

## Nigeria's Food Security Programs: Implications for MDG's Goal of Extreme Hunger Eradication.

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### Abstract

*The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reduction of extreme hunger is an articulated drive whose commitment by world leaders is to be actualized by 2015. The question however is, to what extent have Nigeria agricultural policies overtime with the existing realities been able to address the food question in the country, as well as using it as a development strategy towards the attainment of Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme hunger in 2015. In articulating an answer to this question, the work was situated within the Malthusian theoretical framework. Data was obtained from statistical bulletin of CBN and Bureau for Statistics covering variables such as staple food production, population growth rates, inflationary rate, and Minimum rediscount rate, values of the agricultural guarantee loans, food import bill, total import bill and Real GDP computed at 1990 factor prices. These variables were readjusted to their growth rates via the Ln-log regression approach. The study found out amongst others that constraints militating against agricultural productivity in Nigeria are structured along sector wide constraints and commodity specific constraints. That in Nigeria staple food production is experiencing a downward trend, with Adhoc agricultural polices counteracted by government monetary and fiscal policies. The study recommends that improvements are required in these diverse and complex factors leading to food crisis, and that government should always be mindful in its monetary and fiscal actions, which are counteractive to agricultural strategies put in place. It is imperative to conclude that Nigeria and other developing countries should see Agriculture as the gateway to several desired ends which includes poverty reduction, rural transformation, employment, food security and improved national health profile of the citizenry.*

**Key Words:** Staple Food, Food Security, Agricultural Policies, Agricultural Productivity.

### Introduction

Of the two crisis disturbing the world economy i.e. financial disarray and soaring food prices, the latter is the more disturbing in many developing countries, the paradox is that the highest quartile of the food insecure live in rural areas where food is produced, yet they are net food buyers rather than sellers.

Literatures abound on what constitute the basic necessities of life. The three frontiers that constitute these necessities include food, shelter and clothing.

It suffices therefore to say that, all that governance requires is the formulation of policies and strategies that would articulate a road- map towards primarily, achieving successes in the provision of the basic necessities for the citizenry of any country.

These strategies are via programs in sectors as Agriculture, Health, Housing, Education and Industry sub-sectors. The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) an agenda drawn by world leaders who gathered in New York under the auspices of United Nations in September 2000 to deliberate on the challenges of the new millennium and subsequently formulate strategies to address these challenges, has its objective no different than to provide the Basics of life as encompassed in food, shelter and clothing.

The commitment of those leaders at the summit was pledged towards attacking these challenges on poverty, illiteracy, hunger, unsafe-water, diseases and urban and environmental degradation, within a frame of 2000-2015. The MDGs had an articulated framework of 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. That which this paper seeks to address is one of the most important of the basic necessities of life the goal of eradication of extreme hunger, which the MDG target halving between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The indicators which show these are;

- (a) The prevalence of underweight children under five years of age
- (b) Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (FAO).

The importance of staple foods cannot be overemphasized as its availability is not only a nutritional status but also an important revenue earner for agricultural based countries.

From the aforementioned, it is imperative to ask, to what extent, within the context of existing data would staple food production in Nigeria, lead to unprecedented economic growth which would assist in the actualization of the MDG target of eradicating extreme hunger in Nigeria. In other words, this paper is to chronicle the Nigeria agricultural policies overtime and run an impact analysis with existing realities towards using the food question as the country's development tool and the attainment of Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme hunger in 2015.

### ***Conceptual Framework***

Agbo(2002) defines food security as access by all people at all times to sufficient food for a healthy and productive life. Idachaba(1993) asserts the definition of food security tailored along the definition of the World Food Summit held in Rome in 1974 to mean the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right of everyone to be free from hunger. Odey(2002) articulates food security system definition as the availability and accessibility of foodstuff in desired quality to all consumers throughout the year. Gokum(2007) while acknowledging that the food security concept took its roots around the mid 1970s in the discussions of International food problems at a time of global food crisis he adopted the definition of the World Food Summit in 1974 to say, food security is the availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic food stuff to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuation in production and prices.

The Food and Agricultural Organization(FAO) (2002) succinctly captures the definition of food security concept by stating that food security is a situation that exist when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

In essence the underlying theme of the food security concept underscores the accessibility of the community's or individual's dietary needs at all times, which behooves as a moral obligation on all human beings to ensure that this topmost priority amongst the basic requisites of man is met for his survival.

Economic growth and development concepts are used interchangeably. It is worthy to note that these two concepts do not mean exactly the same thing as Anyanwuocha(1993) agree no other by asserting that sustained economic growth overtime leads to economic development. He espoused that economic development would mean there is equitable distribution of increased output among individuals and areas such that the increased output is not concentrated in the hands of a few; the increased output is not counteracted by rapid population growth and the increasing level of production does not lead to massive unemployment as a result of labour saving devices or mode of production. Anyanwu et al(1995) defines economic growth as the increase of an economy's capacity to produce goods and services needed to improve the well being of the citizen in increasing number and diversity.

Anyanwoucha(1993) explains economic growth as the process which leads to substantial increase in the actual output of goods and services per head. Todaro et al(2003) perceives economic development as multi-dimensional process involving the organization and reorientation of the entire economy and social system which involves radical changes in institution, social and administrative structure as well as popular attitudes, custom and belief. This structural change involve virtually all economic functions including the transformation of production, changes in the composition of consumer demand, international trade and resources use as well as urbanization, growth and distribution of a country's population.

Economic development simply entails a sustained economic growth recorded overtime.

### **Theoretical Framework/Literature Review**

The Malthusian economics has articulated an arithmetic progression in food production given that the world population growth rate would be in geometric quantum. This view presupposed a dis-equilibrating scenario of shortages in food production to meet up the ever increasing population growth rate. This dis-equilibrating scenario was further articulated by the Marshalian economists who linked supply and demand in the context of time, which explains why some economists have argued that with the advent of technological improvements the gloom story as painted by Malthus would be far from achieving its postulates.

However most recently, Durham et al (1988) have argued that, the concept of world food surplus is extremely mischievous. They contended that sustainable production depends on maintaining the carrying capacity which is a prerequisite to that production. Yet maintenance of agricultural and indeed, the whole earth's ecological carrying capacity, depend on limiting the human population growth which increasingly impairs it. Verheye (2000) supports the above views acknowledging the decline in food production on per capital basis in Africa, painting a scenario of Africa experiencing two demographical trends, Firstly population is increasing at an average rate of 3-4% a year, which has doubled in the past 25 years, and is expected to reach 1 billion within next few years. Secondly, the number of people employed in agriculture has decreased significantly from 74% in 1965 to 57% in 1988. This decline is associated with drift of young males from rural areas towards urban and industrial areas.

According to the 2006 Report of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) which has tracked the incidence of hunger highest in the sub-Saharan Africa, where one in every three persons suffers from chronic hunger and the greatest number of under nourished is in South Asia measured at about 299 million and closely followed by East Asia at 255 million people. In essence, in Nigeria with a population of 140 million, about 50 million people suffer from extreme hunger. The report further revealed that, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia all have negative per capital annual growth rates in staple food of between -1.0 to -1.7% from 1995-2004.

To adequately define what constitutes staple food is a difficult thing, as it is hard to know how much of each crop actually ends up being eaten by humans. But according to FAO, in developed countries, corn is the number one staple food, followed by rice, as they provide humanity's major source of carbohydrates though in Nigeria, yam, cassava, corn and rice are seen as the major staple foods in the country. Angus (2008); Verheye (2000); Jabara et al (1988) have contended that although world food production in real terms has increased, rising from an index of 100-221 from 1965-1998, it has actually declined on a per capita basis from 100-86 over the same period according to FAO reports between 1965-1998.

The Natural Environment Research Council Centre for Atmospheric Science situated in the University of Reading, United Kingdom reports that staple food conditions is most efficient in the tropics. This avail reasons why the most supply of staple foods is in the tropics e.g. rice and maize. The centre maintains that tropical regions experience large changes in weather and climate year to year, therefore making food production highly vulnerable to the variations in climatic conditions. The centre therefore contends that reliable seasonal forecast of crop yield would be of real benefit to farmers and could assist with famine early warning systems.

Discussions by Angus (2008); Kasryno (1995); Vidal (2007); Verheye (2000); Collier (2008) on the reasons of global crisis in prices and production of staple foods and other agricultural products reveal that natural shock such as droughts, growing population, net food importation by African countries, reduced assistance and investments by developed countries to the developing economies by the end of the green revolution era, conversion of food into fuel and animal feed, the linkage of food prices to oil prices, have contributed to reasons for the crisis. Dorelien (2008) paper captures the above views more succinctly as he posits that

*“the prices of agricultural commodities, including staples of many African diets, have risen sharply over the last several years. The sharpest rise have been within the past six months. Since 2005, the prices of maize and wheat have doubled and the price of rice has now reached unprecedented levels. According to World Bank, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, the United States Department of Agriculture, these rising prices are likely to persist through 2015.*

*The factors leading to increased prices and resultant food crisis are diverse and complex. Most factors however, can be thought of as having impacts on the supply of food and/or the demand for food. The supply of food may be affected by land and water constraints, under investment in rural infrastructure and agriculture, lack of access to fertilizer and irrigation, trade policies and weather disruptions. Factors that affect the demand for food include rising energy prices and conversions of crop lands to bio fuel production, population growth, globalization of food markets and changing diets. The current food crisis is the simplest terms a result of rapid growth in food demand in conjunction with a decline in the growth of food supply”.*

This evolving global crisis has recorded serious consequences on developed and developing economies. Verheye (2000) posits that for the past 20 years, many African countries that have been food exporters have become net importers.

Not only have they become dependent on foreign aid, but their increasing food bill has become a serious budgetary and political obstacle to progress and growth.

Vidal (2007) reporting on the crisis said that this crisis has led to 18% food price inflation in China, 13% in Indonesia and Pakistan and 10% or more in Latin America, Russia and India. He further reveals that, according to UN Food and Agricultural Organization, wheat has doubled in price, maize is nearly 50% higher than a year ago and rice is 20% more expensive. Global food reserves are at their lowest in 25 years.

Collier (2008) captures these evolving consequences of food crisis more succinctly as he says that “the sharp increase in world price of staple food is an inconvenience for consumer in the rich world, but for consumers in the poorest countries, especially in Africa, it is a catastrophe” Joint field evaluation survey conducted by the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS), the Federal Department of Agriculture and National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA)(2007); report avails that markets in West Africa are highly integrated and price changes due to supply or demand shocks are easily transmitted among neighboring countries, especially any reduction in Nigeria staple food production, by far the largest economy and agricultural sector in the region, usually pushes up regional prices, and seriously affecting food security in neighboring countries.

### ***Agricultural Policies Review in Nigeria***

A review of agricultural production policies in Nigeria date back to independence of Nigeria. The pre SAP era reviewed showed some trace of attention paid more to industrialization policies than agricultural policies due majorly to the discovery of oil . This was evident in the First National Development Plan of 1962- 1968 which trumpeted industrialization and the exploitation of the nation’s abundant natural resources to improve living standards as against the mere setting of a GDP growth target of 4% per annum for agriculture.(FED. MIN. ECO. DEVELOPMENT;1963)

In essence, investment into the primary sector which agriculture belonged to was not the focus of development but the provision of infrastructural facilities was to be the pivotal of development, which had a share of 50% share of the nation’s investible funds.

The Second National Development Plan (1970-74) spelt out a more defined approach towards food production as the main nexus of the plan because of the Nigerian civil war which created hardship due mainly to food shortages. But Shimada(1999) criticized this arrangement stating that government’s pretence towards agriculture was obvious since real budgetary spending on agriculture was a mere 7.7% against the 23.1% expenditure on transportation sector alone. Shimuda(1983) and Murio(1989) further state that government chose to rely more on food importation rather than address measures to strengthen the capacity base for food production.

Okuneye (1992) availed that the National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP) which started in 1974 had a focus of assisting the supply of agricultural inputs and education of farmers could not achieve its objectives due to the poor planning and the un-timeliness in the provision of these extension services to farmers. The failure of this program led to the birth of the Agricultural Development Program (ADP) in 1975, which was a more comprehensive outlook of the NAFPP. This saw to the setting up of 470 agro service centers all over the country by 1985 to meet the challenge of extension services provision to farmers that was difficult in the NAFPP days. While the ADP was diffusing into rural areas, other functional agricultural programs were initiated such as the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976 and the Green Revolution in 1980 ,which were the Agricultural policies captured in the country’s third nation Development plan.(1975-1980) These programs at their nexus pursued a policy shift of joint government and citizenry participation in food production to build a stable and self-sufficient socio-economic system, where there would be a lowering of the food import dependency ratio existent as at then. These policy shifts advocated the issuance of various types of subsidies and incentives to farmers and citizenry alike towards boosting food production. These prescriptions according to Shimada(1999) were a mirage based on results. This was due to the ad-hoc nature of planning and principally bad governance.

The Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985) taking cue from the precedents of the previous years sought to strengthen the self sufficiency in food production via the Green Revolution Era of 1985 as such ascribed 13.5% of budgetary allocations to agricultural sector development, which had the largest share of designated priorities of the plan. This plan was to be achieved through partnership of agencies such as the Ministries of Agriculture, that of Water Resources; Labour; and Commerce; the River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDA) and ADPs.

In summary the Green Revolution program promulgated during the civilian administration of Alh. Shehu Shagari was more comprehensive in character than the Operation Feed the Nation program initiated during the Military Junta of Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo. Despite these comprehensiveness these programs could hardly be implemented in positive light because of bad governance as adduced by Shimada(1999).

In 1986, the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural infrastructure (DFRRI) was created. The implementation of this rural development plan was more of rural roads rehabilitation than food production, more so that the marketing Boards which use to exclusively trade export agricultural goods was abolished preparatory to the SAP regime. This saw the substantial cut down of subsidies and the abolishment of price control.

The post SAP period has recorded other government concerted efforts through fiscal plans to enhance sustainable investment in agriculture via suasion to banks to support agricultural lending at reduced interest rates; tax reduction and subsidization of agricultural inputs.

### ***Constraints to Increasing Agricultural Productivity in Nigeria***

A review of the Nigerian situation has shown via works of Philip et al(2008) that constraints militating against agricultural production are associated with what they categorized under sector-wide constraints and commodity-specific constraints. These include; poor agricultural policies in Nigeria; low fertilizer use; low access to agricultural credit; land tenure insecurity; land degradation; poverty and gender issues; low and unstable investment in agricultural research; poor market access and marketing efficiency; staple crops variety poor resistance to drought, pests and diseases; high farm cost in agrochemicals and poor storage facilities.

Other recent works by USAID Report (2007); Joint field evaluation survey conducted by the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS), the Federal Department of Agriculture and National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA); Ihaji(2004);Ortese(2004); Abachi et al(2004); Okpanachi(2004) Ukase(2007); Jabara (1988);Gokum(2007) in Ogiji(2007) eds has revealed other constraints of agricultural productivity in Nigeria to include; poor conceptualization and inefficient implementation of programs; early cessation of rainfall after several interruptions during the season which causes significant crop losses and reduced yields; poor rural roads and attendant high transportation cost; the increasing unattractiveness of the agricultural and rural sector to the youths who rather flock to cities for ‘white collar’ jobs; the continued dependence on subsistence farming; the cultural structure of communal living and inter dependence which causes unwholesome burden to the working populace; the HIV/AIDS pandemic which is ravaging and depleting the number of working class; ethnic and communal conflicts; farmers misplaced priorities of investable funds to unproductive areas like offsetting debts, building more houses, marrying more wives; the complete disregard of farmers by government in the formulation of agricultural policies; farmers educational low profile; the devastating effect of avian influenza (Bird flu) on poultry industry which led to a drastic fall in demand for poultry products and prompted a decline in the production of maize; and bad governance been at the fulcrum of all.

### ***Trend Analysis of Food Production and Other Economic Indicators in Nigeria (1960-2007).***

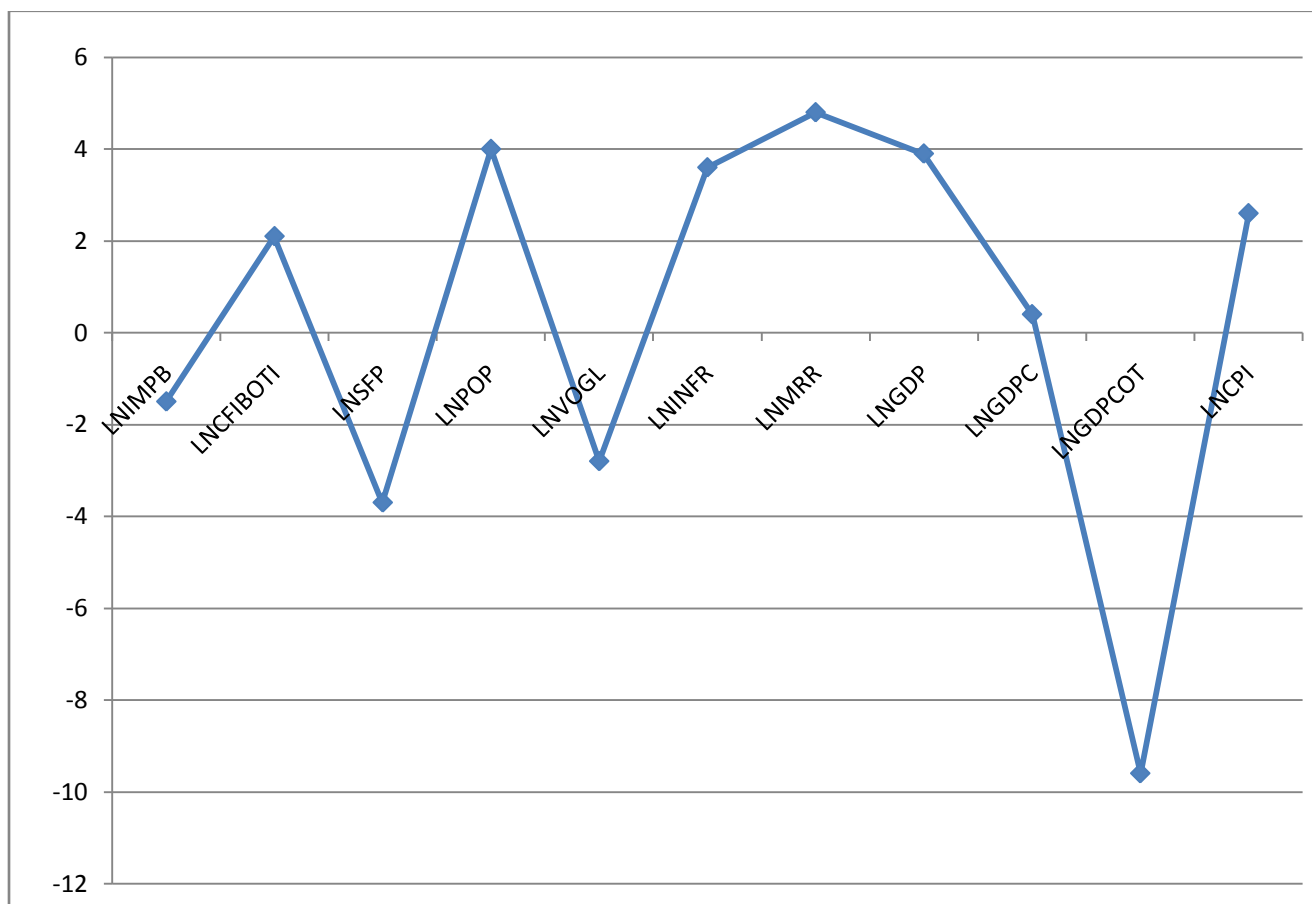
**Table 1: Showing Growth Rates of some selected indicators.**

S/NO	Details	Growth Rate %	Sign
1	LNIMPB	1.5	-
2	LNCFIBOTI	2.1	+
3	LNSFP	3.7	-
4	LNPOP	2.2	+
5	LNVOGL	2.8	-
6	LNINFR	3.6	+
7	LNMR	4.8	+
8	LNGDP	3.9	+
9	LNGDPC	0.4	+
10	LNGDPCOT	9.6	-
11	LNCPI	2.6	+

SOURCE: Growth Rates Computed by Researcher from Table 2.

**NOTE: +(increasing trend) and -(decreasing trend)**

- LNIMPB - Logarithm of % Changes in Food Import Bill
- LNSFP - Logarithm of % Change in Staple Food Production
- LNVOFL - Logarithm of % Changes of Value of Government Guaranteed Agricultural loan to farmers.
- LNINFR - Logarithm of % Changes in Inflationary Rate.
- LNCPI - Logarithm of % Changes in Consumer Price Index
- LNMRR - Logarithm of % Changes in Minimum Rediscount Rate
- LNPOP- Logarithm of Changes in Population.
- LNGDP - Logarithm of % Changes in Gross Domestic Product
- LNGDPC - Logarithm of % Changes in GDP of Crops.
- LNGDPCOT - Logarithm of % Changes of Contribution of GDP of Crops As a proportion of Total GDP
- LNCFIBOTI - Logarithm of Changes in Food Import Bill as a % on Total Import bill.



A cursory look at the foregoing trend analysis has suggested negative implications for the Nigerian economy. With a population that has continued to rise steadily at an annual growth rate of 4% since independence, when juxtaposed with the average growth rate of staple food production which stands at 3.7%, there exist a variance of 0.3%, which is eroded by the stop-gap strategy of food importation expenditure which averages a growth of 1.5%, (this transcends to about N22.5billion per annum in expenses for the past 10years according to the 2008 Report of the International Food Policies Research Institute.) It is worthy to note that the growth rate of food import bill on the country’s total import bill has continually grown at an average of 2.1%. From the foregoing it is worthy of note that the country is spending on food importation more than its requirement.

Further analysis reveal that government efforts to boost agricultural production, (which is a critical variable in national development) via the operations of the guaranteeing loans scheme over the years, has recorded a declining growth rate of 2.8%, this has been further counteracted by government's monetary policies resulting to increasing growth rate of 3.6% and 4.8% for inflationary rates and high cost of borrowing (MRR) respectively.

The foregoing analysis in tandem with the ever growing food import bill (which has capital flight connotations) have contributed to the negative discourse of the nation's development strategy as poverty levels have reached alarming rates. This gloomy picture is further painted by Akor (1985) who states that agricultural contributions to the nation's development strategy is insignificant and with a continuous decline from 10.5% in 1973 to as low as 2.4% in 1983. However, update statistics as at 2007 are reflective of a declining growth rate of 9.6% of staple food production contribution to the nation's GDP that is growing at a rate of 3.9%. It is also worthy to mention that GDP for crops is at a growth rate of 0.4%. This further explanation on the widespread degree of poverty, which Ufford (2006) articulates that the proportion of people living below poverty line in Nigeria rose drastically from 28% to about 66% with an annual per capita expenditure below N5, 146. He further expounded that based on the Consumer expenditure Survey conducted by the Federal Office of Statistics, it indicated a widespread poverty in rural areas, in spite of the fact that these people engage in subsistence farming.

These existing negative scenario trickles down to urban areas and thus the manifestation of social vices which heats the nations polity according to NEEDs 2004 document. Ukase (2007) Citing Odey (2004) captures this more succinctly as he states that

*"It is important to note that about 75% of the population reside in the rural areas and are basically engaged in food production as the basis of their livelihood, therefore, failed food policies are bound to have boomeranging effects on them. The seizure of massive hectares of land under the Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Agricultural Development Programme, River Basin Development Authorities etc. seriously led to the ruination and pauperization of the peasants. Land alienation also led to rural-urban drift, unemployment, prostitution, robbery etc. since the food crisis of the late 60<sup>s</sup> and the collapse of the oil boom of the 70<sup>s</sup> there has been a dramatic increase in the depth of poverty unarguably because of the failure of various strategies adopted and aimed at ensuring food security in Nigeria".*

It becomes imperative to give agriculture a place of priority in the national discourse for the country's development strategy to be achieved speedily via the efficient release of food import funds as well as curtailing on the leakages noticed during the process which should be channeled into other productive areas in the economy. Lewis (1961) and Okpanachi (2004) share the same opinion as they state that if agriculture is stagnant, it offers only a stagnant market and inhibits the growth of the rest of the economy. The core of the doctrine of balanced growth is the neglect to develop agriculture and thus making it difficult to develop anything else. In this connection, Nigeria and other developing countries should see Agriculture as the gateway to several desired ends which includes poverty reduction, rural transformation, employment, food security and improved national health profile of the Nigerian citizenry.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

From the foregoing discussions, the following are findings of the study:

- That several factors affect stable food production in Nigeria other than rainfall which is a natural constraint. These factors range from unimproved mechanized farming, unimproved seedlings, inadequate pesticide and disease control, unimproved irrigation system, unimproved manure systems, Adhoc planning and inconsistent government agricultural policies, bad governance noticed in excess funding of food importation, reduced assistance and investments by developed countries to the developing economies, conversion of food into fuel and animal feed, the linkage of food prices to oil prices, and the current global financial squeeze which has a viscous effect. These constraints are categorized into sector wide constraints and commodity specific constraints.
- That in Nigeria staple food production has experienced a declining average growth rate of 3.7% with corresponding growth rates of 1.5% and 2.2% growth rate for food import expenditure and population respectively. This presupposes that the Malthusian thinking of geometric rise in population against arithmetic progression in food production is attainable in Nigeria if nothing is done speedily to ameliorate the attendant problems associated with food supplies.

This means staple food production is growing less than proportionate to population, as such the MDG goal of halving extreme hunger by 2015 given the Nigeria scenario is but a mirage. This gloomy scenario is painted via the low numbers recorded in GDP of crops and its declining contribution to the nation's GDP. This growth rates are given as 0.4% and 9.6% respectively.

- That it is ironic that staple food production which is growing at a declining rate than population has its effects worst hit at the rural areas, which have recorded extreme hunger conditions.
- That government monetary action tends to send the wrong signals which are counteractive to its agricultural strategies. This explains the galloping inflationary rates and high cost of borrowing, which further explanations on the nation's viscous circle of poverty. Gloomy performance of government operations on guaranteed loans to farmers is a good pointer.

In conclusion, it could be said that, the attainment of one of the objective of the MDG, which is the halving of hunger in Nigeria can only be achieved, if the right structural framework is laid. In other words, if the Nigerian government can harness its resources properly by driving critical improvements in areas of irrigation systems, better agricultural institutions and agricultural extension services, as well maintaining consistency in its policies, would not only bring about increased staple food production but also its equitable distribution to the generality of the Nigeria citizenry.

### **Recommendation**

It is based on the foregoing that, for the Nigeria government to articulate its MDG objective towards halving hunger by the year 2015, the following are recommended;

- The regulation of markets by setting prices of goods is critical in creating the requisite encouragement for local farmers to increase production as well as enhancing equitable distribution and consumption of staple foods which can reduce importation of food. This would therefore entail the establishment of regulatory institutions to assist in the actualization of this objective. It is further suggested that the general public apathy towards consumption of food produced in the country against foreign foods as a habit should be discouraged.
- The country should adopt the new combined weather and crop forecasting system as developed in advanced economies. This allows for information from the most current climate and weather forecasting models to be used directly to stimulate crop harvest. With this system, one can begin to represent crop/atmospheric interactions in a realistic manner.
- That since factors leading to increased prices and resultant food crisis are diverse and complex, improvements are required in the factors which impact on food supply and demand, this include, land and water constraints, under investment in rural infrastructure and agriculture, inaccessibility by farmers to fertilizer and good irrigation systems, poor trade policies; to reduce waste in staple food production by the provision of storage facilities, minimization of the rising energy prices and thus conversion of crop land to biofuel production, reduction of population growth, globalization of food markets, and the minimization of the ever changing diets of the citizenry.
- That government should set the right machinery towards reducing leakages noticed in the funding of food importation which would enhance good governance.
- That Ukase (2007) suggestion that on the basis of comparative advantage each State be encouraged to specialize in a single crop production to maximize the country's staple food gains is but novel in its thinking.
- That government should always be mindful that its monetary and fiscal actions should not be counteractive to the country's agricultural strategies.
- That NGOs and civil organizations aside providing agricultural extension services to farmers on educating them on the right use of agricultural loans should also not rest on their oars of ensuring that people entrusted with public offices are sensitive and responsive to the agricultural needs of the Nigerian citizenry.



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**TABLE 2: SOME SELECTED ECONOMIC VARIABLES(1960-2007)**

Year	import bill(N'm)	SFP(000' tons)	VFCLG(N' M)	IR(%)	CPI(N)	MRR(%)	GDP(N' M)	GDPC(N' M)	%CG DPOT GDP	%CFI BOTI	Pop(m)
1960	47.8			6.1	7.2					11.1	
1961	45.4			6.1	7.7					10.2	53.3
1962	47.0			5.0	8.0					11.6	54.4
1963	43.8			- 2.3	7.9					10.6	55.6
1964	41.2			1.0	8.2					8.1	56.7
1965	46.1			3.9	9.0					8.4	57.8
1966	51.6			9.7	8.5					10.1	58.9
1967	42.6			- 5.6	8.7					9.5	60.0
1968	29.4			1.5	9.5					7.3	61.1
1969	41.7			10.0	10.8					8.4	62.2
1970	57.7	30,548.0		13.8	9.0	4.5				7.6	63.3
1971	88.3	26,352.0		16.0	11.6	4.5				8.2	64.4
1972	95.8	19,243.0		3.2	11.8	4.5				9.7	65.5
1973	126.3	21,961.0		5.4	12.2	4.5				10.3	66.6
1974	154.8	26,003.0		13.4	14.1	4.5				8.9	67.7
1975	298.8	21,993.0		33.9	20.1	4.0				8.0	68.8
1976	441.7	18,862.0		21.2	24.5	3.5				8.6	70.0
1977	780.7	17,828.0		15.4	29.3	4.0				11.0	71.1
1978	1,027.6	15,977.0	2,868.2	16.6	34.5	5.0				12.5	72.2

1979	1,254.3	15,121.0	7,456.1	11.8	37.3	5.0				16.8	73.3
1980	1,437.5	15,421.0	5,176.3	9.9	40.1	6.0				15.8	74.4
1981	1,819.6	15,704.0	7,444.7	20.9	50.2	6.0	251,052.3	71,224.9		14.2	75.5
1982	1,642.3	16,445.0	5,705.4	7.7	54.6	8.0	246,726.6	72,849.8	29.5	15.3	76.6
1983	1,761.1	14,240.0	8,202.6	23.2	67.3	8.0	230,380.8	70,761.8	30.7	19.8	77.7
1984	1,349.7	29,552.0	3,606.4	39.6	96.2	10.0	227,254.7	67,551.8	29.7	18.8	78.8
1985	1,199.0	31,601.0	12,498.0	5.5	100.0	10.0	253,013.3	83,749.1	33.1	17.0	80.0
1986	801.9	32,512.0	33,405.3	5.4	100.1	10.0	257,784.5	93,203.2	36.2	13.4	81.1
1987	1,873.8	37,106.0	56,906.6	10.2	108.7	12.8	255,997.0	89,474.3	35.0	10.5	82.2
1988	1,891.6	47,015.0	77,949.9	38.3	195.3	12.8	275,409.6	99,135.9	36.0	8.8	83.3
1989	2,108.9	52,772.0	100,013.1	40.9	298.1	18.5	295,090.8	104,092.7	35.3	6.8	84.4
1990	3,474.5	55,964.0	79,869.6	7.5	308.0	18.5	328,606.1	108,647.3	33.1	7.6	85.5
1991	3,045.7	67,581.0	64,944.8	13.0	345.9	14.5	328,644.5	113,508.7	34.5	3.5	88.5
1992	12,840.2	75,085.0	76,260.7	44.5	506.8	17.5	337,288.6	116,914.0	34.7	8.8	91.1
1993	13,952.4	78,691.0	70,252.0	57.2	800.2	26.0	342,540.5	120,304.5	35.1	8.4	93.9
1994	13,837.0	81,802.0	82,072.4	57.0	1,174.6	13.5	345,228.5	123,913.6	35.9	8.5	96.7
1995	88,349.9	84,286.0	121,067.6	72.8	2,017.7	13.5	352,646.2	128,126.7	36.3	11.7	99.6
1996	75,392.0	88,080.0	171,836.3	29.3	2,646.7	13.5	367,218.1	132,982.6	36.2	13.4	102.6
1997	100,728.3	90,817.0	187,491.6	8.5	2,864.2	13.5	377,830.8	138,700.9	36.7	11.9	105.7
1998	102,165.1	93,401.0	175,764.8	10.0	3,044.4	14.3	388,468.1	144,110.3	37.1	11.9	108.9
1999	103,489.8	96,769.0	204,058.0	6.6	2,995.5	18.0	393,107.2	151,661.6	38.6	12.1	112.2
2000	113,630.5	102,646.0	303,677.0	6.9	3,213.8	13.5	412,332.0	156,211.5	37.9	12.0	115.6
2001	160,209.1	88,268.8	605,525.7	18.9	4,301.1	14.3	431,783.2	162,147.5	37.6	31.5	119.1
2002	144,297.6	91,927.5	925,734.7	12.9	4,805.2	19.0	451,785.7	168,884.3	37.4	32.4	122.7
2003	201,648.3	98,568.4	1,015,194.6	14.0	3,432.3	15.8	495,007.2	180,706.2	36.5	36.1	126.4
2004	178,747.4	104,695.3	1,807,667.7	15.0	4,990.7	15.0	527,576.0	192,452.2	36.5	37.4	130.1
2005	171,817.1	111,780.7	8,167,101.7	17.9	5,482.1	13.0	561,931.4	206,178.4	36.7	38.0	134.0
2006	174,229.4	120,470.7	3,703,384.3	8.2	7,881.4	12.3	595,821.6	221,622.3	37.2	38.0	140.1
2007	290,654.9	121,247.7	3,871,443.3	5.4	8,828.4	8.8	634,656.6	238,266.1	37.5	39.0	142.2

SOURCE: CBN Statistical Bulletins of Various Years.