dr. Osagie Enahire
Honourable Minister of Health



Prince Clem Agba
Minister of State, Finance, Budget and National Planning

SPEAKERS



Ndidi O. Nwuneli
Co-founder & Managing Partner, Sahel Consulting: Agriculture & Nutrition



Dr. Olumide Okunola
Senior Health Specialist, World Bank



Dr. Frances Ilika
Health Economist & Country Director at Palladium - USAID Health Policy Plus Project



Simeon Nanama
Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF Nigeria



Mercy Sosanya
Nutritionist & Senior Lecturer, Federal Polytechnic Bauchi

MODERATORS



Dr. Tochukwu Nwachukwu
Economist, Public Policy Expert & CEO Preston Consults Limited



Rufus Idris
Deputy Chief of Party, USAID Feed the Future Nigeria Agribusiness Investment Activity



Vivianne Ihekweazu
Managing Director, Nigeria Health Watch

COMPERE



Chief (Mrs.) Moji Makanjuola MFR
CEO, International Society of Media in Public Health (ISMPH)

THE CONFERENCE REPORT



NHED



NIGERIA HEALTH WATCH

'Harnessing Innovative Financing Options for Nutrition - Unraveling the Bottlenecks'

Virtual Conference on Nutrition Report

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AfDB	African Development Bank
ALDDN	Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria
ARiN	Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria
BHCPF	Basic Health Care Provision Fund
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CCTS	Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme
CHIPS	Community Health Influencers, Promoters and Services
CIFF	Children's Investment Fund Foundation
CISLAC	Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre
CMAM	Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CRF	Consolidated Revenue Fund
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CS-SUNN	Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria
DNA	Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid
ERGP	Economic Recovery and Growth Plan
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FEC	Federal Executive Council
FMARD	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
FMCGs	Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Health
HCI	Human Capital Index
HFSS	High Fat, Sugar, Salt
HGSFP	Home Grown School Feeding Programme
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
ISMPH	International Society of Media in Public Health
LGA	Local Government Area

M&E	Measurement and Evaluation
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MBNP	Ministry of Budget and National Planning
MNCH	Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health
MNCHW	Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Weeks
MTNDP	Medium Term National Development Plan
NaFeEDTA	Ferric sodium ethylenediaminetetraacetate
NCN	National Council on Nutrition
NHED	Network for Health Equity and Development
NHW	Nigeria Health Watch
NMPFAN	National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition
NPFN	National Policy on Food and Nutrition
NPHCDA	National Primary Health Care Development Agency
NSIP	National Social Investment Programme
NSPAN	National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OTACCWA	Organization for Technology Advancement of Cold Chain in West Africa
PHC	Primary Health Care
RUTF(s)	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (s)
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SBN	Scaling-up Nutrition Business Network
SHIS	State Health Insurance Schemes
SIPs	Social Investment Programmes
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WDC	Ward Development Committee

CONFERENCE ORGANISERS

#FundNutritionNG



AISHA BUHARI FOUNDATION

The Aisha Buhari Foundation is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation that seeks to optimise the wellbeing of women, youth, and children through intervention in economic empowerment, education and health. Our key strategy is advocacy at all levels. In line with our vision and mission, we champion the rights and wellbeing of children. Central to the wellbeing of children is their right to adequate nutrition. The foundation is a member of supporter consortium, advocating for increased commitment and funding for the prevention and treatment of all forms of children malnutrition including severe acute malnutrition in Nigeria.



FUTURE ASSURED

Future Assured is an initiative of the Aisha Buhari Foundation, a non-governmental organisation set up with the aim of advocating for the wellbeing of women, children and adolescents in Nigeria.

With the vision of a secure future for women, youth, and children, the initiative optimises the potentials of women youth and children through interventions in health, education and economic empowerment.

Future assured focuses on three broad areas: health, education and economic empowerment.



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) has the mandate of providing of quality stewardship and services for the health of all Nigerians.

The vision the ministry is being a world-class government institution that ensures a healthy Nigeria

The development and implementation of policies that strengthen the national health system for effective, efficient, accessible and affordable delivery of health services in partnership with other stakeholders is a mission that the Ministry has set out to achieve.



Federal Ministry of FINANCE, BUDGET & NATIONAL PLANNING

The Ministry oversees the finances of the federal government of Nigeria, including managing, controlling and monitoring federal revenues and expenditures. The Ministry prepares annual estimates of revenue and expenditure for the federal government, formulates policies on fiscal matters; formulates policies in collaboration with CBN to curb inflation and deflation in the economy; prepares and publishes the Quarterly and Annual Reports on the economy; mobilises domestic and external financial resources for development purposes; monitors government revenue from oil and non-oil sources; and manages revenue allocation through the Federation Accounts Allocation Committee.



Network for Health Equity and Development (NHED) was created to serve as alternative business platform to provide international level technical assistance in health and development in Nigeria, particularly in markets restricted to only indigenous organisations.

The affiliate of Health Partners International (HPI), has a vision of becoming the leading, truly indigenous collection of committed professionals implementing reliable and effective home-grown health/health related solutions in Nigeria.

NHED contributes significantly to the transformation of the Nigerian health sector by drawing on local knowledge and expertise while recognising international norms and best practices.



International Society of Media in Public Health (ISMPH) is a registered non-governmental organization established to mainstream the media as a potent tool to accelerate health care information and delivery in Nigeria.

ISMPH was formed in recognition of the very important roles that the media have to play in ensuring that public health issues are treated as developmental issues.

The vision of ISMPH is to promote and advance public health using the media as an effective tool. It does this by engaging the media as a strategic tool to accelerate health care information, create demand and pursue vigorously health rights as human rights.



Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) is a non-governmental, non-profit, advocacy, information sharing, research, and capacity building organisation.

Its mission is to strengthen the link between civil society and the legislature through advocacy and capacity building for civil society groups and policy makers on legislative processes and governance issues.

The centre works to engage state and non-state actors for improved policy and legislative frameworks, transparency and accountability in governance for people oriented development. CISLAC is committed to strengthening civil society legislative advocacy.



NIGERIA HEALTH WATCH

Nigeria Health Watch is a not-for-profit organization that advocates for the health of Nigerians, strengthen the capacity of health sector organisations, enlighten Nigerians on good health habits and practices and engage and support the government and other partners, to formulate and implement positive and effective health policies. Its dual strengths in health and communication enables it to provide solutions for communications and advocacy in the health sector.

Managed by the Health Watch Foundation, Nigeria Health Watch provides informed commentary and in-depth analysis of health issues in Nigeria, always in good conscience.



Transforming Nigeria's nutrition space

Response committees set up to address the COVID-19 pandemic in many instances have sidelined existing structures that champion nutrition and food security.

Yet it is more critical now than it was before for multisectoral nutrition actors to take and support key actions to protect the nutritionally vulnerable groups, given the importance of nutrition in national development. Malnutrition has been a public health problem in Nigeria and a global concern. The situation is more worrisome in children below the age of five years and pregnant women.

This is what the Aisha Buhari Foundation sought to address at the virtual National Nutrition Conference on 'Harnessing Innovative Financing Options For Nutrition - Unravelling The Bottleneck' on 18th August 2020.

Aimed at advocating for increased domestic investments in nutrition, the conference deliberated on how to harness innovative funding streams for nutrition, optimise the funds currently available and recommend a reliable funding plan that will provide a viable financing framework capable of delivering the resources needed to implement appropriate nutrition actions at national, state and local government area (LGA) levels.

The conference highlighted critical ways to strengthen and broaden multi-sectoral nutrition coalition to ensure that actors in different sectors work as effectively as possible to prevent a full-blown national crisis.

Bottlenecks that acted as barriers towards maximising the benefits of available funding for nutrition were brought up - and a consensus on how to mitigate these challenges was reached. The discussions also threw up possible solutions on how to improve coordination in the nutrition space, and how accountability and early releases of budgetary allocations could improve delivery of nutrition interventions. Deliberations centred around key strategies to optimise and sustain funding for nutrition.

Participants were drawn from key government stakeholders, private sector, international development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and others. In attendance at the conference was His Excellency, the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, who is also the chairman of the National Council on Nutrition (NCN). The Honourable Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, the Executive Governor of Gombe State, and the Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, were also in attendance.

Calls were made for increased investments in nutrition, exploring creative ways of harnessing non-traditional means of funding and options on how to leverage on resources from the private sector were spotlighted.

Renewed commitments were made by nutrition stakeholders to work together, improve domestic financing for nutrition, forge viable private sector engagements, strengthen ownership, sustain prioritisation of nutrition investments and ultimately attain national nutrition targets and national prosperity.

TIME	ACTIVITY
11:00 - 11:05a.m.	INTRODUCTION BY THE COMPERE <i>Mrs. Moji Makanjuola (MFR), CEO, International Society of Media in Public Health (ISMPH)</i>
11:05 - 11:10a.m.	WELCOME/CONFERENCE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES <i>Dr. Hajo Sani, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Women Affairs and Admin, Office of the First Lady</i>
11.10 - 11.20a.m.	GOODWILL MESSAGES <i>Mrs. Beatrice Eluaka, Executive Secretary, Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN)</i> <i>Uduak Igbeka, Africa Regional Manager, Scaling-up Nutrition Business Network (SBN)</i> <i>Dr. Shehu Sule, Chairman Board of Directors, Network for Health Equity and Development (NHED)</i> <i>Dr. Sufia Askari, Director, Child Health and Development, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)</i>
SESSION 1: FRAMING OF THE PROBLEM STATEMENT	
11:20 - 11:30a.m.	Nigerian Nutrition Situation Analysis <i>Mercy Sosanya, Nutritionist & Senior Lecturer, Federal Polytechnic Bauchi</i>
11:30 -11:50a.m.	REMARKS <i>Prince Clem Agba, Honourable Minister of State for Budget and National Planning</i> <i>Dr. Osagie Ehanire, Honourable Minister of Health</i> <i>Dr. Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning</i> <i>H.E, Dr. Mrs. Aisha M. Buhari, First Lady, Federal Republic of Nigeria & Founder, Aisha Buhari Foundation</i>
11:50 a.m.- 12:00p.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS <i>H.E, Prof. Oluyemi O. Osinbajo, Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria & Chairman, National Council on Nutrition (NCN)</i>
12:10 - 12:10p.m.	Stimulating Economic Productivity Through Investments in Nutrition <i>Dr. Olumide Okunola, Senior Health Specialist, World Bank</i>
SESSION 2: PAPER PRESENTATIONS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS	
12:10 - 12:20p.m.	PAPER 1 Current Innovative Financing Options for Nutrition <i>Dr. Frances Ilika, Health Economist & Country Director at Palladium - USAID Health Policy Plus Project</i>
12:20 - 12:40p.m.	PANEL 1 Moving Towards an Integrated Approach for Nutrition by Leveraging Innovative Financing Moderator: <i>Dr. Frances Ilika, Health Economist & Country Director at Palladium - USAID Health Policy Plus Project</i> Panellists: <i>Senator Ibrahim Oloriegbe, Chairman, Senate Committee on Health</i> <i>Dr. Faisal Shuaib, Executive Director, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA)</i> <i>Dr. Francis Aminu, Director Health and Nutrition, Dangote Foundation</i> <i>Dr. Anne Adah-Ogoh, Senior Program Manager, Christian Aid Health Systems, Innovative Financing Expert</i>
12:40 - 12:50 p.m.	PAPER 2 National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition; Funding Requirements <i>Mrs. Nduka Chito Nelson, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning</i>

TIME	ACTIVITY
12:50 - 01:10 p.m.	<p>PANEL 2 Unravelling the Barrier to Adequate Financing for Nutrition</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Tochukwu Nwachukwu, CEO Preston Consults, Economist and Public Policy Expert</p> <p>Panellists: H.E. Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Yahaya, Executive Governor, Gombe State Dr. Mairo Mandara, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) Fellow & Public Health Expert Dr. Victor Ajieroh, Senior Program Officer, Nutrition, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) Mrs. Nduka Chito Nelson, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning</p>
01:10 - 01:20p.m.	<p>PAPER 3 Impact of COVID-19 on Nutrition in Nigeria and the Implication for Financing Simeon Nanama, Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF</p>
01:20 - 01:35p.m.	<p>PANEL 3 Strengthening the Health and Social Protection Systems Response for Nutrition</p> <p>Moderator: Vivianne Ihekweazu, Managing Director, Nigeria Health Watch</p> <p>Panellists Dr. Chris Isokpunwu, Head of Nutrition, Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) Mrs. Beatrice Eluaka, Executive Secretary, Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN) Dr. Adeyinka Onabolu, Senior Advisor on Food Security and Nutrition to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture & Rural Development</p>
01:35 - 01:45p.m.	<p>PAPER 4 Ending Undernutrition Through Private Sector Engagement: From the Moral Imperative to Economic Opportunity Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, Co-founder, Sahel Consulting Agriculture & Nutrition & Co-Founder, AACE Foods</p>
01:45 - 02:00p.m.	<p>PANEL 4 Barriers to Private Sector Investment In Nutrition and How Private and Public Sectors Can and Must Work Together to Explore and Implement Sustainable Solutions</p> <p>Moderator: Rufus Idris, Deputy Chief of Party at USAID Feed the Future Nigeria Agribusiness Investment Activity</p> <p>Panellists: Uduak Igbeka, Africa Regional Manager, Scaling Up Nutrition Business Network (SBN) Dr. Emmanuel Sokpo, Managing Director, Network for Health Equity and Development (NHED) Mr. Yonli Abdoul Kader, General Manager, NUTRIK Limited</p>
SESSION 3: CONCLUSIONS AND WRAP-UP	
02:00 - 02:05p.m.	<p>FEEDBACK Mrs. Moji Makanjuola (MFR)</p>
02:05 - 02:15p.m.	<p>WRAP UP/NEXT STEPS/COMMUNIQUÉ CISLAC/ Nigeria Health Watch</p>
02:15 - 02:20p.m.	<p>CLOSING Dr. Omole Ukwedeh, Project Coordinator, Health and Development, Aisha Buhari Foundation</p>

MAKANJUOLA: 'NUTRITION IS FUNDAMENTAL'

Mrs. Moji Makanjuola (MFR), the conference compere and chief executive officer at the International Society of Media in Public Health (ISMPH) set the ball rolling by drawing attention to the ensuing turmoil caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. She called for collective action in recognising the highly vulnerable state of children within already vulnerable populations. And pointed to the call by the First Lady, Dr. Mrs. Aisha Buhari to 'harness innovative finance options for nutrition and to unravel other bottlenecks in the future' as the added nudge for gate keepers of procreation and nurturers of future generations to respond and plan for the sustenance of children.



She laid down the marker: **"Nutrition's necessity as salient to national development and survival, is both fundamental and strategic."**

DR. SANI: 'WE CAN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORKABLE SOLUTIONS TO NUTRITION CHALLENGES'

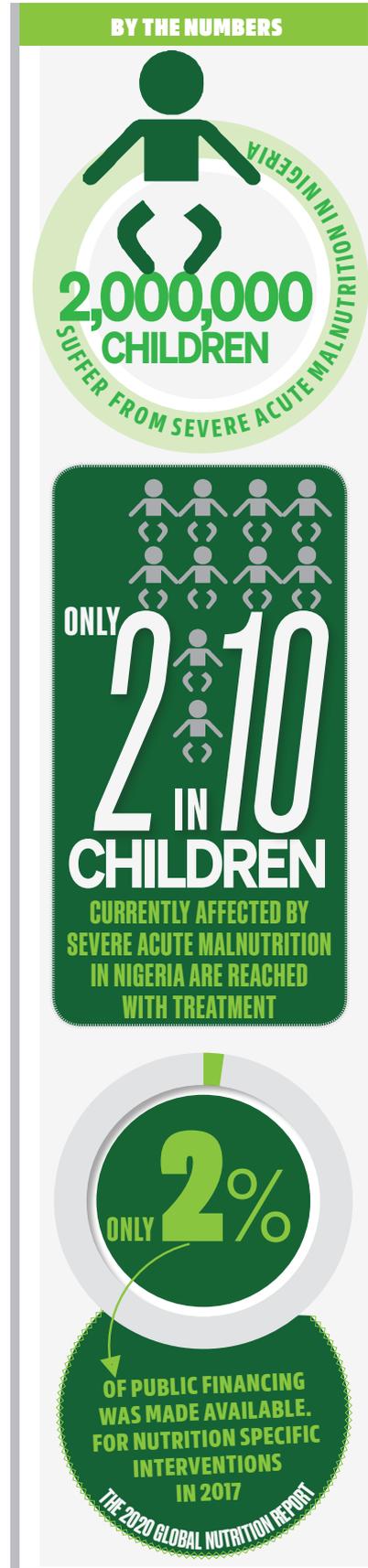
Dr. Hajo Sani, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Women Affairs and Administration, Office of the First Lady outlined the ultimate goal of the conference as that of renewing commitment from all nutrition stakeholders, to work together and improve domestic financing.

She highlighted the key objectives of the conference as :

1. Emphasising the role optimum nutrition plays in national development and highlight the huge deficits in funding requirements for nutrition, and need for urgent action.
2. Exploring alternative, innovative resources for financing nutrition including strategies for increasing private sector investment in nutrition.
3. Unraveling the constraints in budget, implementation, coordination, planning, and accountability as a strategy for improving financing for nutrition.



For her, the conference was a platform where working together, stakeholders could take responsibility for workable solutions to nutrition challenges: **"It is critical to strengthen and broaden multi-sectoral nutrition coalition to ensure that actors in different sectors work as effectively as possible to prevent a full-blown national crisis."**





Mrs. Beatrice Eluaka,
*Executive Secretary,
Civil Society Scaling-Up
Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN)*



INVESTMENTS IN NUTRITION ARE NOT YET COMPARABLE TO THE SCALE OF MALNUTRITION PROBLEM AND THE UNMET NEED FOR ESSENTIAL NUTRITION SERVICES ARE VERY HIGH.

CS-SUNN calls on government to quickly approve the National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Nutrition, return the N800m Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTFs) allocation removed from the 2020 Nigerian Budget and create an enabling environment for the local production of RUTFs.

CS-SUNN associates itself, fully with the efforts of the Nigerian government and is committed to contributing its quota to achieving improved, innovative financing for nutrition.



Uduak Igbeka,
*Africa Regional Manager,
Scaling-up of Nutrition Business
Network (SBN)*

INVESTING IN OUR SMEs IS A NUTRITION SENSITIVE ACTION. IT ENSURES THAT WE BUILD RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS, IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS OF VALUE CHAIN ACTORS FROM SMALL HOLDER FARMERS TO RETAILERS UP TO OUR CONSUMERS.

SBN has been set up to galvanise private sector action, to address the multiple burdens of malnutrition. The Network hopes that deliberations will emphasise the need for increased local investments in SMEs, providing access to safe, nutritious foods in Nigeria. SBN calls on the investment community, both public and private

sector-led, to collaborate towards bridging the financing gaps that threaten food systems, especially in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Dr. Shehu Sule,
*Chairman Board of Directors,
Network for Health Equity and
Development (NHED)*



WE HAVE SUPPORTED FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH TO INTEGRATE SAM PREVENTION AND TREATMENT INTO NUTRITION AND OVERALL BUDGET IN THE COUNTRY IN AN INTEGRATED FORM.

The Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) Advocacy Consortium requests the timely release of funds committed by state governments for nutrition in 2020 alongside palliative budgets. request Government funding for nutrition with clear accountability framework, should be put in place. The Consortium is ready to lend its support in this stead. Private sector participation, along the lines of providing the enabling environment for the production of RUTFs is needed.



Dr. Sufia Askari,
*Director, Child Health & Dev.,
Children's Investment Fund
Foundation (CIFF)*

ACUTE HUNGER IS ALSO ON THE RISE. TODAY IS THE TIME TO INVEST IN NUTRITION AND TO PROTECT THE NEXT GENERATION FROM BECOMING THE VICTIMS OF THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

Unprecedented times require unprecedented actions. This conference and the participation of such senior leadership is testimony to the fact that Nigeria is ready for action. CIFF firmly believes that good strategy based on

science and human values led by country champions is what drives change. Partners like CIFF feel privileged to follow these leaders.





PRESENTATION

Nigeria's nutrition situation analysis

Mercy Sosanya, Nutritionist & Senior Lecturer, Federal Polytechnic Bauchi



NUTRITION IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

Government is the primary duty bearer to ensure that Nigerians fulfill their rights to nutritious food as enshrined in the universal declaration of human rights.

NUTRITION IS THE FOUNDATION FOR GOOD HEALTH

Optimum nutrition is also the foundation for good health, proper growth, cognitive development, and immunity from infections, including COVID-19. Undernutrition in the first 1,000 days of life can result in permanent damage to health and increased risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, Type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancers in adulthood.

OPTIMUM NUTRITION MAKES ECONOMIC SENSE

Stunted children have been shown to go on to earn 20% less income in adulthood than their non-stunted peers. This productivity losses can reduce Nigeria's gross domestic products by 2-3%. These losses can amount up to \$7.9bn annually but with an investment of \$10m as stipulated in the National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition, a high return on investment is guaranteed.

NUTRITION PREVENTS INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY

Optimum nutrition prevents inter-generational poverty, and secures future generations. Also, emerging epigenetic evidence shows that before birth diets of parents and grandparents can negatively reprogram a person's genes. For instance, folic acid deficiencies in pregnancy can alter DNA methylation of the also, and that can promote obesity and type 2 diabetes in adulthood.

THE CORRECT NUTRITION SITUATION

Between 2012 and 2019, Nigeria's global food security score increased from 35 to 48. However, the global security Index ranking dropped to an unacceptable 25th from the bottom, out of 113 countries.

Also between 2008 and 2013, under-5 mortality dropped from 157 to 128 deaths per 1,000 live births, but it increased again to 132 in 2018. Maternal mortality has plateaued, at above 5 maternal deaths per 1,000 live births.

Also, Nigeria loses about one million children every year. That is the population of Port Harcourt - and the revenue from the Nigeria Customs Service for Port Harcourt in 2018 was about \$81.2bn.

LOST POTENTIAL

Apart from enormous losses in human potential, malnutrition has claimed the lives of many of Nigeria's scientists, technologists, innovators, inventors, astronauts, businessmen, and even future potential high net worth individuals like Aliko Dangote.

SOME POSITIVES

On the positive side, stunting has dropped from 41% to 37% and wasting has reduced by half from 14% to 7%. Also exclusive breast feeding between 2008 and 2018 has more than doubled from 14% to 29% of mothers practising exclusive breastfeeding. However, the percentage of children that have access to the minimum acceptable diet had a steep drop from 30% in 2008 to just 7% in 2018. Severe acute malnutrition has reduced from 2% to 1.5%, a testimony to progress with community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM).

WHAT CAN BE DONE

Acknowledge progress

It is convenient to say that no progress has been made, but we need to realise that all stakeholders have been working hard to achieve progress. Visible progress made include:

- Budgeting of \$5.9m for nutrition

“INVESTMENTS IN NUTRITION NEED TO BE BENCHMARKED AGAINST NUTRITIONAL INDICATORS SUCH AS THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH REDUCED STUNTING, NOT JUST THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN REACHED WITH PROGRAMMES.”

Formulation and Evaluation of Ready-To-Use Therapeutic Foods Using Locally Available Ingredients in Bauchi, Nigeria

This research found out that low income women who have well-nourished children were identified as positive deviance in Bauchi. Lessons from successful childcare practices of mothers were shared and the mothers were taught about nutrition. This resulted in a significant improvement in child nutrition. From an Oxfam-funded assessment of foods consumed in Bauchi, it was also observed that the addition of cheap groundnut cake or the use of two legumes in addition to cereals, drastically improved the protein and micro-nutrient content of meals. Indigenous RUTFs were successfully produced using reduced quantities of milk, sugar and groundnuts with soy beans and cereal powders. Cashew nuts were used in place of groundnuts, and sugar in place of dates. Comparable nutrients profiles were achieved, alongside comparable acceptability of the RUTFs.

This research was published in the European Journal of Nutrition & Food Safety - <https://doi.org/10.9734/EJNFS/2018/37833>

LITTLE STEPS...

in 2017 and 2018, despite the fact that was less than the stipulation of the strategic plan of action

- Review of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition in 2016,
- Inauguration of the National Council on Nutrition (NCN)
- Establishment of the Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP)
- Scaling up nutrition initiatives and numerous interventions by stakeholders

Look beyond the numbers

Momentum has to be built up to achieve greater results. To make inroads that go beyond numbers, stakeholders need to see that every statistic represents a real human being with family ties, aspirations and needs. Resource managers need to be personally touched by every life lost or affected by malnutrition and work passionately for prevention and mitigation.

Coordinate and commit

A concerted approach to nutrition interventions needs to be adopted as opposed to fragmented and dispersed responses. Setting up a dashboard for current nutrition efforts and a database for completed interventions in the Ministry of Finance Budget and National Planning will prevent duplication of efforts and improve effectiveness. These should show the nutritional situation in the Nigeria, sectorial interventions, implementing partners, resource allocations, impact, lessons learned, pitfalls and sustainability.

Data-driven action

The government needs to use quantitative tools such as the Optima Nutrition Learning Tool developed by the World Bank to assist with prioritising funding to minimise stunting, wasting, anemia or under-5 mortality at both the national and regional levels.

Evaluate and monitor progress

There's a need to evaluate and monitor progress, build on successes and learn from failures. In addition to regular evaluation, there's a need to study the long-term effects of nutrition interventions as new scientific evidence indicates alteration of the metabolomic and epigenetic profiles as well as the microbiome of subjects.

DETAILS OF DATA DRIVEN ACTIONS

- Targeted financial investments need to be made. Investments in nutritional need to be benchmarked against nutritional indicators

such as the number of children with reduced stunting, not just the number of children reached with programmes

- The need to constantly track budget performance, and 'follow the money'
- A food supply revamp through increased investments and leveraging technology to boost agricultural infrastructure, marketing information systems, distribution, processing, storage and commerce.
- The need to educate women, empower them financially and make them undergo nutrition trainings.

INDIGENOUS ACTIONS

- Development of Aflasafe by the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan, for the prevention of aflatoxin contamination of groundnuts. This needs to be made widely available to farmers to reduce reliance on imported groundnuts for RUTFs due to the problem of aflatoxin contamination.
- Improvement of Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices of teenage mothers via a mobile app with permission granted from FMOH to adapt content for the ongoing project.
- Intensification of capacity building for nutrition professionals and mobilisation of nutrition graduates in nPOWER and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to lead IYCF support groups.
- Utilisation of innovative means to change the behaviour of young people, via social media, in collaboration with Nollywood and the music industry to include nutrition messages in films and songs alongside changing the nutrition curriculum in schools.



REMARKS

‘Innovative and sustainable options to nutrition financing are needed’

Dr. Osagie Ehanire, Honourable Minister of Health

MALNUTRITION IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM

Malnutrition and nutrition related issues remain significant global public health problems which manifest as undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Balanced nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life is important and the main indicators of undernutrition are stunting or low height for age caused by long-term insufficient nutrient intake and chronic infections.

Stunting, occurs generally before the age of two and its effects are largely irreversible, while wasting or low weight for height is a strong predictor of mortality among children under-5. It is usually the result of significant food shortage or disease.

IMPACT OF MALNUTRITION

There is a clear relationship between malnutrition and the underdevelopment of a country. Malnutrition negatively affects the wellbeing of people, it drains the nation of quality human capital, and so hinders economic and social development.

THE NIGERIA SITUATION

Nigeria has the highest number of stunted children below age five in Sub-Saharan Africa and the second highest in the world with stunting and wasting rates of 37% and 7% respectively. The proportion of children, exclusively breastfed from birth to six months of age is only 29% while 12% of women of the 15 -49years of childbearing age bracket also suffer from acute malnutrition. In addition, Nigeria faces an increasing burden of diet-related noncommunicable diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION FOR NUTRITION

The National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition (NSPAN), was developed for implementation from 2014 to 2019. The goal being to improve overall nutritional status with special focus on vulnerable groups like poor women of reproductive age and children under five years of age. Funding was a major implementation challenge but a review is underway.

COMMITMENT OF FMOH

The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) is committed to fighting malnutrition in all forms. Government spending on nutrition has increased over the years with N1.8bn spent over the last two years on RUTFs to treat children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) at over 2,000 sites, for community management of acute malnutrition

in 26 states. Her Excellency, Dr. Aisha Bahari launched the National Zero Water Initiative of FMOH in August 2019 to create awareness of the need to feed babies, breast milk only in the first six months of life, as well as to promote adequate complimentary feeding to end malnutrition and lay a foundation for healthy children. Early reports show that the effort is making impact.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATIONS

Additionally, opportunities in the private sector are waiting to be unlocked. The report of the African Development Bank (AfDB) shows that Africa’s private sector accounts for over four-fifths of total production, two-thirds of total investment and three-quarters of total credits to the economy and also employs 90% of the working age population.

It is becoming increasingly necessary to involve private sector to supplement and reinforce public sector effort in fighting malnutrition. The private sector can invest in infrastructure, mobilise extra resources, produce nutritional commodities, like ready to use therapeutic food, train health workers and much more.

THE WINDOW PROVIDED BY BHCPF

The Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) is intended to improve the quality of primary health care services and access to the nutrition for the most vulnerable members of the population, including children and poor women. The BHCPF financing - which is in the process of disbursement - presents a unique opportunity to increase nutrition financing, and fast-track progress towards universal health coverage (UHC).

“INVESTING IN NUTRITION IS A COST-EFFECTIVE DRIVER OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY BECAUSE IT ENABLES CHILDREN TO GROW TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AND TRIGGERS POSITIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES.”



REMARKS

‘More collaborations to tackle and eliminate malnutrition required’

Prince Clem Agba, Honourable Minister of State for Budget and National Planning



REDUCING MALNUTRITION IS A PRIORITY

Malnutrition leads directly to suffering and deaths, and slows down developments. Nigeria's contribution to under-5 and maternal mortality in the whole world is not commendable. Hence, the present administration, highly prioritises reduction of malnutrition in this cardinal project objectives for the country.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION FOR MALNUTRITION

Considering dwindling government resources, alternative innovative financing needs to be supported by the private sector and donor community. Given the role of the Ministry as the secretariat of the National Council on Nutrition and National Committee on Food and Nutrition, we shall effectively coordinate and provide oversight towards implementation of the revised National Policy on Food and Nutrition at national and sub-national level as well as the costed National Multisectorial Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition (NMPFAN). This is geared towards reducing the burden of malnutrition in the country.

PRIORITISING NUTRITION-SPECIFIC AND SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

The Ministry will also continually engage the sectoral ministries and agencies to prioritise nutrition specific and sensitive interventions. Since the inception of President Muhammadu Buhari's administration, progress has been made

“THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE, BUDGET AND NATIONAL PLANNING, WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN ENSURING THAT WE ACHIEVE OPTIMAL NUTRITIONAL STATUS FOR ALL NIGERIANS AS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY.”



in the reduction of malnutrition, but unfortunately the advent of COVID-19 and lock down of global and local economies have impacted on already achieved gains.

THE INTERVENTIONS

This administration introduced several programmes targeted at the poor such as a comprehensive National Social Safety Net Programme in 2016 to address unemployment, tackle poverty, hunger and improve the condition of living of extremely poor and vulnerable Nigerians. To stimulate the economy and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on malnutrition, a stimulus package that included physical and monetary policies, sectoral interventions and social programmes was developed. These are direct support to the health sector, mass agriculture, and more funding of WaSH programme. More collaborations with the international community to tackle and eliminate malnutrition in all its ramifications are required.

THE NEEDED LEADERSHIP

The Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, in line with this broad mandate of coordinating food and nutrition related activities in the country, will continue to provide effective leadership in ensuring that optimal nutritional status for all Nigerians is achieved as outlined in the National Food and Nutrition Policy.

IN PLACE...

A Thematic Working Group on Nutrition

A thematic working group on nutrition has been setup in the successor Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP 2021- 2025), and the Perspective Plan, Nigeria Agenda 2050, due to the importance of nutrition to national development. It is expected that this technical working group, will do a lot of the planning, the costing required and therefore, what will subsequently accrue to the nutrition sector.

REMARKS

‘Focus is on mobilising and boosting domestic resources’

Nibila Aguele, representative of **Dr. Zainab Shamsuna Ahmed**, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning



GLOBAL SHIFT TOWARDS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Given the dual impact of COVID-19 and the drop in crude oil prices, there is an urgent need to address malnutrition. There has been an increasing and necessary global shift towards strategic partnerships and innovative approaches to bridging the nutrition funding gap with well costed government led policies and programmes.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

In Nigeria, there have been some improvements in recent years - in the areas of child nutrition and breastfeeding. But in order for these improvements to yield concrete results, malnutrition and other public health issues must be addressed through the implementation of innovative policies and strategies. These need to be appropriately funded, data driven, sustainable and must optimise transparency and accountability.

CONTINUOUS COLLABORATIONS

We must continue to work collaboratively across the federal and state governments and hand-in-hand with the private sector, development partners and the civil society organisations (CSOs).

GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT

Nigeria has shown a clear commitment to the eradication of malnutrition through the adoption and domestication of policies and costed strategic plans - which emphasise increased reliance on domestic funding and well-coordinated, multi-sectorial and multi-stakeholder approach comprising government, CSOs, private sector and donors backed by sustained high level political commitment.

“WE WILL FOCUS ON DEVELOPING WELL COSTED AND IMPLEMENTABLE NATIONAL PLANS TO ENSURE A COORDINATED MULTI-STAKEHOLDER AND A CROSS SECTORAL APPROACH TO ERADICATING MALNUTRITION IN NIGERIA”

ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS

Recent and ongoing developments include the, National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition (NSPAN), the National Policy on Food and Nutrition (NPFN), the innovative National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) - of which the Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP) is a highlight - the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), the National Council on Nutrition (NCN) - chaired by the vice president

- and the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), a medium-term strategic plan aimed at investing in our people, diversifying the economy and restoring growth places critical emphasis on strategic multisectoral interventions to address food security and malnutrition. Furthermore, the 2020 Budget was passed in record time, ushering in a necessary return to the January -December budgeting cycle.

THE INTERVENTIONS

To support government’s focus on diversifying away from oil revenues and enhancing domestic revenue mobilisation, the Strategic Revenue Growth Initiative (SRGI) was launched in January 2019 and the 2020 Finance Act was passed.

The government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been swift and people-oriented. It includes a fiscal stimulus package, amendments to the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework and the 2020 Probation Act and launch of the Multi-Sector Economic Sustainability Plan.

The focus has been on protecting the economy and funding the country’s health care needs with the COVID-19 response, spurring necessary transformation and innovation in the fiscal space and beyond .

Nutrition is therefore one of the key thematic areas in Medium-Term National Development Plan, which is currently underway and Nigeria Agenda 2050 also, currently being developed.

BEING DONE...

Official Development Assistance Policy
The Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning is currently finalising an official Development Assistance Policy, which seeks to maximise the benefit of international assistance, both for nutrition and other critical areas. The policy will be underpinned by a government led multi-mutual accountability framework aimed at ensuring that development aid is deployed in alignment with and in furtherance of national priorities.



REMARKS

‘Stakeholders should follow through with their commitments on nutrition’

HE, Mrs Dolapo Osibanjo, Wife of the Vice President of Nigeria and representative of H.E, Dr. Mrs. Aisha M. Buhari, First Lady, Federal Republic of Nigeria & Founder, Aisha Buhari Foundation

GRIM SITUATION

Nigeria records millions of children suffering and even dying from one form of malnutrition or the other. The country has the second largest number of stunted children in the world - children that may never be able to have an optimally productive adult life. To ignore this, will be a disservice because tomorrow we will not have the full complement of competent young adults. Looking beyond the figures, you will see actual children who are practically unsure of their next breath.

EMOTIONAL ISOLATION

Although we do not physically isolate these children, we isolate them emotionally each time we have a chance to take any decision in their favour and fail to do so. The current global pandemic and shrinking fiscal space has further worsened the situation by moving all attention and resources towards the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic. We may have unconsciously excluded these vulnerable children in this process, thereby leaving them in extra jeopardy without a fighting chance against COVID-19. We should realise that their lives are equally as important.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE VULNERABLE NIGERIAN CHILD

We are not about to stop holding these meetings and having elaborate conversations on nutrition simply because we have had many before. We will only stop when we have ended the scourge of malnutrition ravaging our children, and secured the future of that vulnerable Nigerian child who is at risk of never optimising his mental and physical potentials, when we have created systems where our children can survive, thrive,

“IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE THE EFFORTS COUNT BY CREATING STRUCTURED, PROGRESSIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE MECHANISMS TO OPTIMISE RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR IMPROVING NUTRITION, ESPECIALLY FOR THE HELPLESS CHILD.”



and possess the requisite cognitive ability to handle the future. We will only stop when our communities understand the need to adopt proper infant and young child feeding practices, when government, at all levels, back up their commitments by funding nutrition, and ensuring that allocations and interventions are duly executed. We will only stop when the private sector realises that no business can truly succeed if the future of a nation is bleak and invest in nutrition. We will only stop when civil society realises that demanding accountability and sensitising the community, is as important as making funds available and when we all play our individual and collective roles to end malnutrition and secure the future of the nation. We will only stop when all realise that the Nigerian child is our responsibility, not that of the international donor community and stop demanding incentives to do what is right within our purview. Only then will we stop holding similarly recurrent nutrition themed talks. Only then will our society look at the future with hope.

SOME PROGRESS

We have made some progress in recent years, especially having more stakeholders talking about nutrition and getting a more nutrition-sensitive budget at the federal and state levels. We have also enjoyed more responsiveness from the ministries of health and finance.

With leadership we can end this scourge of malnutrition and create a better future for our nation. We understand that the government alone cannot handle this situation. It is however important that we make the effort count by creating structured, progressive, accountable and sustainable mechanisms to optimise resources available for improving nutrition, especially for the helpless child. This will improve our budgetary allocation and private sector investments in nutrition.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

‘Strong voices can make a difference’

H.E. Prof. Oluyemi O. Osinbajo, Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman National Council on Nutrition (NCN)

THE TERRIBLE SCOURGE

With malnutrition, we are confronted with a terrible scourge that is capable of defeating the present aspirations of millions of young Nigerians for healthy and productive lives. Since children are the most vulnerable victims, their physical and mental abilities are hindered.

THE NIGERIAN CONUNDRUM

While malnutrition is indeed a global problem, Nigeria has distinct factors that exacerbate the prevalence of malnutrition. The first is poverty, which is both a cause and the consequence. But the effect of the economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has made a bad situation worse. This has not only translated to massive job losses and supply chain disruptions but also a drop in income for the poor and the most vulnerable households resulting in diminishing nutritional status.

Second, is the displacement of large populations especially children as a result of the insurgency in the northeast, and the banditry and conflict in the northwest. The persistence of these underlying issues increases the overall physical and material resources that will be required to deal with malnutrition.

PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR MALNUTRITION

- Review and adoption of the National Food and Nutrition Policy and inauguration of the National Council on Nutrition (NCN) in 2017. NCN is charged with providing strategic direction, ensuring coordinated and aligned programming, coordinating innovative financing and accountability for nutrition interventions.
- Progressive increases in budgetary allocations to nutrition activities in the country have resulted in an increased investment of about N3.8bn by federal and state governments especially for the procurement of RUTFs.
- Revitalisation of the primary health care (PHC) system with nutrition as the primary focus and the promotion of optimum breastfeeding and improved quality of complementary food resulting in a decline in stunting and wasting: stunting, from about 44% in 2017 to about 37% in 2019 and wasting from 10.8% in 2017 to 7% in 2019, and an increase in exclusive breastfeeding amongst children under 6 months from about 24% in 2017 to 29% in 2019.
- Social Investment Programmes (SIPs) particularly the Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP) for public schools - that feeds over 9 million children across 34 states and the FCT, serving one nutritious meal every day - and



the Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme (CCTS) that has provided cash transfers to about 1.2 million beneficiaries, to boost income with the aim of improving the nutritional status for each household - with the recent presidential order of an increase in the number of beneficiaries by an additional one million.

MORE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED

There is clearly a very long way to go in providing resources. According to the Nutritional Costing Study of the World Bank in Nigeria about 6 years ago, the cost per child is something in the order of \$14.5 per child, arrived at by the variation in cost among the proven 10 nutrition interventions and the estimated number of beneficiaries.

This cost compares favourably to global estimates of \$30 per child calculated by the World Bank as at 2010. This estimate can be adopted for the baseline for 2020 and beyond. Considering inflation and economic indices, \$30 or more can be adopted. At the national level, it is

“THE JOURNEY TO ENDING MALNUTRITION NEED NOT BE A LONG ONE. WE CAN WITH EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION, THE SINCERITY OF PURPOSE AND CREATIVITY REACH OUR GOALS QUICKLY.”

VITAL ACTION..
Implementation of new National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition (NMPFAN)

The implementation of a new National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition (NMPFAN) will be an important part of restructuring the response to malnutrition. The National Council on Nutrition has approved the plan and budgetary projections are underway before presentation for Federal Executive Council (FEC) approval.

The implementation of the plan will involve fully spelling out the role of the states and other stakeholders. To achieve needed results, implementation will include working with the states to develop their own specific plans and channeling support to the states in an organised and coordinated fashion.



projected that the total additional public investment required to scale up 10 nutrition-specific interventions from current coverage levels to full coverage levels is estimated to be \$837m.

There is a clear need to increase domestic financing by looking more at what can be done at the federal and state levels and directing funding to communities with the greatest needs.

LENDING A STRONG VOICE

There are always several competing needs for resources and sometimes strong voices - especially directed at the ongoing debates and public hearings - can make a real difference in what ends up in the budgets at all levels.

MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMME

Budget funds from both states and federal governments cannot meet all of the needs. Ultimately, the pool of funds from the mandatory health insurance programme, will be an important contributor to financing nutrition. We need to aggregate a pool of funds outside the budget fund which is why the proposal for mandatory health insurance is one that is very important not just for health care but also for the proposed nutrition interventions.

INCREASING NUTRITION FINANCING

- Donors to increase nutrition financing with a focus on equity by targeting populations that are most in need, including those that are fragile but have limited options for effective mobilising of domestic finance for nutrition.
- Private corporations to absorb some of the costs for implementing nutrition programmes in areas such as fortification of foods, transportation of food and communication on behavioural change.
- Efficient and transparent deployment of resources and coordinating the contributions of our local and international partners. Funding will always be key but so also is reducing bureaucracy with common sense approaches and solutions.

INVESTMENT IN DATA MANAGEMENT

We need data-driven action to efficiently target scarce resources to where it is most needed. The states also have to help in building the data that will be necessary for the kind of efficient allocation of resources that are desperately needed especially with the scarcity of resources.

VITAL EDUCATION OF WOMEN

There is unquestionably a correlation between levels of education of mothers and health and nutrition outcomes. It is important to educate them as vigorously as it is now being done both at the state and federal levels as a fallout of the presidential declaration of the full implementation of compulsory primary education in the first 9 years of a child's school life - especially for the girl child. It is important to ensure that women are educated so that mothers are given key information required even in situations where there are high levels of poverty. Information on nutrition could still be very helpful in bringing about better outcomes than we are getting at the moment.

PRESENTATION

Stimulating economic productivity through investments in nutrition

Dr. Olumide Okunola, Senior Health Specialist, World Bank

ECONOMIC REALITIES

Poverty is on the rise and the Nigerian economy has contracted with attendant declining revenues. There is a challenge that has now been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nigeria has about 35% of the population stuck in hard agriculture, tilling the land with hoes but have not contributed so much to productivity. Really smart people will be required for Nigeria to be a highly industrialised nation. These people will need to be adequately fed. They will need balanced diets at a particular period of their lives because giving them that diet later on, would only be an exercise in futility.

THE CHALLENGES

There are challenges: revenues are low despite the reforms in place for possible increase. Poor revenue inflow means little money going to sectors like health care or less priority given to health care.

HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX

Public financing for health care in Nigeria is one of the lowest among its peers. Stunting, low education and reduced survival of children under-5 are the fallouts. Yet for a nation with the amount of wealth Nigeria has, the human capital index (HCI) should not be where it is. This HCI is a composite figure, which says, 'Look, if we do everything, we are meant to do for this

“AT THE WORLD BANK, IT IS NOT NECESSARILY ABOUT NUTRITION. IT IS ABOUT EDUCATION AND EDUCATING GIRLS. IT IS ABOUT ENHANCING THEIR HEALTH SERVICES. IT IS ABOUT EMPOWERING THEM BY ADDRESSING SOCIAL NORMS. IT IS ABOUT EMPLOYING THEM.”



child today, what would this person be in 18 years time? Based on the education, based on the nutrition and the health that this person has, if you add that together, you can have an idea of how productive that person can be in the future.'

Nigeria is 152 out of 157 countries on the HCI rating with only 34% potential reached. But the good news is that the Nigerian government set up a Human Capital Development Core Working Group in 2018 to address the country's low HCI.

THE FUTURE

Despite the odds confronting Nigeria, the future - based on the decisions taken regarding the youths



and women - has the potential to reap dividends if the focus is on human capital. This is what could tilt the scales for the country.

A stunted child will grow healthy into adulthood, but will not be able to do complex things and will not be able to think at expected levels. Nigeria's future completely depends on the kind of decisions made today. Otherwise, there will be more children, growing into adulthood with these kind of inhibited brains.

PREVALENCE OF STUNTING

Beyond economic growth, a whole lot of potential future diseases are avoided when we do what we have to do to reduce stunting rates within the first 1,000 days of life. Considering the level of Nigeria's wealth, a 37% stunting rate is not acceptable. The fact that this high prevalence of stunting is found highest amongst the poorest populace, makes it even worse. The import of this is that, if COVID-19 pushes more people into poverty, the prevalence of stunting will rise.

THE SPREAD OF STUNTING

No political zone of Nigeria is spared from stunting, and that accounts for its high prevalence rate. Some geopolitical zones have even much higher stunting averages than the national average of 37%. When you consider the fact that a huge number of the children affected by the big stunting crisis, are also affected by severe acute malnutrition, adverse consequences are inevitable, not just for the future of individuals, but for the very essence of Nigeria.

MOVING FROM TALK TO ACTION

In addition to nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions and taking advantage of enabling environments, there is a need to move from talk to action. It is not so difficult to give



IN PLACE...

Accelerating Nutrition Results In Nigeria (ARiN) World Bank Project

Facilitated by the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ARiN) is the only example of strategic purchasing for nutrition approved by the board of the World Bank on May 23, 2018. It is a \$232m credit with 11 states - Abia, Akwa Ibom, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Oyo and Plateau - covered in Phase 1 (5 year duration: 2019-2023). The 21-year facility (2019-2040) involves the use of contracts to purchase high impact nutrition services in a phased approach to reduce chronic malnutrition (stunting and micronutrient deficiencies). The project objective is to increase utilisation of quality, cost-effective nutrition services for pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls and children under-5 years. ANRiN aims to reach 1.8 million pregnant and lactating women and 6.8 million children under-5 years annually with high impact nutrition interventions.

Vitamin A - one of mankind's cheapest known drugs - as supplements to kids.

BEING CREATIVE ABOUT NUTRITION

Nutrition is something we cannot afford to toy with. We can be strategic and put together certain interventions where the problem is hardest and be creative about it since the return on investment is high. Nutrition-sensitive interventions like school-based deworming or working on aflatoxin control can be undertaken.

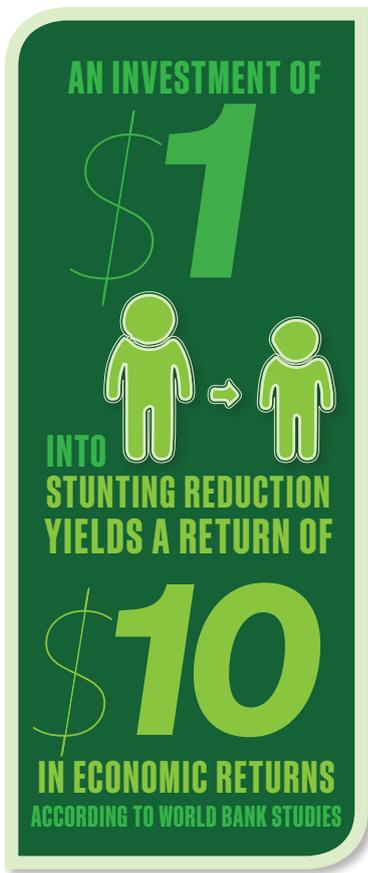
We need to marry nutrition-sensitive interventions with nutrition-specific interventions, even though they don't come for free.

MOBILISING REVENUE FOR NUTRITION

Moving forward, appropriate revenues need to be mobilised despite the policies that are in place. Alongside the processes and reforms being put in place to address revenue concerns, the health sector needs to seriously consider how health insurance services can be bought in such a way, that they make a difference for children.



Estimated additional number of children that can become severely acutely malnourished due to the disruption of health services by COVID-19 according to the United Nations



IN PLACE
The SUN Business Network in Nigeria is made up of over 150 businesses. 80% of which are SMEs who have made commitments to contribute to improve nutrition through their customer base or through their workforce.

ESTABLISHED
A flagship program, which is called the SUN Business Network, Nutrition Pitch Competition. The competition provides opportunity to support innovative ideas from the private sector that could improve access to nutritious foods if provided with the right technical support and catalytic funding to scale up their business modules.

PAPER 1

Current innovative financing options for nutrition

Dr. Frances Ilika, Health Economist & Country Director at Palladium
- USAID Health Policy Plus Project

THE NUTRITION PROBLEM

Nigeria has to move from beautiful policies to actually making things happen in order to change the narrative for nutrition. Nutrition is a huge problem in Nigeria that cannot be ignored. The numbers show an estimated 2 million children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and only 2 out of every 10 children being reached with treatment. Moreover, current financing for nutrition is inadequate and also not reaching the most affected people. There are also additional areas that need to be addressed by a lot of efforts at the community and PHC levels.

POOR HEALTH INDICES

Evidently Nigeria is not meeting UHC targets due to inadequate funds. With the bulk of health care spending being out-of-pocket expenditures, the poor are unable to afford appropriate nutrition and are most affected by malnutrition. This is what contributes to the country's poor health indices.

INNOVATIVE FINANCING

Innovative financing is key to improving already existing financing mechanisms from government and external sources - to ensure that needs can be met. It is expected to catalyse private sector investments and investments from other sources. It is also expected to stimulate efficient use of mobilised resources. These mobilised resources and funds must make impact - health, economic, social and political - and need to be utilised efficiently to address identified needs.

STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION SECTOR

One of the most effective ways to grow human capital is strengthening the health and nutrition sector. If there are children who are not growing up with properly developed brains, they would be unable to invent or contribute to any country's development. If the intelligence of these children do not match the intelligence of their peers from other countries, they would be unable to grow and compete globally. Every money spent to reduce chronic malnutrition will save at least \$30. This makes it cost effective and ensures government savings.

WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM?

Domestic resources must be strengthened to ensure that results being



sought are achieved. Some of the sources of financing include:

- Domestic or traditional budget systems and some appropriations at national and state levels - which may not be adequate.
- Appropriations at the LGA levels - which are key since they are closest to the people.
- Private sector finances and other innovative mechanisms
- Spending from external sources
- Donor funding for some key nutrition interventions - that require country ownership and utilisation of domestic resources in order to make lasting impact

ADDRESSING THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Domestic resources have to be used to solve the problems in a self-reliant manner. Financial innovations have to be context appropriate so that they are effective. A mix of funding mechanisms are needed to address the big financing elephant in the room. This is because just one funding mechanism will not cut it. Public financing, from government sources at the national state and local government levels is needed. Allocations should be followed up with actual release of funds and then

“INNOVATIVE FINANCING CAN ACTUALLY IMPROVE WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE. IT CAN BE A NEW MECHANISM, BUT CAN ALSO BE USED TO IMPROVE WHAT IS ALREADY IN PLACE SO THAT WE DON'T KEEP THINKING THAT IT MUST BE ENTIRELY NEW.”



Why Do We Need Innovative Financing?**BUILDING
A CASE...****HEALTH IMPACT**

- Current funding for undernutrition is insufficient
- Innovative financing mechanisms for nutrition will raise new resources and improve effectiveness and efficiency
- An average annual investment of \$7bn above existing levels of spending would be required over ten years to finance the scale up of evidence based interventions to achieve nutrition targets

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPACT

- Physical and cognitive development negative consequences on individual's education, employment and income level human capital
- Damage to up to 3% of GDP per year from the effects of undernutrition on productivity
- Every dollar spent to reduce chronic malnutrition saves at least \$30 IFPRI (2012)

strengthening of the public financial management processes. This will ensure that funds actually get to the defined endpoints at the community, PHC and secondary healthcare levels, and key outlined interventions. Mechanism for these funds to reach the endpoints should be put in place.

SOME LOW HANGING FRUITS

It is critical to start with what is at hand and then look at additions that can come on board. Available financing for nutrition include

- The Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), which is an annual statutory deduction in which nutrition is a basic minimum package with provisions for essential nutrients for children, nutritional advice, vitamin A supplementation as well as management of uncomplicated nutrition as elements.
- State Health Insurance Schemes (SHIS) that have been set up with 1% of the consolidated revenue fund (CRF) earmarked for funding the schemes. For these, nutrition has to be actually captured to ensure that nutrition benefits from the schemes and is prioritised in government budgets at all levels.
- High fat, sugar, salt (HFSS) content tax which Jamaica, a fellow developing country, has put in place for improvements in the health sector.
- Financial transactions taxes: diaspora funds, airport/ticket taxes and plane ticket contributions which allow for contributions as little as N1,000 on plane tickets for health gains that could include nutrition.

GOVERNANCE

Governance is key to innovative financing. Therefore, some government mechanisms need to be in place and existing policies need to be implemented. Evidence of funds spent on particular interventions need to be provided in addition to actual amounts of money mobilised or that need to be mobilised. Spends on any particular priority areas need to be captured and tracked. Evidence is very important and this is a governance action.

PANEL 1**Moving towards an integrated approach for nutrition by leveraging innovative financing**

Using statutory functions of legislature, appropriation oversight and accountability to ensure that there is adequate appropriation for nutrition at all levels:



“We are aware that the majority of the money that nutrition can benefit from will come from the BHCPF, and we would use oversight to get the manual that will drive the implementation of the fund to be reviewed to achieve effective implementation.

Using the Network For Universal Coverage Initiative and working together at the national and state assemblies, monitoring tools are being developed to monitor the implementation. The finalised tool, based on the manual, would spell out how funds are released from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to the various pathways. If there any bottlenecks between the pathways and the states, more work will be done with the state legislators on their monitoring of the two pathways in their states.”

“Overall, as legislators and as concerning health, we work very effectively with the FMOH on monitoring budget to be able to address any bottlenecks that they have in terms of release of funds and in terms of pushing the funds down to the states or to various agencies.”

Senator Ibrahim Oloriegbe

Chairman, Senate Committee on Health

PANEL 1

Moving towards an integrated approach for nutrition by leveraging innovative financing

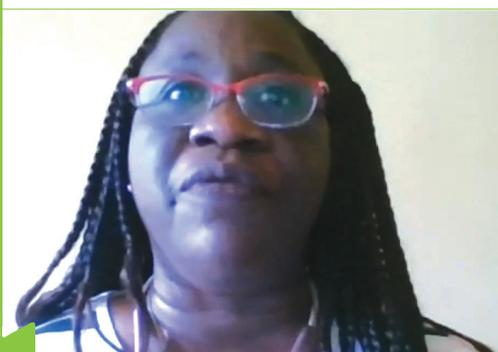
How the NPHCDA working with state PHCs, agencies and governments to ensure that appropriations for nutrition are released and upon release, are spent efficiently so that they reach where the bulk of the interventions are needed:



“At the NPHCDA, BHCPF is set up to ensure the implementation of decentralised facility financing (DFF). This ensures that once the BHCPF comes to the Agency gateway, they are sent directly to the health facility within three days. This mitigates against released funds remaining at the national or Abuja level and attracting a high propensity for funds diversion or non-implementation of the programmes. At the health facility, the funds are utilised for preventive and promotional interventions around nutrition, and also for managing mild to severe anemia.”

Because of the engagement with the states, LGAs and PHC services, NPHCDA has articulated a basic health care provision manual that states clearly all the governance and accountability issues in the utilisation of BHCPF funds. Human resources at the level of the community are also being engaged alongside communication with traditional and religious leaders - to have a better understanding of how nutrition is important in the lives of all community members. - Dr. Faisal Shuaib, Executive Director, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA)

What are the lessons learnt from innovations like CHIPS, BHCPF and SHIS? What is needed how can things must do differently this time?



“That central coordinating framework needs to be in place and it has to be very strong. It has to be very vocal and it has to be able to bring all of the actors to the table. It is about collaborations and not about competition, which means individual potentials have to be harnessed to a holistic response to the needs.”

Dr. Anne Adah-Ogoh, Senior Program Manager, Christian Aid Health Systems, Innovative Financing Expert

What is attractive to private sector investors that would make them invest more in nutrition and their preferences in terms of accountability and efficiency?



“Private sectors need incentives to participate. These incentives - financial, moral, cohesive, natural or intrinsic - will always motivate individuals to perform an action. They like to be involved in the downstream accountability and governance framework of service delivery. They want to know the extent of delays in transfer of funds or mismanagement and diversion of funds and what will happen in such instances.”

Dr. Francis Aminu, Director Health and Nutrition, Dangote Foundation

PAPER 2

National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition; funding requirements

Mrs. Nduka Chito Nelson,

Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning

INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is crucial at all levels of development for the individual - at the community and national levels. There is a high rate of malnutrition among the vulnerable groups. The National Policy on Food and Nutrition in Nigeria was approved in 2016 with food and nutrition security being an essential component of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020). Nutrition will also feature in the successor plans Medium Term National Development Plan; (MTNDP 2021-2025), MTNDP 2026-2030 and the Agenda 2050 given its strategic importance to drive and achieving development.

PURPOSE OF NMPFAN

The National Multi-Sectoral Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition (NMPFAN) was developed to facilitate resource mobilisation and is a useful tool for advocacy. It was drawn up to determine how much to allocate to nutrition in the annual national budget and guide the allocation and investment of adequate funds for nutrition interventions.

COST CATEGORIES CONTAINED IN NMPFAN

- Food and nutrition security
- Enhancing care giving capacity
- Enhancing the provision of quality health services
- Improving capacity to address food and nutrition insecurity problems
- Raising awareness and understanding of the problem of malnutrition in Nigeria
- Resource allocation for food and nutrition security at all levels

PRIORITY RESULT AREAS COVERED BY NMPFAN

- Food and nutrition security
- Enhancing care giving capacity

“THE PURPOSE OF NMPFAN IS TO FACILITATE RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND TO BE A USEFUL TOOL FOR ANYBODY THAT WANTS TO ADVOCATE FOR NUTRITION. IT SETS OUT WHAT IT WILL COST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO FUND NUTRITION ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.”



- Enhancing the provision of quality health services
- Improving capacity to address food and nutrition insecurity problems
- Raising awareness and understanding of the problem of malnutrition in Nigeria
- Resource allocation for food and nutrition security at all levels

The budget requirement of implementing the six key result areas by all sectors amounts to over N63bn.

NUTRITION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The framework has a 5-level structure with the ward committees that having the ward development committee (WDC) chairmen as leads at the base. At the LGA level, the LGA vice chairmen oversee the LGA committees. The State Planning Office takes charge of the state committees with the Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP) overseeing the affairs of the National Committee on Food and Nutrition. The Office of the Vice President oversees the National Council on Nutrition, the main decision-making and coordinating body on food and nutrition in the country.

ROLE OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NMPFAN

The roles of governance structures in the implementation of NMPFAN include

- Ownership and endorsement of NMPFAN
- Mobilisation of funds within the traditional sources and through other innovative mechanisms
- Ensuring budget lines for food and nutrition and timely release of funds
- Ensuring accountability of released funds
- Monitoring of implementation status

PANEL 2

Unravelling the barrier to adequate financing for nutrition

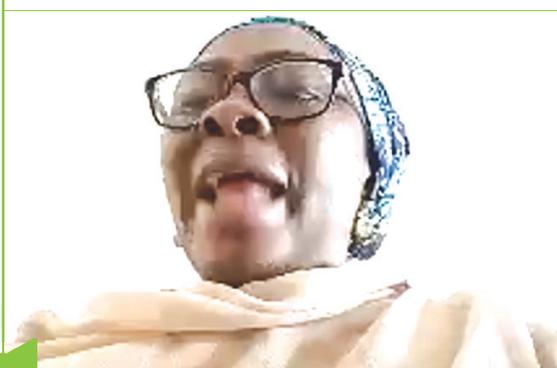
Lessons from Gombe State on how to sustain funding for nutrition against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant fall in the state government's revenues:



“The government of Alhaji Muhammad Inua Yahaya looked at the poor statistics as a call-to-action and a state of emergency was declared in the health care sector. The Budget Planning and Development Partner Coordination Office was then set up to coordinate all activities of partners engaged in the health and nutrition sectors. This helped to optimise resources and provided information on the exact commitments on leveraging additional resources to fund the budget.”

“Allocations for the health sector alongside agriculture and education have been increased. Measures that did not endanger food security were put in place at as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. We have been consistently learning from other states with best practices - states like Kaduna and most recently Borno. We are preparing a 10-year development plan that has prioritised SDGs and nutrition as strategic focus areas, and will legislate on it to get the needed buy-in from people.” - *Dr. Ishiaku Mohammed, Special Adviser, Budget & Planning and representative of Alhaji Mohammad Inua Yahaya, Executive Governor, Gombe State*

Role of nutrition policy and strategic planning in nutrition budgeting and financing, measuring progress in financing and making key parties accountable at different levels:



“There is a need to be accountable and stay-the-course. Allocated funds must be released to the right agencies and released amounts published. The nutrition line item for the released funds - either advocacy, education or RUTFs - must be purchased, implemented and evaluated. And until evaluation is carried out the job is not done.

Civil society must ask health ministries and partners key questions on progress or situation reports of released funds to ensure accountability and efficiency.”

“Strong systems need to be put up to prevent more children from SAM. The issue of prevention is not about government money but about accountability by parents, ministries of agriculture, traditional and religious leaders, and women, to ensure that children get what they need. Completion of senior secondary school must be the centrality of girls' education to stop the vicious cycle of malnutrition and to enable them make key informed decisions.” - *Dr. Mairo Mandara, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) Fellow & Public Health Expert*

PANEL 2

Unravelling the barrier to adequate financing for nutrition

Major challenges facing Nigeria in scaling-up financing for nutrition and how coordination among different stakeholder groups - government, private sector or donors and civil society - influence funding and accountability:



“Crucially, we need to shape the narrative in a way that it really helps us to unlock more resources. We need to also improve the quality of our partnerships and collaboration and address some basic technicalities in processes around shaping sectoral priorities and taxonomy. Beyond the budgets of the government, we need to come up with how to get ruthless about execution in order to unlock resources. We need to harness the power of evidence and data a little bit more.”

- Dr. Victor Ajieroh, Senior Program Officer, Nutrition, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)

“The nutrition narrative has to be shaped to give it more attention in the midst of current competing priorities. Nutrition should not be pursued as a freestanding objective but as part of broader initiatives. Agriculture and the broader food systems should not just feed, but nourish the people. People have to understand that poor diets account for the highest risk factor for the global burden of diseases. Decision makers need to know that even though nutrition has far reaching influences, it is not necessarily expensive relative to other costs.

We need to see more fidelity and commitment when it comes to partnerships. When parties come to an agreement, to a mechanism, to a platform and are faithful to their commitments in counterpart funding, in living up to their expectations, there is a way it reinforces additional funding,

The private sector has an indispensable role in advancing nutrition but it is not monolithic. The private sector cuts across the full system, the health sector, the private service providers and the people in big companies that are driving food fortification. We need to agree on how to incentivise them and remove the obstacles to really address that. We need to know clearly how nutrition has been funded as the national health accounts do not define the taxonomies of nutrition.”

Identifying and optimising current sources of funding for nutrition, and improving budget performance for nutrition:



“Money for any nutrition activity has to be judiciously deployed and goals or targets have to be met. Money meant for a particular category of individuals or target groups, must not be diverted, but used specifically for the stated purposes. Also, the impact of the line activity has to be assessed.”

- Mrs. Nduka Chito Nelson, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning

“Presently we have the traditional funding source, which is government - at all levels. Bilateral and multilateral organizations, the CS-SUNN coalition and some private companies or sectors also participate in funding nutrition. To optimise the funding for nutrition, there is need for implemented activities to be nutrition-smart for impact. Implementation should follow a costed plan which should have strategies for implementation with the M&E framework attached. Budgets for nutrition activities can be improved by ensuring efficient use of funds, transparency and accountability.”

PAPER 3

Impact of COVID-19 on nutrition in Nigeria and the implication for financing

Simeon Nanama, Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF

FALLOUTS OF COVID-19 IN NIGERIA

Nigeria was among the first countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to identify cases of COVID-19. The government implemented strict measures to contain the spread of the virus. These included the closure of the borders, lock-down of interstate travel, ban on social gatherings and transport services, and restriction of non-essential economic activities. These had some immediate consequences including the disruption of the national and international transport systems, crash in crude oil price in the global market by 60%, reduced government revenue, loss of livelihoods and reduced income in both the formal and informal sectors and limited access to health and nutrition interventions.

DETERMINANTS OF MALNUTRITION

Fallouts from COVID-19 already triggered the basic pathway for malnutrition and impact on nutritional outcomes is imminent in the short, medium and long term.

MALNUTRITION IN NIGERIA PRIOR COVID-19

Advent of COVID-19 and measures to contain its spread compounds nutrition vulnerability by pushing more children with marginal nutritional status into severe conditions with increased risk of mortality.

COVID-19 IMPACT COVERAGE OF HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

COVID-19 measures led to the suspension of community delivery platforms for nutrition, MNCHW and immunisation campaigns with impact on coverage of health services. There is decline in coverage of all MNCH services during COVID-19 compared with same period in 2019.

COVID-19 IMPACT ADMISSIONS IN SAM TREATMENT

COVID-19 lockdown in April 2020 and May 2020 resulted into a reduction in SAM admissions but following the easing of the lockdown and other measures, spikes in admission rate were seen (compared with June 2020).

COVID-19 IMPACT FOOD INSECURITY

Compared to the same period in 2018, proportion of population experiencing severe food insecurity has more than doubled in 2020. In line with World Food Programme's global projection that the number of people suffering from acute hunger could almost double



from 135 million in 2019 to 265 million in 2020 due to economic impact of COVID-19 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020).

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO FOOD INSECURITY

- Disruption in international and national transport system
- Crash in crude oil price in the global market by 60%
- Tightening of credit and inputs access to farmers
- Limited access to transport services for locally produced foods
- Limited food import due to border closure
- Loss of livelihood, reduced purchasing power
- Limited access to nutritious food

COVID-19 IMPACT FGN NUTRITION ALLOCATION

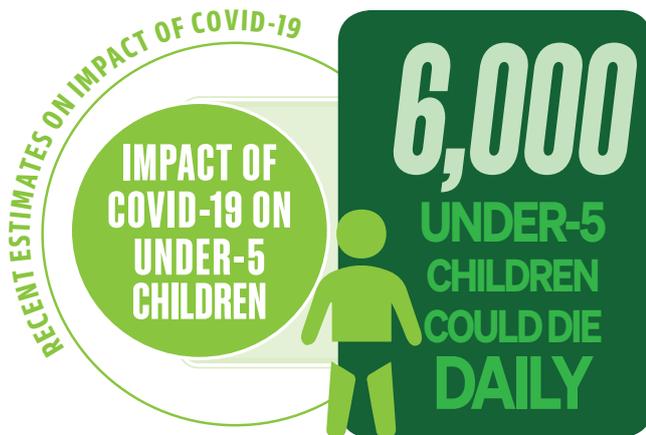
Nigeria invests 0.02% of the national budget on nutrition, against the 4% recommended (Nutrition Global Report)

FINANCING POSSIBLE IMPLICATION FOR NUTRITION

Combined effects of COVID-19, its mitigating measures and emerging global economic recession will negatively impact on the burden of undernutrition, thereby increasing funding need to address nutritional issues

FINANCING NUTRITION IS A COLLECTIVE MORAL AND DEVELOPMENT IMPERATIVE. WE ALL KNOW THAT IT HAS IMPACT ON SCHOOLING, EARNING, POVERTY, ECONOMY, HEALTH AND ON SURVIVAL.





in the face of competing priorities and dwindling government revenue

- Amount allocated per person from the nutrition budget is inadequate as compared to the burden
- With the ongoing pandemic, it is anticipated that the allocation to nutrition intervention will further reduce
 - Nutrition Allocation in the 2020 revised budget was revised down to zero from N800m due to COVID-19
 - Funding cuts including for nutrition by donors are being witnessed

WHAT IS NEEDED

Government

- Maintain effort to strengthen PHC system and create a strong and sustained community health platform
- Improve coordination and leadership for nutrition
- Increase domestic funding for nutrition at federal and state levels at least to the 4 % recommended by the Global Nutrition Report Innovative Funding
- Improve the efficiency of the limited funds by making evidence-based choices
- Create an environment that attracts the private sector in the food system

Donors

- Continue to prioritise nutrition even in the context of COVID-19

Private sector

- Leverage on new technologies to make nutritious food available at affordable prices for treatment and prevention
- Get involved in agro-business for production of diversified nutritious foods and stronger food system
- Invest in nutrition as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Civil society

- Supported delivery of auditee nutrition services
- Work with communities with community level champions to raise awareness, increase accountability and modify behaviours

PANEL 3

Strengthening the health and social protection systems response for nutrition

Social safety nets and disruptions caused by COVID-19:



“As we battle with the current COVID -19 pandemic, many lessons are being learnt across the different sectors. Our future is based and talked about on the decisions we make now.

We have a unique opportunity to build back better, strengthening our health care and social protection to ensure that the most vulnerable in our population, women - especially pregnant women and children - have vital nutritional needs. We are under-investing in nutrition and this was also the case before COVID-19. With COVID-19, it was not just the case of people not being able to have access to food but it was also the disruption of supply chains, especially of nutritious foods with our small-scale farmers being more adversely impacted.”

“Investing in health and social protection must also be a moral and development imperative for all of us.”

- **Vivianne Ihekweazu**, Managing Director, Nigeria Health Watch

PANEL 3

Strengthening the health and social protection systems response for nutrition

Mechanisms that are being or should be in place to ensure the sustainability of social protection:



“Smallholder farmers should be equipped with the mechanisms to enable them participate in several institutional markets. They should be able to understand how to tender and how to prepare their produce for particular markets.

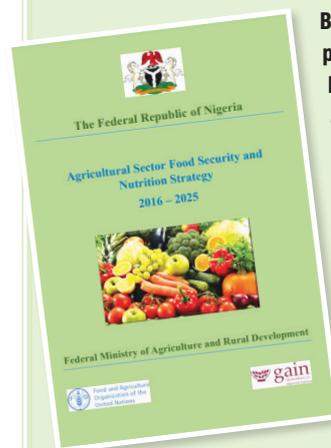
Access to credit and non-traditional insurance services, particularly for the small holder farmers, should be facilitated.”

“Going forward, we need to safeguard the food systems. Income poverty has to be alleviated if social protection is a goal. More income-generating activities for smallholder farmers should be promoted. Vulnerability of small holder farmers should be reduced so they can easily bounce back when challenges and shocks come up. Marginalised groups should be empowered to foster greater social justice and inclusion.”

- **Dr. Adeyinka Onabolu**, Senior Advisor on Food Security and Nutrition to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture & Rural Development

IN PLACE...

Agricultural Sector Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (2016 - 2025)
(Nutrition Component of Agricultural Policy;
Agricultural Sector Component of National Policy on Food and Nutrition)



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) prepared the Agricultural Sector Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition in May 2017. A particular priority area of the Strategy focuses on actions that would ensure the ability of households

to mitigate, adapt to, or recover from shocks and stress in a way, or in a manner that reduces their vulnerability and facilitates their growth.

Some of the entry points in this priority area include supporting landless agrarian community households to be able to establish small scale agro-processing businesses. This is so that when other people produce, since they don't have land to produce, they can process and be able to send nutritious foods into the markets. This entry point supports them to diversify their livelihood. They can also do other things that would ensure that when the circumstances are not right to produce, they can get into other activities that can bring money. This is what linking them to institutional markets sets out to achieve.

PANEL 3

Strengthening the health and social protection systems response for nutrition

Roles played by civil society organisations (CSOs) in ensuring government responsiveness in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on nutrition:



“Civil society should be watchful and resist the urge to find faults and carry out protests. They should identify inherent problems, proffer solutions and support governments to solve the identified problems.”

Mrs. Beatrice Eluaka, Executive Secretary, Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN)

“CSOs have the responsibility of holding governments accountable for commitments made and provide support as governments fulfill promises made. They have to mobilise non-state actors to generate evidence, build capacity, advocate and stimulate communities to scale-up nutrition.

Focus should be on the key principles for making social protection, more nutrition-sensitive, and targeted at the nutritionally vulnerable individuals. CSOs have to advocate for women to be empowered and positioned strategically to enable them be the recipients of social protection benefits.

They need to promote strategies that enable households to diversify their diets, help strengthen linkages to health and sanitation services, and advocate for integration of nutrition education.”

Scaling up the intervention of the private sector, working with CSOs to incorporate health and social protection especially at the state level; and ensuring that state governments take responsibility to make available social and health protection services for their local citizens:



“Build a business case and corporate social responsibility for the private sector. It is good business to engage and get private sector businesses involved in nutrition. The whole essence around nutrition at this point will be about building resilience due to the COVID-19 shocks. There has to be a link between the private sector and building resilience.” - **Dr. Chris Isokpunwu**, Head of Nutrition, Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH)

“Social protection interventions can be in forms of conditional cash transfers - making it conditional on improving nutrition. Health insurance and BHCPF also provide opportunities that can be leveraged upon to provide resources for nutrition and entice the private sector to invest. BHCPF has both the health insurance component strengthening the health system, as well as the emergency medical aspects. Investments in nutrition should prioritise women, empowerment, and access to credits, capital and resources. They should have credit facilities to invest in nutrition promoting activities.”



PAPER 4

Ending undernutrition through private sector engagement: from the moral imperative to economic opportunity

Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, Co-founder, Sahel Consulting Agriculture & Nutrition & Co-Founder, AACE Foods

MANDATORY AND VOLUNTARY FOOD FORTIFICATION

Due to the high level of malnutrition in the country, the government mandated the fortification of staple foods with key nutrients by processors. In addition, select processors engage in voluntary food fortification.

Mandatory Food Fortification

The Nigerian government mandated the fortification of 5 staple foods including: sugar (vitamin A), edible oil (vitamin A), salt (iodine), wheat flour of semolina (zinc and iron - NaFeEDTA - and vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, B9 and B12) and maize flour (zinc and iron - NaFeEDTA - and vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, B9 and B12).

Voluntary Food Fortification

A few FMCGs engage in voluntary fortification with essential vitamins and minerals, some because they are interested in advancing nutrition in Nigeria and others to follow the lead of other companies and gain marketing advantages. Some of the product categories which FMCGs voluntarily fortify include: margarine and spreads, snacks, bouillon cubes chocolate powders, cereals, drinks and beverages.

SOME CHALLENGES OF FOOD FORTIFICATION

Despite the government policy for mandatory fortification, the level of compliance remains low for the major food staples in part due to the cost of importing the fortificants.

Compliance figures remain low for major food staples; wheat flour (33%), edible oils (20%), sugar (50%) and highly variable for salt (40% -90%).

For most small processors, the cost of fortification is high due to the importation costs and the challenges associated with sourcing FOREX.

The type of packaging used affects the shelf life and nutrient content of the food items. For sugar, due to the volatile nature of vitamin A, the recommended shelf life of fortified sugar is approximately 8 months.

In open markets, products are displayed in direct contact with the sun therefore losing efficacy.

AIMS OF ALDDN'S NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS

The interventions of Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria (ALDDN) aim to:

1. Increase dietary diversity among smallholder dairy households and indigenous host communities through food systems entry point
2. Increase women's involvement in household food decision making
3. Increase access to and promote use of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) facilities
4. Improve hygiene behaviours among dairy households and indigenous host communities
5. Improve health seeking behaviour among smallholder dairy households and indigenous host communities
6. Improve childcare practices among smallholder dairy households and indigenous host communities

ALDDN'S NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS' OUTCOMES

1. At least 50% increase in participating households' knowledge of good nutrition and hygiene practices
2. At least 50% increase in number of households reporting consumption of nutritious food groups
3. At least 50% increase in number of households practicing safe food preparation, food safety and food hygiene behaviors
4. At least 50% increase in number of households practicing good personal and environmental hygiene
5. Dietary diversity indicator (MDD-W) increased by at least 50% among participating households.

“WE MUST LEAVE OUR EGOS AND LOGOS AT THE DOOR AND WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE LOCALLY SOURCED NUTRITIOUS FOOD. WE MUST RAISE THE STANDARDS IN OUR FOOD ECOSYSTEM FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.”





IN PLACE..

The ALDDN programme

The Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria (ALDDN) is catalysing the emergence of a vibrant local dairy sector in an inclusive way that improves the livelihoods, productivity, nutrition, and empowerment of small holder women dairy farmers and the communities in which they live. The key components of ALDDN comprises farmers’ organisation, infrastructure development, productivity improvement, financial inclusion and income support, training and extension, advocacy and behaviour change, and policy advocacy to support a thriving dairy sector. ALDDN is partnering with interested dairy processors to deliver various combinations of interventions based on each processor’s needs, level of interest and commitment. The programme has signed tripartite MoU between the processor partners and respective state governments.

ALDDN INTERVENTIONS	
Farmers’ organization	Identification and integration
	Self-help groups formation and strengthening
Infrastructure development	Water resources
	Milk cans
	Milk collection points/ centres or parlors Milk evacuation vehicles
Productivity improvement	Feed and fodder commercial production
	Genetics and breeding
	Animal health
Financial inclusion and income support	Financial inclusion
	Income diversification support
Training and extension, advocacy and behaviour change	Good dairy practices
	Nutrition education and behaviour change
	Hygiene education and behaviour change Engagement of men as champions
Policy advocacy	Policy advocacy to support a thriving dairy sector

A CALL TO ACTION

- Industry collaborations are needed now more than ever before to drive:
 - Consumer awareness to ensure demand for nutritious food- push and pull, and to spread costs between players
 - Industry self-policing to collectively raise the bar, and call out poor performers and food fraud
 - Data sharing to inform data-driven policy making
- Greater investments by private sector players to innovate and ensure that nutritious food is more affordable and accessible - and to support homegrown solutions and locally sourced food
- Government must embrace a multi-sectorial approach to the food ecosystem and serve as an enabler and supporter.

PANEL 4

Moving towards an integrated approach for nutrition by leveraging innovative financing

Platforms and incentives available for private sector organisations that invest in nutrition in Nigeria:



“Sahel Consulting’s Nourishing Africa Hub is a platform available for nutritious food businesses to engage and access information on funding opportunities and support systems.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) had a project that focused on reduction of post-harvest loss in Nigeria especially fresh fruits and vegetables. The establishment of the Organization for Technology Advancement of Cold Chain in West Africa (OTACCWA) was a fallout. OTACCWA has businesses operating in the cold chain value chain coming together to exchange ideas on how to maximise cold chain within the sub-region. The organisation addresses the development of cold chain infrastructure and looks at ways to shore up the value of cold chain investments in Nigeria.”

“Currently the Scaling-up Nutrition Business Network provides SMEs in the nutrition food space with technical assistance or support and partnership linkages. It provides a connection with development programmes and educates SMEs on what nutrition really is. The Network educates the private sector on the priorities of government and how they can tap into these priorities and also make their own contributions.”

- Uduak Igbeka, Africa Regional Manager, Scaling Up Nutrition Business Network (SBN)

PANEL 4

Moving towards an integrated approach for nutrition by leveraging innovative financing

What has really worked in the private sector investment in nutrition in Nigeria and how to scale them:



“At the local level, there is the Masaki Project in Jigawa State. The project works with local women, using local materials to see how they can educate themselves and then effectively ensure that they not just treat malnourished children but prevent children from becoming malnourished.”

- Dr. Emmanuel Sokpo, Managing Director, Network for Health Equity and Development (NHED)

“In the past couple of years, there’s been a lot of efforts to have local production of RUTFs. There are four companies now committed to production of RUTFs. A Kenya-based set up saw the fertile market and have put their machinery in place. Others are also setting up their factories, but have had limitations in terms of policy issues in raw materials and the rest of it.

The BHCPF has to be positioned in such a way that the private sector also benefits.

The other issue is just the use of aflatoxin resistant groundnut, which requires amplification by the private sector. RUTFs cannot be produced in Nigeria because of the issue of aflatoxin. So if you have that variety produced, the private sector needs to take that on board. But that also requires government policy and enabling environment.”

Creative ways to finance nutrition and the envisaged future for private investment in nutrition:



“Issues around approvals for importation of raw materials should be resolved. Private investors need to also work with the farmers and the stakeholders to find a way to increase the production quantities and even the quality of to Aflax-safe groundnuts.” -Yonli Abdoul Kader, General Manager, NUTRIK Limited

“A policy in place in Nigeria to help manufacturers of RUTFs to reduce their cost of production is needed. We can reduce the taxes that we have for the importation of raw materials and utilise some of the raw materials - premixes and vitamins - available in the country.”

▼ 1.

The government of Nigeria is not oblivious of the nutrition challenges the country is currently facing as they have put in place systems, structures and policies for the prevention and treatment of all forms of malnutrition at national and sub national levels. Although the current government has made efforts to increase investments in nutrition through increased budgetary allocations, particularly for the procurement of RUTFs, nutrition is still grossly underfunded

▼ 2.

Malnutrition poses a significant public health and development challenge for Nigeria. With a national prevalence of 37% among children below the age of five years, the country has the second highest number of stunted children in the world. Seven percent of children below the age of 5 years are wasted and 58% of women of childbearing age are anaemic. (NDHS, 2018)

▼ 3.

While malnutrition manifests as stunting, wasting, overweight, and micronutrient deficiency most of which result in poor physical and cognitive development in children during the first 1,000 days of life. Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) increases a child's susceptibility to immediate mortality.

▼ 4.

The consequence of malnutrition transcends the individual and threatens economic development. Investments in nutrition are key drivers for national development.

▼ 5.

The social and economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the susceptibility of the poor and most vulnerable households to malnutrition. This situation is further exacerbated by pre-existing insecurity (banditry and insurgency), poor human capital development and low social protection. The implication is an increase in the already scarce material and physical resources needed to combat malnutrition.

▼ 6.

Poor hygiene, ignorance, illiteracy particularly among women, and inappropriate feeding habits at the household level contribute to malnutrition.

▼ 7.

There is a correlation between girl-child education, health and nutrition outcomes.

▼ 8.

Urgent attention is needed to strengthen the prevention and treatment of malnutrition at the PHC level and integrate it into outreach services particularly in underserved and hard-to-reach communities.

▼ 9.

The civil society has a crucial role to play in advocating for the prioritisation of nutrition by all stakeholders at federal and state levels.

▼ 10.

There has been low compliance with food fortification by manufacturers. There is also the challenge of packaging and shelf life to preserve products in the open market.

▼ 11.

RUTFs have been shown to be effective in treating SAM but only about a fifth of children with SAM have access to RUTFs. The country continues to rely on RUTFs produced outside Nigeria. This reliance on importation puts pressure on the foreign exchange market and leads to underdevelopment of the industry. Local production of RUTFs would make it more accessible to the children that need it, create jobs and reduce the pressure on foreign exchange. However local production has been hampered by the poor quality of groundnuts in the country, unavailability of milk products and competition from the imported alternatives.

▼ 12.

Nigeria requires \$800m to scale up nutrition interventions but it is believed that the country is mobilising less than 2% of the funding needed to treat and prevent malnutrition. Budgetary allocations are insufficient and alternative sources of financing for nutrition need to be explored.

1. There is need for a mix of financing mechanisms for nutrition. Country ownership and use of domestic resources for nutrition is necessary for sustained action and improved nutrition outcomes. Government at the national and subnational levels should prioritise nutrition in their budgets by ensuring adequate appropriation, timely releases, and efficient utilisation of funds, budgetary allocations while exploring innovative options of supplementing financing for nutrition.
2. Government should explore innovative options for financing nutrition. Innovative financing can be used to improve what is already existing such as BHCPF as well as national and state health insurance schemes. Other options that may be explored include
 - Nutrition impact bonds
 - Sin taxes on commodities such as alcohol and tobacco
 - Voluntary contributions and solidarity e.g. private sector contribution as part of their corporate social responsibility(CSR)
 - Financial transaction tax e.g. diaspora funds, airport tickets
3. The private sector should be encouraged to supplement and reinforce public investments in nutrition. The private sector can invest in infrastructure, nutrition commodities, training of health workers, food fortification and supply chains.
4. There is a need for extensive legislative oversight to ensure, adequate appropriation for nutrition, equitable, efficient and judicious use of funds, accountability, and transparency.
5. Government should ensure a robust governance structure for nutrition which should include coherent policies, oversight and accountability mechanisms at all levels, improved intra and multisectoral collaboration, and feedback (citizens voice)
6. There should be urgent promotion and support for the local production of RUTFs in Nigeria to promote SAM's sustainable treatment.
7. An evidence-based needs assessment of RUTF requirement for budgetary allocation should be carried out to facilitate proper and progressive planning towards ending SAM.
8. There is need to return the budgeted N800m for RUTFs removed from the federal budget, possibly from other funding sources such as the service vote - as RUTF is an essential life-saving commodity for children with severe acute malnutrition who have a right to life.
9. Nutrition services should be mainstreamed into the national and state primary health system through the State Primary Health Care Agencies in Nigeria for sustainability and institutionalization of nutrition intervention. Nutrition services including the treatment and prevention of SAM should be mainstreamed into the BHCPF Scheme.
10. Instituting appropriate public health education on adequate nutrition status at all levels for required behavioural change through massive public/community awareness and sensitization by relevant MDAs to complement efforts in the prevention and treatment of SAM.
11. Prioritising immediate curative measures to address SAM through Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), while galvanising preventive measures through scale-up of Infant and Young Child Feeding programs (IYCF) across all communities in Nigeria.
12. Need for increased investment in girl child education as a long term and sustainable means of preventing malnutrition and other maternal and child health challenges.
13. Deepening cooperation and collaboration between the national and state government MDAs to ensure synergy in the intervention is crucial for strategically reducing Nigeria's malnutrition. The co-ordinating ministry needs to increase their engagement, support and oversight of other line ministries and stakeholders at all stages of the budgeting and implementation process of both government and donor-funded nutrition interventions.
14. There should be establishment and equipment of CMAM centres in all ward level PHC facilities in the country as the federal government implements its PHC revitalisation agenda for ease of accessibility.
15. There is need to follow through and ensure the implementation of policies and strategies which are appropriately funded, data driven, sustainable and concurrently, optimises transparency and accountability.
16. The private sector should be a key driver for innovations and be fully involved in nutrition discussions

COMMITMENTS

1. The Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, informed by the importance of nutrition to national development, has created a Thematic Working Group on nutrition for the successor Medium Term National Development Plan 2021 - 2025 and Perspective Plan, Nigeria Agenda 2050. This thematic working group would plan and cost nutrition interventions for the budget
2. Senator Ibrahim Oloriegbe made a commitment that the senate committee on health will follow-up with the Executive for the reinstatement of the N800m allocation for RUTF which was removed from the 2020 budget. The funds can be sourced from the service-wide-vote.
3. The Vice President acknowledged the need to increase domestic financing for nutrition and states that the Government is committed to progressive increase in resources allocated for nutrition particularly for the procurement of RUTFs.
4. The federal government, through the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning has re-committed to formulating well-costed plans for nutrition in the national budget.
5. The Vice President, H.E. Prof. Yemi Osinbajo stated that the federal government is committed to the revitalisation of PHCs with the provision of nutrition services as a primary focus by promoting exclusive breastfeeding and quality complementary feeding.
6. The Vice President, H.E. Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, noted that the federal government is focused on a new national multi-sectoral plan of action to tackle nutrition challenges.

CONCLUSION

Malnutrition is a public health challenge that requires multi-sectoral approach to address it. It is a threat to national development.

Although there is need for government to improve its financing for nutrition, government resources are not enough to tackle the current issues.

There is the need to explore innovative sources of financing nutrition in Nigeria. The private sector, civil society and development partners need to channel efforts and resources equitably and focus on populations that are most in need. If all stakeholders understand and perform their roles with proper coordination, accountability and sincerity of purpose, Nigeria can overcome the scourge of malnutrition and change the trajectory towards optimal nutrition and national development.



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