LAW, FOOD SECURITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT*

P.I. IWEHOA, O.L. OMOREGIE, A.A. ALABI & M. E. IDAHOSA

Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Abstract
The paper explores the tripartite relationship between law, food security and national development with a view to proffering measures and strategies aimed at guaranteeing food security in Nigeria through the instrumentality of the law. The paper posits that the concept of 'food security' and 'national development' are inextricably linked for a holistic and integral development framework in any country, especially in a developing nation as Nigeria. The bane of the problem of food insecurity in Nigeria among other factors, include general lack of coherence, the issue of programme and policy continuity, corruption, poor commitment to implementation of agricultural policies, programmes and laws, focus on monolithic oil economy, fast growing population, climate change and other issues relating to institutional and sectoral policies. The paper concludes that through innovation, appropriate measures and pro-activeness on the part of government, Nigeria can achieve sustainable agriculture and food security that will ultimately guarantee and promote human capital and national development.

1. Introduction
Food is the most basic need of man. Its adequacy, affordability and security have been the pursuit of every human community over the century. One of the indices of a nation’s development is the level of food and nutrition that is available to its citizenry. The disparity in national development that is being witnessed today between developed nations on the one hand and developing/underdeveloped nations on the other hand has been linked to the issue of food security. In Nigeria, the recent phenomenal rise in food prices has been of grave concern to both the government and the citizens. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, as of October 2016, Nigeria consumer prices increased by 18.3 percent year-on-year basis, reaching its highest inflation rate since October 2005. The reasons for this exponential rise in prices, among other things, have been linked to dwindling oil revenue and the neglect of Nigeria’s agricultural sector. Nigeria has huge agricultural potential with over 84 million hectares of arable land. Yet, it depends on importation of staple commodities like rice, beans, wheat, and maize et cetera which are not favourable to its trade balance. According to the 2016 Global Food Security Index, Nigeria is rated 39.4 on its score chart and occupies 90th position out of 113 countries assessed by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Similarly, the 2016 Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report puts Nigeria in 84th position out of 118 countries assessed, with a Global Hunger Index Score of 25.5 percent, which falls within

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*P.I. Iweoha, Lecturer, Dept. of Public Law, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma; O.L. Omoregie, Lecturer, Dept. of Commercial & Industrial Law, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma; A.A. Alabi, Lecturer, Dept. of Jurisprudence & International Law, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma; M. E. Idahosa, Lecturer, Dept. of Private Property Law, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.


the ‘serious level of hunger’ category according to the GHI Severity Scale. Famine is currently on-going in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States where an estimated 1.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in these states remain inaccessible due to insurgency and military operations in these areas. Over the past few years farmers in these North Eastern States are no longer able to farm for security reasons. The insurgent activity has in turn affected food production and consequently raised prices of food that are majorly cultivated in these areas, like pepper, tomatoes and onions, cowpea, fish as well as meat. Acute food insecurity and the risk of famine are projected to remain high if drastic measures are not taken. In some of the Southern states, the menace of Fulani herdsmen due to unwholesome grazing activity has led to destruction of farmlands and food crops of rural farmers making food unavailable to the people in the affected areas.

In Nigeria, several agricultural policies, programmes and legislations have been formulated to curtail food security challenges to no avail. Given the fact that the poor are more vulnerable in the face of the challenges highlighted above, and Nigeria’s population estimated at 187 million in 2016 and projected to reach 262.55 million in 2030, 398,508 million in 2050 (thereby becoming the third most populous nation in the world by 2050), and 752,247 million in 2100, there exists the risk of deteriorating poverty if drastic measures are not taken. Thus, the issue of food security requires urgent attention.

This paper explores the tripartite relationship between law, food security and national development with a view to proffering measures and strategies to guarantee food security in Nigeria through the instrumentality of the law. Consequently, the paper is divided into seven segments. Apart from the introduction, the rest of the paper focuses on: the conceptual analysis of key terms; effects of insecurity of food and poor nutrition; Nigerian policies on food security and agriculture; a brief overview of food security and agricultural laws in Nigeria; and some recommendations. In the last section, a conclusion is drawn.

2. Conceptual Analysis of Key terms

‘Food’ according to Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary is something that people and animals eat, or plants absorb, to keep them alive. Plants, animals and even microorganisms (bacteria, yeasts, and fungi) are also known sources of food. It is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for an organism and contains essential nutrients such as carbohydrates, fat, proteins, vitamins or minerals. In addition, water constitutes a basic ingredient of food. As one commentator rightly observed, ‘there is no life without water’.

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10Deatherage (n9) 33.
‘Food security’ is a flexible concept that has attracted several definitions.12 Whenever the concept is used, its explicit or implied definition needs to be established.13 Food security was first defined in 1974 at the World Food Summit as: ‘availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices.’14 In 1983, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) expanded the definition by stating that it refers to: ‘ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need’.15 In 1986, the World Bank in its report titled ‘Poverty and Hunger’ defined it as ‘access of all people at all times to enough food for an active, health life.’16 A more robust definition was adopted in the 1996 World Food Summit thus:

Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and health life.17

This definition represents the fulcrum of modern definitions adopted by various authors and bodies today. It had been slightly refined since 2001 to accommodate the integral components of availability, utilisation, stability, and access by vulnerable people to food and the social dimension of food security. Thus, FAO now defines it as:

Food security is a situation that exists when all people at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.18

Essentially, ‘food insecurity’ therefore exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above.

Another fundamental concept in this discourse that requires consideration is ‘national development’ as it relates to food security. This compound concept can be broken down into two for clarity, that is, ‘national’ and ‘development’. The meaning of ‘national’ poses no real problem. It relates to the fact or state of a thing, phenomenon, event, belonging to, pertaining to, or peculiar to a nation. ‘Development’ on the other hand, defies a precise meaning.19 The early definitions focused on economic development without a consideration of the human, social and environmental factors.20 But there is a paradigm shift that focuses on the human

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factor which is referred to as 'sustainable development'. The term was first introduced by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1980.\textsuperscript{21} However, it was popularised by the Brundtland Commission in its report ‘Our Common Future’ in 1987, proposing a brief description of the term as ‘the development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’\textsuperscript{22} Sustainable development stands on a tripod. It seeks to promote the principle of ‘sustainable’ environment, economy and social equity which are the three main dimensions.\textsuperscript{23}

Although the means and methods of achieving sustainable development are subject to varying and sometimes conflicting thoughts, perceptions and practices, there is consensus that promoting food security for the human race is one of the primary goals of sustainable development.\textsuperscript{24} It is noteworthy that the concepts of ‘food security’ and ‘national development’ are inextricably linked for a holistic and integral development framework under the instrumentality of laws and policies in any country, especially in a developing nation as Nigeria.

3. Effects of Insecurity of Food and Poor Nutrition

Food insecurity is one of the root causes of malnutrition. Malnutrition is in two forms: under-nutrition and over-nutrition. Under-nutrition occurs due to deficient intake of energy, protein or essential vitamins and minerals. Hunger is usually understood to refer to the distress associated with lack of food. It manifests in the form of undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting and child mortality. Food insecurity and hunger are two sides of the same coin. Starvation, the most severe form of under-nutrition, is a deficiency of energy that causes weight loss, poor growth, the inability to reproduce and if severe enough, death.\textsuperscript{25} The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) defines food deprivation or under-nourishment as the consumption of fewer than about 1,800 kilocalories a day – the minimum that most people require to have a healthy and productive life.\textsuperscript{26} Over-nutrition which is an excess intake of nutrients is also another form of malnutrition. This is because when food is consumed in excess of energy needs, the extra is stored as body fat. It requires recognising that some fat is necessary as insulation and an energy store, but an excess of body fat called obesity, increases the risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic health problems.\textsuperscript{27} In a nutshell, insecurity of food and malnutrition are detrimental to the human body and endanger effective human capital and national development.

and P. Woodrow, Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster (West-View Press, Boulder, 1989); Walter Rodney, (n19) 2, 3.


\textsuperscript{24}See Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals ‘Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger’, which lapsed in 2015, and Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals ‘To End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improve Nutrition, and Promote Sustainable Agriculture’ which commenced in 2015 and is bid to end in 2030.

\textsuperscript{25}L.A. Smolin and M.B. Grosvenor, Nutrition: Science and Application (4\textsuperscript{th} edn, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2003) 6.

\textsuperscript{26}IFPRI, Concerned Worldwide and WHH, (n4) 6.

\textsuperscript{27}Smolin and Grosvenor(n25) 6.
4. Nigerian Policies on Food Security and Agriculture

The first national policy on food security and agriculture was adopted in 1988 and remained valid up to 2000. It was geared towards the attainment of self-sufficiency in basic food commodities, and improvement of the level of technical and economic efficiency in food production. To achieve this objective, an Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) was put in place. Prior to the National Policy on Agriculture 1988, the pre-independence period (1900-1960) witnessed policies that encouraged production of cash crops to feed the industrial needs of the colonial masters and ensure a market for products of their industry. During the first decade of independence, food production was in excess of local needs. Plantation agriculture was encouraged to raise commercial export crops. Military incursion into governance on January 15, 1966 affected government policies and programmes on food security and agriculture by increasing military expenditure especially against the backdrop of the civil war in 1967. The period 1970-1980 saw the expansion of the petroleum sector and further neglect of agriculture with importation of food items made cheaper by a stronger Naira.  

In 2001, a new policy document titled ‘Agroclimatic in Nigeria: The New Policy Thrust’ was launched. Although similar to its 1988 counterpart, it was more focused with better direction and articulation. It is noteworthy that to achieve food security, agriculture has been at the heart of Nigeria’s strategic framework. This included the new policy document together with the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) adopted in May 2007 anchored on a ‘7-Point Agenda’ by the President Umaru Yar’Adua’s Administration of which National Food Security Programme was a cardinal component. Both documents were intended to help the country achieve its Millennium Development Goals including Goal 1 – Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger which lapsed in 2015, and its own ‘Vision 20:2020’ which aims to make Nigeria one of the top twenty economies in the world by 2020.  

In 2008, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources launched the ‘National Food Security Programme’ (NFSP) designed to attain food security by ensuring that all Nigerians have access to good-quality food while making Nigeria a major exporter of food. The Ministry drew up a ‘5-Point Agenda’ for agriculture representing a road map of steps to be implemented to achieve the objectives listed for agriculture in the ‘7-Point Agenda’. The 5-Point Agenda of the Ministry also complied with the major orientations outlined in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) prepared by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2002. Its implementation also fell within the ECOWAS Regional Agricultural Policy mooted in 2005 (ECOWAP) that spanned 2006-2010 which called for the drawing up of National Agriculture Investment Programmes (NAIPS). An elaboration of NAIP led to the establishment of Medium Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) for the year 2010-2012 in Nigeria. 

The Jonathan Goodluck Administration launched the ‘Agriculture Transformation Agenda’ (ATA) in 2012 to ensure food security and create wealth. At the core of the Agenda were some major policies and institutional reforms to help sanitise the agricultural sector, eliminate corruption and to reposition the sector for better performance. A Growth Enhancement Programme was launched to support farmers; an E-wallet System was developed which used

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28Ladan (n1) 180-188.
29Ibid., 202, 203.
30Ibid.
mobile phones to subsidise seeds and fertilizers to farmers. It introduced the Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) to curb fertilizers racketeering (eleven) that de-risk lending to the agricultural sector by the Central Bank of Nigeria. It had 11 commodity value chains: rice, sorghum, cocoa, maize, soybean, oil palm, cotton, cassava, livestock, fisheries and horticulture, which were formulated as part of plans to achieve huge increase in production. The programme is said to have reduced Nigeria’s food importation by over 40 percent as of 2013, making the country closer to self-sufficiency in agriculture and Nigeria was reputed to have been the world’s largest producer of cassava in 2014 with an output of over 45 million metric tons by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nation.

Recently, the Muhammadu Buhari’s Administration has come up with a new agricultural road map for 2016-2020 tagged ‘Agricultural Promotion Policy’ (APP) otherwise called ‘Green Alternative’ launched in July 2016. The policy is founded on a number of guiding principles which are carryovers from Jonathan’s ATA. The policy is aimed at making food a human right with respect to food security and equity in the Nigerian society and compelling the government to recognise and fulfill the irreducible minimum degree of freedom of the people from hunger and malnutrition. It is also aimed at ensuring that agriculture is key to long term economic growth and security. The four main goals of the APP are: food security, import substitution, job creation and economic diversification. It has been described as ‘the green initiative that will change Nigeria from a consumer economy to a producer economy which will improve the GDP of the country and ease the economic tension in the nation’. In the wake of the economic recession that has taken its toll on the nation, the Buhari’s regime revived the suspended E-wallet System which was part of the Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GES) introduced by Goodluck Jonathan’s Administration to address the menace of fertilizer racketeering. The present Administration also set up the Federal Executive Council of Food Security Interministerial Task Force comprising of Ministers of Agriculture, Finance and Water Resources to evaluate and proffer solutions to escalating prices of food that has taken its toll on the Nigerian populace.

There have been various programmes, policies, projects and schemes of successive and the present government aimed at revamping the agricultural sector and enhancing food security. They include:

(i) The Farm Settlement Scheme of the late 1950s to forestall dwindling farm labour.
(ii) The Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) conceived in 1972 aimed at achieving rural development through increased productivity of farmers.
(iii) National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP) established in 1973 by the General Yakubu Gowon military regime focused on providing the framework for the development of the main aspect of agriculture such as crop production, irrigation,

34Ibid.
research, mechanisation, credit and extension services. This programme is noted to have failed.37
(iv) Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) which commenced in March 1976 by the General Olusegun military regime which was aimed at encouraging public participation in agricultural production. It has been described as a mere campaign without achieving its aim. 38
(v) River Basin Development Authority (RBDA) established in 1976 with the responsibility to develop, irrigate and cultivate numerous river basins in the country. It is noteworthy that the RBDA did not perform remarkably well and was restructured by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of 1986.
(vi) Green Revolution Programme (GRP), a major agricultural initiative during the Second Republic launched by Alhaji Shegu Shagari spanning 1979-1983, which was focused on the expansion of food production especially grains. It failed to increase food supply and like its preceding programmes its achievements did not match the fanfare with which it was launched.39
(vii) Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) established in 1986 by the General Ibrahim Babangida military regime with the objective of improving the quality of life and standard of living of the rural people in food intake and human development. Like other programmes, it was not successful.
(viii) National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) established in 1990 geared towards ensuring availability of land to people for farming purposes. Its impact was hardly felt and had since been scrapped.
(ix) Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS) established to encourage agricultural loans to farmers. Its impact on agriculture was minimal, since it did not enhance food production in the country.
(x) Commercial Agricultural Development Project (CADP) launched in 2009 due to the global food crisis that peaked in 2008, aimed at strengthening agricultural production systems for targeted value chains and facilitating access to markets in five states, namely: Cross River, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano and Lagos. The project was not all embracing as it was restricted to certain states.
(xi) Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) launched by immediate past President Goodluck Jonathan aimed at curbing corruption in the agricultural sector and enhancing food production to ensure food security and creation of wealth. It has been described as a sham with heavy debt burden passed on to the next administration.40
(xii) The recent Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) launched in July 2016 by President Mohammadu Buhari’s Administration aim at making food a human right with respect to food security and equity in the Nigerian society, and to ensure that agriculture is a key to long term economic growth and security.

It is to be emphasised that, many of these programmes, policies, projects and schemes which are now extinct largely could not attain their goals and objectives as a result of several limitations and challenges including a general lack of coherence, the issue of programme and
policy continuity, bad leadership and governance, corruption,\textsuperscript{41} poor commitment to implementation of agricultural policies, poor capacity utilisation, focus on monolithic oil economy, rural/urban migration, poor access to funds, militia insurgency and terrorism, Fulani herdsmen menace, political instability, economic instability, ethnic and religious rivalry, fast growing population, climate change, environmental degradation, flooding and draught, pricing system, overdependence on rain-fed farming, insufficient infrastructural support, and other issues relating to institutional and sectoral policies.\textsuperscript{42} With the current economic recession in the country, the Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP) of the present administration is shrouded in so much uncertainty.

5. A Brief Overview of Food Security and Agricultural Laws in Nigeria

These are made up of international and regional instruments as well as national legislations. They include the following:

**International Instruments on Food Security and Agriculture**

At the international level, Nigeria is a signatory to international and regional instruments on food security and agriculture. Notable among these instruments are:

(i) Charter of the United Nations 1945\textsuperscript{43}
(ii) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).\textsuperscript{44}
(iii) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966;\textsuperscript{45} and accompanying General Comments (GC 12 for food security and GC 15 on right to water).\textsuperscript{36}
(iv) Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.\textsuperscript{47}
(v) Convention on Biological Diversity 1992
(vi) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).\textsuperscript{48}
(vii) Sustainable Development Goals\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{41}Nigeria is said to have lost N796 billion to corruption and fertilizer racketeering between 1980-2010 from Fertilizer Subsidy Expenditure totaling N873 billion spent by the Federal and State governments during these periods. The Goodluck Jonathan’s Agricultural Transformation Agenda has been described as ‘Big Sham’. A whopping sum of N65 billion fertilizer debt is claimed by the present Government to have been left behind by the Goodluck Jonathan’s Government. See Ladan (n1) 204, 205; Ajayi (n31); Ogunyinka (n31).


\textsuperscript{43}See art 35.

\textsuperscript{44}See Preamble to Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

\textsuperscript{45}Resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966; it came into force on 3 January 1976. See article 25, para 1. The Covenant defines ‘right to food’ as the right to be free from hunger and to have sustainable access to food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy one’s dietary and cultural needs. See art 1, 3, and particularly art. 11-12 on the right to food.

\textsuperscript{46}See art 11(2).

\textsuperscript{47}See art 24.

\textsuperscript{48}The goals include eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; reduction of child mortality; developing a global partnership for development; ensuring environmental sustainability; promoting gender equality and women empowerment, and so on. Although these goals lapsed in 2015, majority of them are yet to be attained in Nigeria.
(ix) Rome Declaration on World Food Security 1996.
(xv) Paris Accord 2015.

National Legislation on Food Security and Agriculture

There are a modest number of national legislations through which food security and sustainable agricultural development have been promoted. They include the following:

(ii) National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) Act which seeks to provide strategic public support for land development.
(iii) National Agricultural Seeds Act which seeks to regulate the development of the natural seed system by establishing a council known as the National Agricultural Seeds Council.
(iv) National Crop Varieties and Livestock Breeds (Registration, etc) Act which seeks to introduce a register for the certification, registration and release of national crops varieties and livestock breeds.
(v) Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute Act which seeks to provide, inter alia, detailed identification of management training needs in agriculture and rural development organisations throughout Nigeria.
(vi) Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund Act which seeks to establish a Fund into which shall be subscribed a certain sum to provide guarantee loans granted for agricultural purposes by any bank.

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8Pledged in September 2015 prioritizing 17 goals geared towards a renewed commitment to end hunger and global poverty by 2030. Goal 2 thereof is directly relevant to issues of food security as it is a wakeup call to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. The other 16 goals are indirectly relevant to ending poverty and improving people’s health and wellbeing.
10Otherwise known as the ‘Banjul Convention’ which apart from guaranteeing individual rights, guarantees collective rights.
11See art 14 which urges state parties to realize, to the best of their ability and with all available resources, the child’s right to health, nutrition and safe water.
12Cap C23, Vol 3, LFN 2004. See particularly Chapter II, ss 16 and 17, christened ‘Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy on “economic and social objectives”. It is to be noted that Chapter II of the CFRN reenacted the provisions enshrined under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
(vii) Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria Act\textsuperscript{59} which seeks to establish the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria, and provides for the establishment of research institutes by the Council.

(viii) Agricultural (Control of Importation) Act\textsuperscript{60} which makes provisions for regulating the importation of articles for the purpose of controlling plant diseases and pest.

(ix) Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC) Act\textsuperscript{61} which seeks to provide a scheme to protect the Nigerian farmer from the effects of natural hazards by introducing measures which shall ensure indemnity sufficient to keep the farmer in business and to establish the NAIC as the body responsible for the implementation, management and administration of the Agricultural Insurance Scheme.

(x) Fertilizer (Control) Act 1992\textsuperscript{62} aimed at ensuring appropriate distribution of fertilizers to farmers.

(xi) Food Security Bill 2016 sponsored by Senator Theodore Orji which has passed its second reading.

(xii) Climate Change Bill 2008.

It is noteworthy at this juncture, to observe that the above legislations have lofty provisions that can significantly enhance food security and promote agriculture. The bane of the problem however, lies in the implementation of these laws. Moreover, the economic and social objectives contained in sections 16 and 17 of the 1999 Constitution, though appealing to the moral conscience of government, remain non-justiciable.\textsuperscript{63} This would have safeguarded the economic and social rights of the citizens. It is submitted that when economic rights are guaranteed, government at all levels would be compelled to establish mechanisms to ensure that their citizens have progressive access to food. The courts in Nigeria have indicated interest to give effect to these objectives as fundamental rights. To this end, Uwaifo JSC remarked in \textit{Attorney-General, Ondo v Attorney-General of the Federation}\textsuperscript{64} thus:

\begin{quote}
We do not need to seek uncertain ways of giving effect to the Directive Principles in Chapter II of our constitution. The constitution itself has placed the entire Chapter II under the Exclusive Legislative List. By this, it means all the Executive Principles need not remain mere or pious declarations. In fact, a similar enactment can possibly be made ... to ensure that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food; reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, sick benefit and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizens.
\end{quote}

6. Recommendations

\textsuperscript{60} Cap A12, Vol I LFN 2004.
\textsuperscript{61} Cap A13, Vol. 1 LFN 2004.
\textsuperscript{63} Cap F25, Vol 7 LFN 2004.
\textsuperscript{64} See s 6(6) (c) of the CFRN 1999
\textsuperscript{65}(2002) 9 NWLR (Pt. 772) 222.
Against the backdrop of the limitations and challenges highlighted above together with the current economic recession reputed to be the worst in the past twenty-five years of our nationhood, the following measures are proffered for achieving food security in Nigeria:

(i) There is need for government commitment to its policies and programmes, and to fully implement enacted laws to ensure national food security.

(ii) The Nigerian economy needs to be diversified to an agro-based economy.

(iii) A holistic transformation of our national food system is required by improving infrastructure, technology, processing, storage, transportation, marketing and the distribution systems to minimise food loss and develop effective policies to reduce food wastage and conserve our national resources.

(iv) Nigeria should foster cooperation with other countries and international organisations on food security and sustainable agriculture. The Malawi, China, Indonesia and Brazil system of farming should be introduced.

(v) There is need for substantial import substitution for commodities such as rice, sugar, and wheat coupled with incentives for commercial production of cash crops for export.

(vi) There is need to address inequalities that exist among sections of the society and encourage participation and inclusiveness of all groups and persons in agricultural activities so as to maximise food production. This requires that all hands must be on deck.

(vii) Policy integrity should be upheld so as to sanitise the business environment for agriculture in terms of accountability, transparency and due process of the law by ensuring efficient allocation of public funding and fighting corruption on all programmes involving public resources particularly in relation to agricultural sector.

(viii) All the bureaucratic bottlenecks associated with the implementation processes of government programmes, policies, projects and activities formulated to boost agricultural production should be removed.

(ix) Above all, the constraints contained in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 should be jettisoned so as to ensure that food is guaranteed as a human right with respect to food security and equity in the Nigerian society.

7. Conclusion

A review of policies, programmes and legislations so far formulated to boost agricultural production and ensure food security in Nigeria reveals that virtually all are fraught with limitations and challenges. We found that among other factors, the implementation of these policies, programmes and legislations has been poor. Corruption is another cankerworm that has endangered agricultural productivity in the country. It is shameful that, as at today, Nigeria still imports basic food items like rice, sugar and wheat which can be produced locally in abundance. The situation is not insurmountable. The current impetus shown by the Muhammadu Buhari-led government in the face of the worst economic recession in Nigeria, though positive in some respects, still leaves much to be desired. It is, however, hopeful that through innovation, appropriate measures, and pro-activeness on the part of government, Nigeria can achieve sustainable agriculture, and food security that will ultimately guarantee and promote human capital and national development.
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EDITED BY:
GODWIN N. OKEKE
SYLVIA C. IFEMEJE
IKENGA K.E. ORAEBUNAM
AMAKA G. EZE
BONIFACE E. EWULUM
JUDE O. AZEANOKWASA
MATTHEW ANUSHIEM