



CASE STUDY



“Say No to Famine” – Addressing Food and Nutrition Insecurity in North East Nigeria

NIGERIA

1. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Key Cross-Country Benefit	Key National Benefit
 <p><i>Generation of knowledge spillovers regarding pressing topic in the whole region</i></p>	 <p><i>Improvement of food and nutrition security for local population and strengthening of agricultural production possibilities</i></p>

2. QUICK FACTS

Categories	Project Details
Project Name	“Say No to Famine” – Addressing Food and Nutrition Insecurity in North East Nigeria
Project Description	The project is dedicated to strengthening the food security in conflict-prone regions of North-East Nigeria. It follows a multidimensional approach in which short-term food assistance is combined with improved means for the local population to profitably conduct agriculture.
Global Public Good (GPG) Theme	Global public health
Sub-Theme	Food systems
Sector	Agriculture and Rural Development

Disclaimer: We based the case study on the information cited and publicly available as of May 2023. The findings – especially concerning the GPG perspective – have been concluded to our best knowledge. The views expressed are the authors’ assessments and do not necessarily reflect the project stakeholders’ views. Any errors that remain are our responsibility.

Country of Implementation	Nigeria
Region	Sub-Saharan Africa
Income Category	Lower-middle income
Implementation Period	2019-2021
Project Volume	US\$ 19.1 million
Financial source	African Development Fund loan: US\$ 17.2 million Federal Government of Nigeria counterpart: US\$ 1.9 million
Instruments	Technical assistance, policy support
MDB Involved	African Development Bank
Implementing Partner	World Food Programme (managed by Presidential Committee for the North East Initiative)
Link to detailed project information¹	https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/NIGERIA - Say No To Famine - AR.pdf

3. WHY THIS IS A BEST PRACTICE

- **Sustainability:** The project provides infrastructure and resources to enable the local population to recommence agriculture themselves, eventually without being dependent on external support. This approach contributes to the project's sustainability, as the positive effects and infrastructural improvements continue even after the project.
- **Scalability:** This project follows an approach that is significantly characterised by the involvement of local citizens. If this close contact is maintained – e.g., through a sufficient number of local initiatives of the World Food Programme as implementing agency – it is possible to translate it to larger dimensions. In fact, this can even benefit the project, as knowledge gains and project-specific learnings can be shared and adapted in many places.
- **Transformability:** Adaptation and resilience to climate-related vulnerabilities – especially in the agricultural sector – is one of the main starting points to decrease famine. This issue is addressed by the Say No to Famine initiative. By changing the way in which agriculture is approached, food production can be transformed, and new potentials can be used.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the information used in this case study can be found in this source.

4. PROJECT INFORMATION

4.1 CHALLENGES OF GPG PROVISION IN THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

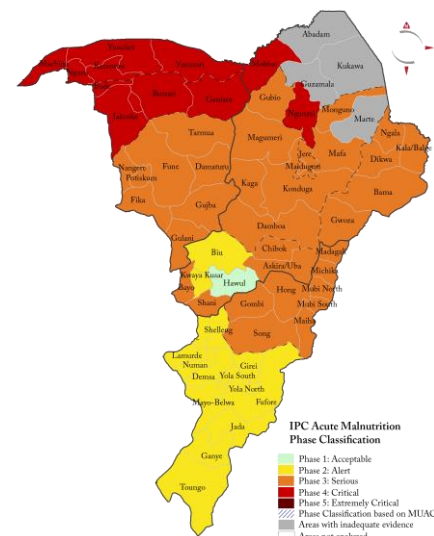
Nigeria is one of countries most severely affected by malnutrition worldwide. The lack of food security threatens multiple aspects of human development. This situation is particularly prevalent in the North-East of the country, namely in the three regions Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe. From May to August 2021, 11 out of 61 Local Government Areas were expected to be in a critical nutrition phase, based on the assessments by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification.² This is not least due to the political unrest and violence by Boko Haram, which is particularly prevalent in the North-East of the country. Estimates quantify the loss of agriculture that has been caused by the conflict to about US\$ 3.7 billion since 2009 (e.g., due to livestock losses, no access to fishing grounds, and infrastructure destruction).³ Ensuring food security is important for both national development and international stability. In the context of Global Public Goods, **malnutrition in one country threatens the Global Public Health**. It further imposes negative externalities to other countries, as it for example elicits migration movements and weakens the **Peace and Security** architecture in a region.

4.2 INTERVENTION

4.2.1 Project Design and Agents of Change

To mitigate the dangers that are associated with the increased vulnerability, the project **“Say No to Famine” – Addressing Food and Nutrition Insecurity in North East Nigeria** was implemented in 2019. It contains a loan in the scope of about US\$ 17.19 million, provided by the African Development Fund. The Federal Ministry of Nigeria is the borrower, on behalf on the Federal Government of Nigeria. To coordinate the project components, the Presidential

FIGURE 1: MALNUTRITION SITUATION IN NORTH EAST NIGERIA



Source: [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(2021\)](https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1153451/?iso3=NGA)

FIGURE 2: REGIONS OF PROJECT INTERVENTION



Source: [African Development Fund \(2018\)](https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/project-and-operations/nigeria-say-no-to-famine-ar.pdf)

² Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (2021): <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1153451/?iso3=NGA>

³ African Development Fund (2018): [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/NIGERIA - Say No To Famine - AR.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/NIGERIA-Say-No-To-Famine-AR.pdf)

Committee for the North-East Initiative (PCNI) was installed by the government. The PCNI manages the World Food Programme, which is the implementing partner.

The main goal of the project is to **improve the food security of about 31,500 households, which corresponds to 157,500 people, in the three North-Eastern Nigerian regions Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe**. To make the desired impact more tangible, the project is structured along certain outcomes and – even more precise – particular outputs that should be achieved. Those three dimensions of desired goals are depicted in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: EXPECTED IMPACT, OUTCOMES, AND OUTPUTS



Source: Oxford Economics based on [African Development Fund \(2018\)](#)

4.2.2 Expected Results

The areas of intervention contribute to knowledge transfer and good practice in the following areas: Promotion of food security, disaster risk management, long-term resilience building, and monitoring evaluation. This includes for example the distribution of vouchers to mitigate short-term food scarcity, the provision of drought tolerant seed varieties, or the implementation of equipment for irrigation. Comprehensive performance indicators are put in place to monitor and quantify the success of the project. They testify to the high level of ambition and allow for a data-driven assessment of the success and efficiency of the resource allocation. The performance indicators for the expected impacts and outcomes are stated in Table 1.

TABLE 1: EXPECTED RESULTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance	Baseline (2018)	Target
<i>Impact</i>		
Food poverty GPG	41%	Reduced by 75%
Percentage of households spending more than 65 percent of their monthly budget on food	80%	30%
Emergency Preparedness Capacity index	0	At least 50% register positive change in selected variable of capacity strengthening
Environmental Benefit Indicator GPG	0	At least 50% of the targeted communities population report environmental benefit from assets created
<i>Outcomes</i>		
Proportion of HHs reporting increased agricultural production GPG	51%	Less than 30% of households among targeted groups and communities are food insecure from 51%
Number of months of food sufficiency from own production GPG	0	Reduced or stabilised average food coping strategies from baseline value
Vitamin A	80%	100%
Number of HHs reporting increased agricultural production GPG	No	16000 beneficiaries reported increased income from IGA activities
Number of months of food sufficiency from own production GPG	0%	Food sufficiency from own production either remained stable or increased by one or two months
Assets Benefit Indicator	5%	At least 70% of assets created or rehabilitated are functional and properly utilised
% of HHs engaged in environmental and climate-friendly income-generating activities GPG	30%	65%
State Emergency food security preparedness Plans	None	3

Note: **GPG** highlights indicators that are particularly relevant from the GPG perspective.

Source: Oxford Economics based on [African Development Fund \(2018\)](#)

5. PROJECT IMPACT

5.1 NATIONAL BENEFITS

For Nigeria, the “Say No to Famine” project is an **important contributor in the stabilisation and improvement of food security on site**. This is a crucial determinant of overall living conditions. By supporting food security in the regions Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, the project increases the incentive to (re-)locate there, especially for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who had to leave the region. Moreover, it is particularly focused on the involvement of youths and women and therefore targets groups that are particularly prone to economic deprivation. It is estimated that the project will positively impact about 2.3 million members of vulnerable groups (IDPs, women, youths, children). Strengthening these groups can eventually strengthen the socio-economic and political

structures in Nigeria, which in turn yields **positive externalities to the peace and security architecture**. Food insecurity in the North-East of Nigeria is significantly driven by the disturbance of Boko Haram, which is due to a shortcoming of structures to ensure peace and security. Conversely, increasing food security can curtail the influence of Boko Haram, as a strong and resilient civil society is implemented. Besides the immediate benefits of an improvement of the nutritional situation, the “Say No to Famine” project can therefore also contribute to fostering peace and security in the region.

157,000

people

will experience improved food security during the project



5.2 CROSS-COUNTRY BENEFITS

The issue that is targeted in the “Say No to Famine” project in Nigeria is also applicable to other countries in the region. One focus of the Nigerian initiative is the use of resilient agricultural factors and procedures that can withstand hazardous weather events. Good practice examples and knowledge gains that are generated in this context can be transferred to other countries that face similar threats. Due to its size as well as economic and political relevance, the socio-economic circumstances in Nigeria also impact other countries in the region, for example through refugee movements or potential externalities of conflicts. Accordingly, an **increased economic and political stability in the North-East of Nigeria due to higher food security could yield positive externalities on peace and security in neighbouring countries**.

Additionally, the project features **positive externalities for biodiversity**: The project focuses on the implementation on environmental-friendly livelihood. This can be achieved through a sustainable and considerate use of farmland as well as livestock and a coordinated natural resource management. It contains aspects such as a reduction of groundwater pollution. Those components contribute to a strengthening of a biodiverse environment.

6. LESSONS FOR FUTURE GPG PROVISION

6.1 SUCCESS FACTORS

The Say No to Famine is one of the comprehensive initiatives to mitigate food insecurity in the Horn of Africa and in Nigeria. As malnutrition is a pressing issue in the region, it is important to align the project specifically

to the needs on site and to adapt it to existing structures. Otherwise, the interventions would neither be effective – as they would potentially fail to target the exact needs – nor would it be sustainable – as it would lack acceptance within society. Therefore, one success factor of the project is its **alignment with existing strategies**. The provision of Global Public Goods yields both cross-country and cross-sectoral externalities. To improve the effectiveness of these externalities, it makes sense to reconcile measures from different sectors with each other. In this case, this is ensured as the project is part of the “Buhari Plan”, a comprehensive strategy dedicated to tackle the circumstances in North-East Nigeria that are caused by the Boko Haram insurgency.⁴ This makes it easier for actions taken within the “Say No to Famine” project to be in line with the implementation of the “Buhari Plan” and that they are supported by a larger institutional framework.

Another success factor is the holistic approach of the project: A **combination of short-term humanitarian aid and medium- to long-term investments in infrastructure and equipment** is needed to create resilient and sustainable food systems. In this case, this includes immediate food subsidies in conjunction with a longer-term knowledge and capacity building that reduces dependencies.

6.2 HOW TO REPLICATE THE BEST PRACTICE

In addition to that, the following lessons can be learnt from the project and can be used to replicate the best practice:

- There is a strong linkage between public health, e.g., in the form of nutrition, and peace and security. This linkage becomes effective in both directions: Fragile societies can be more vulnerable and less resilient towards violent activities and violent activities, in turn, deteriorate the overall health on site. Accordingly, strengthening food systems is an important building block in peace-making initiatives.
- Food production is further closely linked to climate change and the preservation of biodiversity. Harmful food production conditions diminish the biodiversity, e.g., through the ineffective use of pesticides, and worsening climate and environment hamper a profitable agriculture.
- Food insecurity needs to be perceived as a holistic problem with many different origins.
- The Say No to Famine framework is suitable for replication. This can be seen by the fact that it is currently not only implemented in Nigeria, but also in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda. It is therefore already replicated multiple times and proves to be an approach suitable for various countries that face food insecurity.

⁴ Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration (2019): https://www.un.org/jsc/sites/www.un.org/jsc/files/general/jsc_progress_review_nigeria_0.pdf