

Report

February 2024



# **EXCLUSIVE BREAKFAST MEETING ON ADDRESSING NIGERIA'S FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY CHALLENGES**

Abuja, Nigeria

## **PREAMBLE – SETTING THE PACE**

The Exclusive Breakfast Meeting, hosted by Sahel Consulting Agriculture & Nutrition Ltd, brought together leaders from the diplomatic community and development partners in the food and nutrition ecosystem to discuss ways to accelerate efforts to achieve national food and nutrition security and self-sufficiency goals. The goal of the gathering was to promote high-level participation and collaboration in order to drive meaningful sector development.

The breakfast meeting was held on February 14, 2024, at the Sahel Consulting office in Asokoro, Abuja. A total of 20 participants were in attendance. The guests consisted of leaders from the diplomatic and donor community, as well as representatives from prominent organizations dedicated to transforming food systems in Africa





## A DAY OF STRATEGIC DIALOGUE & CONVERGENCE

The meeting served as a platform to underscore the criticality of partnership and collaboration among key stakeholders, including the donor community and public institutions, to foster transformative development in Africa's food systems. The gathering also served as an avenue to highlight the significance of localisation, with facilitators emphasising the necessity of scaling up indigenous solutions to address the multifaceted challenges facing the food and nutrition sector.

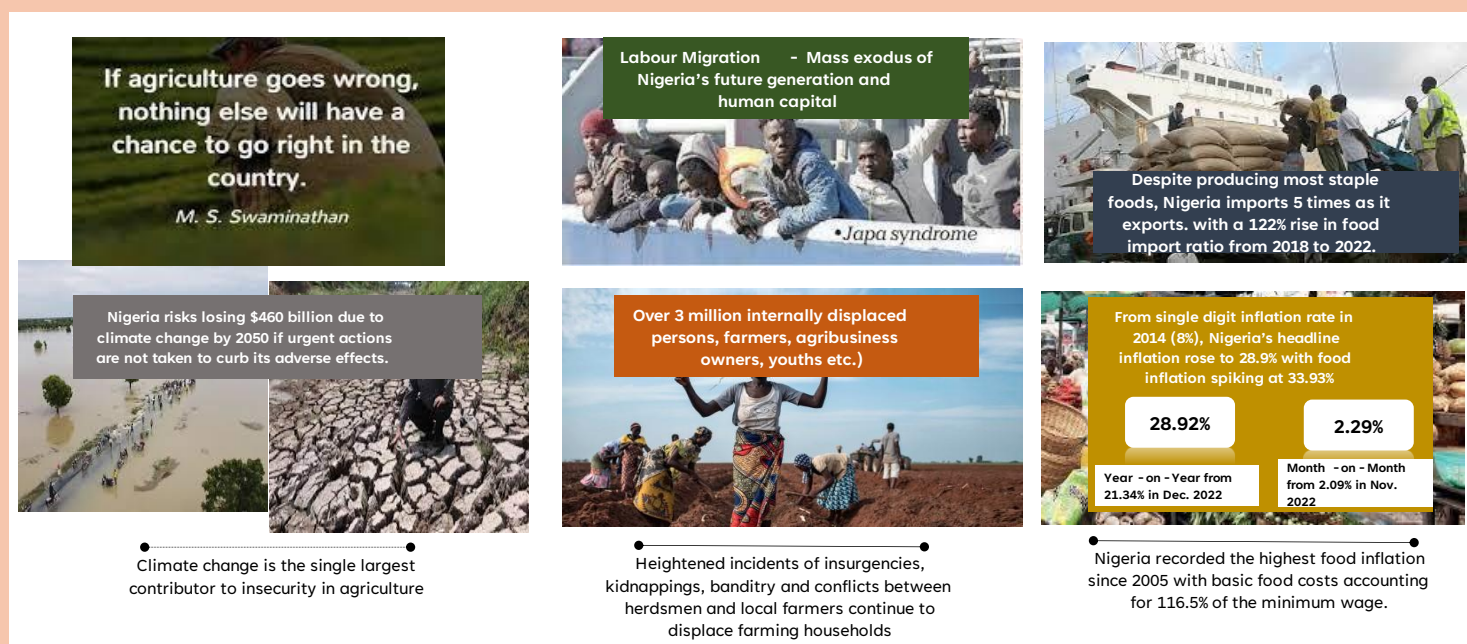
Furthermore, it was acknowledged that making substantial progress requires harnessing the influential role of the donor community to drive and influence state actors in their planning, scaling, and implementation of viable solutions while upholding the utmost standards of accountability and transparency.

The breakfast meeting began with introductions of the guests in attendance. Following the introductions, the meeting commenced with a warm welcome address and an overview of [Sahel Consulting](#) and [African Food Changemakers](#) (AFC) by Temitope Adegoye, the Managing Partner of Sahel Consulting.

During his presentation, Mr Adegoye provided insights on how Sahel Consulting and AFC are working in value-chain transformation, providing business advisory services, addressing financial inclusion, driving public-private partnerships, and driving institutional strengthening to address systemic challenges in the sector. Finally, Mr Adegoye led the guests through the yearly Sahel Food Systems Changemakers Conference, reviewing key takeaways from the 2023 edition and outlining the essential outcomes.

## THE SHIFTING NIGERIAN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE LANDSCAPE

A presentation by the Associate Partner at Sahel Consulting, Chinedu Agbara, highlighted that despite the economic turmoil caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the agriculture sector managed to avoid contraction. However, in the first quarter of 2023, it experienced negative growth for the first time since the 2016 recession, contributing to a decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector's contribution to the GDP was around 24.45% in 2016 and increased to 25.70% in 2020. <sup>1</sup>



## THE CHARGE: FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The interactive conversation focused on the impediments to the growth of Nigeria's food system. It brought to light a range of obstacles that hinder success. Notably, despite significant investments made by donors to harness the country's potential to contribute to global food production, there is little to show in terms of tangible outcomes.

The Agora session, led by Sahel Consulting co-founder and Board Chair, Ndidi Nwuneli and Dr Lawrence Haddad, the Executive Director of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), underscored the importance of prioritising investing in local partners, establishing a unified database for food systems, and enhancing government capacity to ensure accountability and efficiency in food security initiatives.

The discussion highlighted the disruptive impact of increased insecurity on food production and distribution and the enormous problems caused by the country's current macroeconomic realities. To ensure a lasting impact, participants acknowledged the need for improved coordination and agreed to actively work on engaging the President to gain support for the implementation of the presidential mandates.

<sup>1</sup> Source: USDA 2024

## NEXT STEPS

- Proactive engagement of private sector integration via umbrella bodies like Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), Nigeria AgriBusiness Group (NABG) and Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) to drive sustainable transformation in the sector.
- Leverage international partners' convening power to champion the transparent engagement of public stakeholders.
- Take the time to co-create agricultural development programmes with state actors to drive food security transformation. "Big projects fail because people plan too quickly and implement too slowly."
- Collaborate, co-fund and intentionally design partnerships that enable each funder to contribute their distinct strengths and expertise. Donor collaboration is no longer an option but a necessity.
- Establish coordination mechanisms between security and agricultural stakeholders. This entails creating dedicated agricultural desks within security agencies and security desks within agricultural agencies to ensure the dissemination of essential security intelligence to farmer groups and agribusinesses.
- Allocate resources towards innovative solutions that effectively tackle security challenges hindering access to nutrient-dense food, especially to the last mile. One notable example is the establishment of virtual groups on instant messaging platforms, providing access to weather and security information.

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