

Breakfast *Meeting*



Communiqué

of the Exclusive
Breakfast Meeting 2026

Why This Conversation Could Not Wait

Nigeria's agriculture sector is a giant hiding in plain sight, an engine powerful enough to move the entire economy, yet often running below its true capacity. It is one of the busiest marketplaces in Africa, with millions of producers, 35–50% of the labour force, and economic value representing nearly one in every four naira of GDP.

Yet this system falters not for lack of skill, ambition, or effort, but for lack of synchrony. Projects, investments, policies, and innovation are all in motion. But without a common frame, overlaps multiply, actions run in parallel, and progress struggles to scale.

Yet a quieter question has emerged in boardrooms, donor/ implementing partner reviews, and policy discussions:

if so much is happening, why does impact still feel harder than it should?

This question shaped the 2026 Exclusive Breakfast Meeting. The issue is not effort. Nor is it ambition. It is the growing distance between parallel action and shared outcomes.

As Dr. Hussaini Abdu, Country Director of CARE Nigeria, observed during the discussions:

“We often work in cycles. Projects start and end, teams change, and coordination conversations restart rather than build forward. Without a shared framework, even well-designed programmes end up operating in parallel.”

Across Nigeria, capable actors are working, often within the same geographies, institutions, and value chains, without always seeing how their efforts intersect. In a context of tightening resources and rising complexity, the cost of misalignment is no longer abstract: it appears as missed opportunities, slower learning, and impact that does not travel as far as it could.

According to our Managing Partner, Temi Adegroye, in his opening remarks, several systemic realities made the conversation urgent:



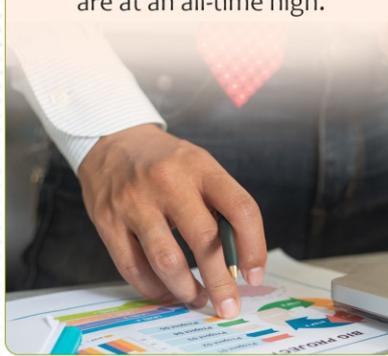
Global volatility:

Food prices remain elevated (~127 index in 2025), directly affecting local affordability.



Funding gaps:

Humanitarian and agricultural support is at a 5-year low, even as needs are at an all-time high.



Coordination gaps:

Survey data shows only 6% of practitioners consider current coordination in Nigeria's food systems "very effective."



The 2026 Exclusive Breakfast Meeting, under the theme:

"Parallel Efforts to Shared Outcomes: Strengthening Alignment in Nigeria's Food Systems," was designed as a strategic pause: not to diagnose failure, but to interrogate effectiveness; not to introduce new ideas, but to ask whether existing ones are connecting well enough to deliver outcomes at scale.

By convening leaders in agriculture and agribusiness, we created a trusted space for candid dialogue on system-wide challenges that no single actor can resolve alone.



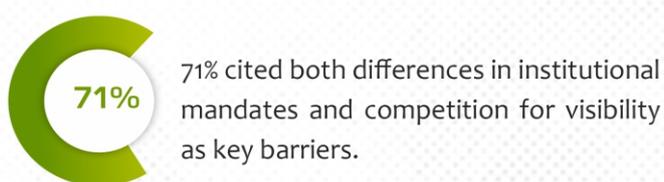


Survey Insights: Evidence from Stakeholders

Chinedu Agbara, our Partner at Sahel Consulting, presented findings from a survey we conducted among food systems actors to identify practical barriers to collaboration and how a more aligned and action-oriented impact can be achieved. The result

perceive coordination, investment, and system-wide constraints. The survey provided evidence that complemented the expert discussions in the Agora session, making the challenges and opportunities tangible.

Key findings from the survey included:



15 of the 17 respondents say coordination sometimes, rarely or never leads to actual action.

16 of the 17 respondents are open to co-design or co-funding.



Agora Session: Data and Investment as Catalysts for Impact

The Breakfast Meeting featured a high-level Agora session that brought together two sector experts to explore how data and investment can drive coordination and scalable outcomes in Nigeria's food system.

Data as a Catalyst for Alignment: Insights from Dr. Michael Ojo

Dr. Michael Ojo, the Country Director of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), shared how data can act as a catalyst for coordination and alignment across the food system. He highlighted that agricultural development cannot succeed in isolation from nutrition outcomes, noting that weak coordination continues to limit impact even as sector activity grows.



“Agricultural development must move with nutrition and coordination is the missing link.”

— Dr. Michael Ojo

Dr. Ojo stressed the central role of government in coordination: setting expectations, convening actors, and demonstrating capacity to align priorities. Drawing from the UN Food Systems approach, he underscored the value of structured national convening, bringing together public institutions, private sector actors, development partners, and civil society under a shared agenda.

A key tool for enabling this alignment is the National Food Systems Dashboard, operational for over two years and now fully housed within government. Originally built with 99 indicators and expanding toward 150, the dashboard has been adapted to reflect Nigeria's food system realities.

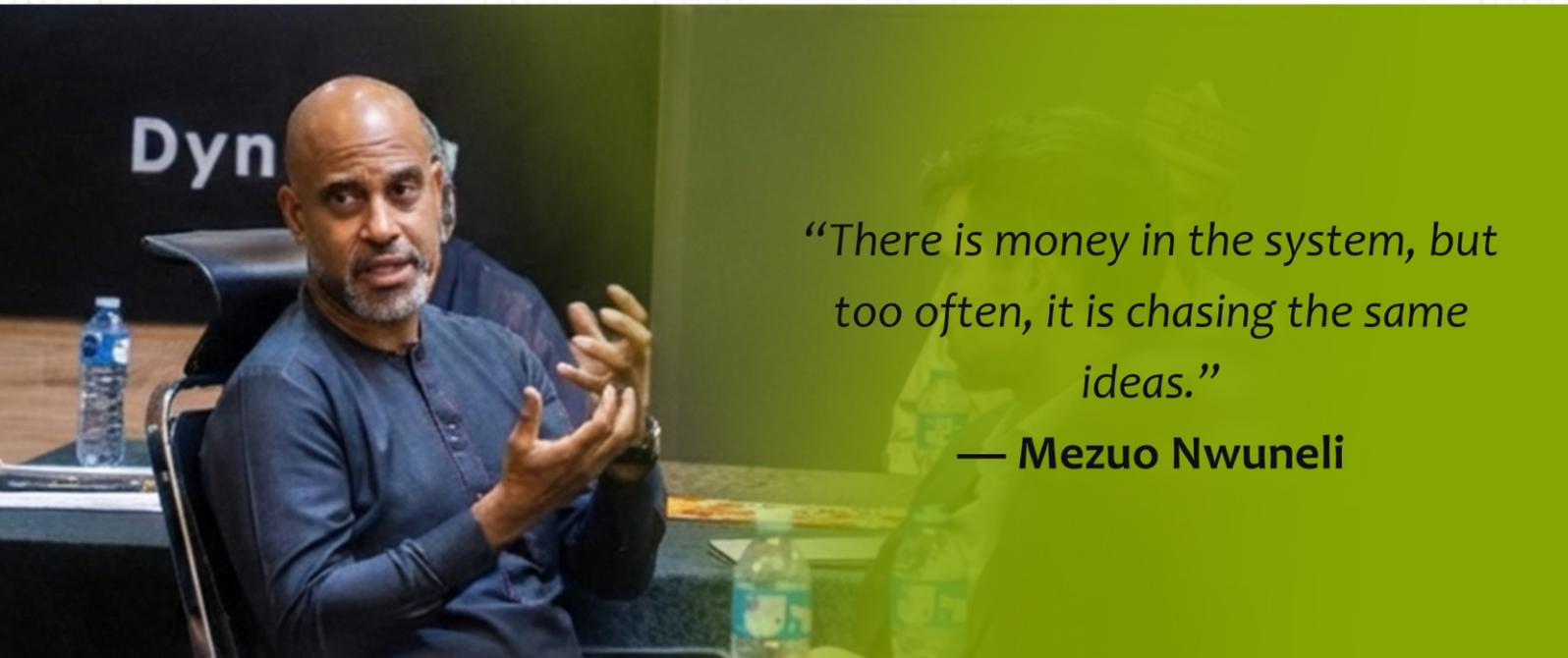
“The dashboard allows us to diagnose problems, identify where investment is needed, and track performance across the system.” — Dr. Michael Ojo

The dashboard provides a neutral reference point, guiding policy decisions, informing budget allocations, and strengthening accountability. Its effectiveness depends on active, continuous use by all stakeholders.



Making Capital Work Better: Insights from Mezuo Nwuneli

Mezuo Nwuneli, the Managing Partner of Sahel Capital, also reflected on investment trends across Nigeria and Africa. While capital has increased, outcomes remain uneven due to fragmentation and duplication.



“There is money in the system, but too often, it is chasing the same ideas.”

— Mezuo Nwuneli

He cautioned against creating new investment vehicles when existing ones could be strengthened and noted that imposing rigid preferences on fund managers can sometimes undermine performance.

“Capital works best when it backs what is already working, not when it tries to reinvent the wheel.”

On policy, Mezuo Nwuneli highlighted positive developments, including pension sector allocations to agriculture, while also pointing to challenges posed by conflicting regulations and rising capital requirements. Security was identified as a critical constraint, directly affecting agricultural GDP, SME growth, and local supply chains.

He concluded by emphasising two clear pathways for maximising impact:

- Co-funding arrangements that align risk and returns.
- Portfolio convening, enabling cross-learning and resilience in a challenging operating environment.



01.

Coordination remains weak

Only 6% of respondents believed that coordination within the current food systems ecosystem is effective. Despite active programs, actors continue to work largely in silos.

03.

Information and cognitive gaps persist

Stakeholders noted uneven access to actionable data and weak integration with government platforms, hindering evidence-based planning and collaboration.

05.

Dialogue without follow-through risks perpetuating the status quo

While annual conferences and convenings were recognised as useful, participants stressed the importance of structured follow-through to translate discussion into measurable impact.

These findings reinforced the meeting's central message: coordination is no longer optional; it is essential for scalable and sustainable outcomes. They also set the stage for the next discussions on stakeholder perspectives, commitments, and actionable next steps.

As participants noted:

“Coordination cannot remain an informal discussion; it requires ownership, timelines, and a clear process that moves us from planning to action.”

— **Oliver K. Kurui**, *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*

This view was further reinforced by concerns around continuity:

“As governments change, priorities also change. For coordination to work, the mechanism must be open enough to build buy-in across actors and political cycles.”

— **Dr. Audu**, *Gates Foundation*.

02.

High cost of capital and financing constraints

Limited access to affordable financing continues to restrict smallholder productivity and investment uptake.

04.

Formal government-led coordination is most preferred

The survey reflected a strong consensus that poor coordination undermines impact, requiring Nigerian Government-led coordination, supported by partners,

Additional voices on how the platform should be structured:

“Not another conference!
What is required is a
platform for

“It should be country-led, and discussions should be based on evidence-based national level analysis, and proposals cascaded to proposals for implementable zonal and state level activities”

“Identification of priorities must be linked to overarching, shared national goals.”



Next Steps Toward Coordinated Action

The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to move beyond diagnosis toward implementation. Participants converged around four immediate priorities.

1. Strengthen and Empower Government Leadership

Objective: Establish clear public-sector ownership of national food systems coordination.

Immediate Actions

- Activate a Federal Coordination Task Team within the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS), working closely with the Ministry of Budget and Planning. Rather than convening new platforms.
- Encourage partners issue a Coordination Mandate Note that outlines roles, expectations, and accountability for MDAs, DFIs, and implementing partners for new programs.
- Designate a Senior Government Champion in the Ministry of Budget and National Planning who is responsible for driving alignment and ensuring continuity across political cycles.

2. Make Data the Operating System of Coordination

Objective: Transition coordination from narrative-based to evidence-driven decision-making.

Immediate Actions

- Institutionalise routine use of the National Food Systems Dashboard in programme design, joint reviews, and investment planning.
- Strengthen and expand existing data partnerships to ensure a unified platform for data providers and the Working Group will serve as a coordination link with public and private stakeholders.

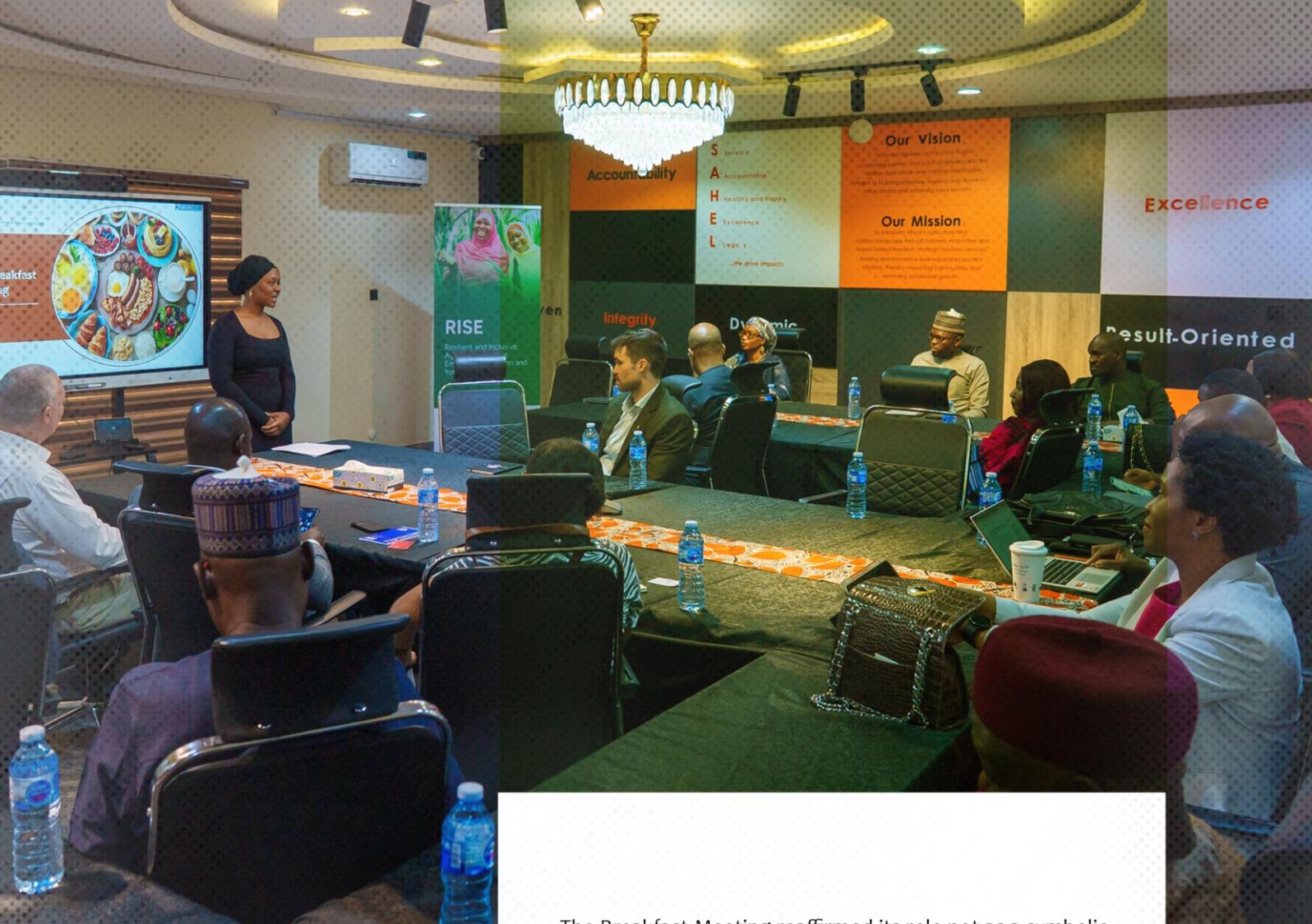
3. Establish a Standing National Coordination Platform

Objective: : Create a durable space for alignment, learning, and joint action.

Immediate Actions

- Host a National Food Systems Roundtable focused on portfolio convening, cross-learning, and barrier resolution with measurable KPIs that can be tracked to measure impact.





Closing Reflections

The Breakfast Meeting reaffirmed its role not as a symbolic gathering, but as a results-oriented platform for advancing system-wide alignment.

The central message of the day was clear:

Nigeria does not need more isolated excellence. It needs coordinated impact.

By creating a space for honest reflection, evidence-based dialogue, and shared commitment, we were able demonstrate the value of strategic convening at a time when efficiency, alignment, and trust matter more than ever.

The path forward is clearer.

Parallel efforts must intersect if Nigeria's food system is to deliver shared, scalable, and sustainable outcomes.



