



YSDC 2020

**BACKGROUND GUIDE: ZERO HUNGER & GOOD HEALTH
COMMITTEE**

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TOWARDS ACHIEVING FOOD SAFETY AND A HEALTHY DIET

Do you know? That:

- In 2018, 149 million children under 5 years of age which forms 22% of the global under – five population were still chronically undernourished.
- In 2017, an estimation of 821 million people were undernourished.
- The majority of the world’s hungry people live in developing countries, with 12.9% of the population undernourished.
- Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40% of today’s global population. It is the largest source of income and jobs for poor rural households.
- 500 million small farms worldwide provide up to 80% of food consumed in a large part of the developing world.
- Poor nutrition causes nearly half of deaths in children under 5 i.e. 3.1 million children each year making up 45% of the population.
- Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the highest prevalence of hunger, with the rate increasing from 20.7% in 2014 to 23.2% in 2017 making the total number of undernourished people increased from 195 million to 237 million in 2014 and 2017, respectively.
- If women farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million.
- Children born into poverty are almost twice more likely to die before the age of 5 than those from wealthy families.

1. INTRODUCTION

NUTRITION IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF ALL THE SDGs

Optimal nutrition is essential for achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals, and many SDGs impact nutrition security. Nutrition is hence linked to goals and indicators beyond Goal 2 which addresses hunger. A multisectoral nutrition security approach is necessary for success.



Goals 2 and 3 of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals, focus on the spread of knowledge related to the attainment of zero hunger and good health worldwide by 2030. In an industrialized world where the ever-growing population stands to outgrow the equal spread of available resources, it is no surprise that this goal has been deemed necessary to contemplate.

Life is the source of existence and the human body is what contains this source. However, the industrialization which has taken over the dealings in our era of modernity, has gone on to affect the potency of provision with respect to good food and good food and good health. It is natural knowledge that the human body cannot survive without adequate feeding, and bad health also leads to death. It is also well acknowledged that the other goals of the UN in its SDGs such as no poverty, quality education, climate action, amongst others, cannot be achieved in a vacuum. People are needed to achieve these goals. However, if people do not exist in a world where they are blessed with access to the basic necessities of life such as good food and health, there cannot be productivity.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN) are 17 in number and were adopted by the UN in September of 2015. Zero Hunger stands as Goal 2 while Good health and well-being stands as Goal 3. It should be noted that the arrangement of the goals suggests no

ranking. In other words, no goal is more important than the other. Instead, the different goals are interdependent and interrelated. That stated, there are targets which have been set by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the foremost UN development agency for each goal stipulated in the SDGs which presently serve as guides in the achievement of these goals. The UNDP is the agency created by the UN to aid with the implementation of these goals in party countries, most especially the developing countries concerned. These targets would be looked at in explaining the goals.

Zero Hunger

With modernity comes development and this has been realized in today's world. Today, we have a scenario where developing countries can cater for their needs on an average scale and economic world powers are starting to grow from these countries. However, the problem of hunger and malnutrition is still a raging bull in these countries.

The goal of achieving zero hunger worldwide by 2030 is to be achieved by ending all forms of malnutrition and promoting the sustainable development of agriculture within developing and underdeveloped countries. The goal seeks to develop the area of agriculture for the prevention of such figures seen with respect to malnutrition and undernourishment, for instance, the fact that as recent as 2019, an estimate of about 820 million people were still malnourished worldwide. The development of agriculture here would involve the creation and expansion of agricultural storage facilities, food production systems, food security systems, education and enlightenment as to the practicals in agriculture. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) underscored the importance of this goal by stating the UN after the end of the era of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, should place due focus on the achievement of zero hunger by 2025.

The goal of achieving zero hunger per the UN involves the ensuring of equal access by all to food resources; ending all forms of malnutrition and paying attention to the nutritional needs of special persons such as pregnant women, adolescents, older persons, amongst others; the provision of resources for small-scale income farmers to increase productivity; providing food production systems which would be free from natural disaster effects; maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds and traditional practices; preventing trade restrictions in world markets and decreasing extremity in food price; and the regulation of export subsidies to encourage international trade of agricultural produce by small-scale income farmers.

However, at present, only a few countries in the world have been able to implement a pathway towards the achievement of this goal, with others still scrambling for a premise to begin.⁷ In this stead, it can be stated that the achievement of this goal worldwide by 2030 looks unrealistic to achieve, with the pace at which some countries are adapting to the targets of the SDGs.

Good Health and Well-Being

The interconnectedness between Zero Hunger and Good Health is easy to comprehend as foremost, the absence of hunger is in its right, good health for an individual. However, the goal of “Good Health and Well-Being” goes beyond the scope of good health provided by sufficient feeding. It extends to the issue of non-communicable diseases and otherwise, mortality rates in countries, life expectancy rates and social protection. Social protection here, per the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), is a term which is concerned with due care given to the interests of a person, with the aim of safeguarding such interests from adversity.⁸

The goal of good health focuses mainly on the eradication of diseases by 2030, especially diseases which children of ages less than five years are susceptible to; rampant diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and others; improving access to sexual health and reproduction services; tobacco control and others. The goal calls for a need to improve the adaptation of personal hygiene into the lives of persons worldwide. As a result, the goal deems the need for constant education especially for persons in underdeveloped countries as to acts which could stand detrimental to their health. Youth are also to be enlightened on situations such as the dangers of adolescent pregnancy.

Besides diseases, good health revolves around intake. As such, the goal further looks at the eradication of the prevalent case of substance abuse in certain countries across Western and Central Europe and developing countries in Africa and Asia. Attention should also to be paid to vices such as road hazards, workplace negligence which could lead to injury, self-medication, etc. Each and every premise which could be dangerous to the health of the human being is to be tackled herein, the most important premise here being the lack of access to health facilities.

The number of deaths per live births is also an issue to be tackled, courtesy of this goal. The need to pay attention to the reduction of death here, is based on the fact that a majority of deaths

which occur, do occur as a result of preventable causes such as lack of access to health facilities, inadequate training of health personnel, expensiveness of medical services, etc.

However, the attainment of this goal on a worldwide scale has also been deemed unrealistic as many countries are yet to implement the foregoing targets in their geographical territories.

Food Safety and Healthy Diet

This topical issue posits to be a representation of the above SDGs. Food and Health are interconnected as stated earlier. Where food is not safe for consumption, good health cannot be attained. As such, for the achievement of the stated goals, there has to be a consensus between the food consumed and the healthiness derived from such by the body. The existence of apt access to safe and nutritious food leads to good health for an individual.

What is Food Safety? Per the Australian Institute of Food Safety, it refers to “preparing, handling and storing food in a way to best reduce the risk of individuals becoming sick from foodborne illnesses”. Foodborne illnesses here are usually caused by infectious organisms such as bacteria, fungi and other chemical substances which have contaminated food. These have the potency to cause death and as such, must be prevented by all means.

Food safety in this stead, is an idea to be associated with food hygiene. This is because without food hygiene, there can be no food security. Per the World Health Organization (WHO), there are five key principles of food hygiene or safer food which include:

1. Keeping food clean
2. Separating raw food from cooked food
3. Cooking food thoroughly
4. Keeping food at safe temperatures
5. Using safe water in cooking.

As can be seen, these key points mostly focus on the maintenance of good, clean and healthy food for all and sundry, at home. Food when contaminated, becomes unsafe for consumption and could cause ill health, which all go against the dictates of the SDG Goals 2 and 3. The concept of safety however, does not only focus on domestic measures taken at home to ensure food is safe

for eating, but also measures to be taken in the process of the movement of food from the market to the consumer's home. In that process, food hygiene can only in theory, be guaranteed a hundred percent. In practice however, the contamination of food is an inevitable occurrence as many hands are usually involved in the passage of food to the final consumer. Such contamination could be physical, chemical, viral, and environmental amongst others. The guarantee of food safety thus lies in the end with the necessary measures undertaken by the final consumer.

When food is contaminated, mostly, it is biological. Biological contamination here involves food being affected by micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and viral organisms as well. These micro-organisms when consumed with food, often cause a plethora of diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, cancer, and others. In contamination, micro-organisms such as those listed hitherto, contain what are known as pathogens which are basically infectious agents that cause the said diseases. In the scientific field, there are five major pathogens known as the "Big Five" which cause foodborne diseases namely:

1. Norovirus
2. Hepatitis A Virus
3. Salmonella Typhi
4. Shigella Spp.
5. Escherichia Coli.

In the attainment of food safety, constituents such as food storage, security and nutritional value must come to play. Per the World Food Summit of 1996, food security exists "when all people at all times, have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life". The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization also defined Food security as "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 healthy life". These definitions, amongst others, only go to show the interconnectedness between zero hunger and good health.

Despite the spread of knowledge concerning food safety and security however, the figures at hand such as those from the World Health Organization (WHO) show that in practice, food

safety is not sufficiently achieved on a worldwide scale. This problem is due to certain challenges such as climate change, depreciation in land, socio-economic strain, etc.

Unsafe food breeds global crisis and so does insecurity in food supply. There needs to be a provision of equipped and adequate storage facilities in countries. Also, agriculture must be developed in a way for the accommodation of more workers to increase food production. There must be a development in food production and infrastructural storage facilities, which when achieved, would then lead to food security. Food safety as stated earlier, majorly depends on the in-house activity of the consumer with relation to food purchased. Thus, enlightenment must be made available to country populace about necessary activities to undertake to ensure food safety.

The World Health Organization has in that stead, been well involved in the pursuance of adequate food safety worldwide for a long period of time. Measures such as the Codex Alimentarius, the establishment of commissions to deal with worldwide feeding issues, are evidential of the fact that a problem has been recognized and work is being implemented to combat it, for the attainment of the SDGs.

The Codex Alimentarius is a key part of the international framework dealing with food safety and security. The Codex Alimentarius or “Food Code” is a body of rules, regulations, international practices and guidelines which deal with food safety, production and security. The body of rules was developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission which was established by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1961. WHO works in consonance with the Food Code and the FAO to ensure there is sufficient regulation of generic food practices worldwide.

In Nigeria, the message of food safety is not well pronounced, and this is evident in relevant facts. There have been recorded cases involving deaths resulting from food poisoning. One of such was in 2017 in Yagba West, Kogi State where it was reported that 62 deaths had occurred as a result of gastroenteritis, an illness caused by the ingestion of zoonotic bacteria. In 2015 also, toxic metals in Zamfara state were recorded to be the cause of food poisoning which resulted in the deaths of a lot of children. The issue of lack of food safety has been a tormentor to the Nigerian populace for a long time coming.

To combat this issue, there have been various organs established, legislative Acts promulgated which include the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control Act, Food and Drugs Act, the Consumer Protection Council, the Nigerian Institute of Food Science and Technology (NIFST), etc. According to the Director General of NAFDAC, Prof. Christiana Adeyeye, some of the issues inherent with food safety in Nigeria include the frequent use of unauthorized agents such as calcium to ripen fruits artificially, the storage of food in chemical drums, the use of unauthorized chemicals for the preservation of food, the use of wrong tanks e.g. petroleum tanks, for the transportation of food products, etc. The armed insurgency issue in Northern states has also been a huge factor responsible for the downturn of food security in that region of Nigeria.

These factors have proved responsible for the regular rate at which deaths occur in Nigeria due to food poisoning. Apt measures need to be undertaken geared towards the attainment of a drastic decrease in the prevalence of this issue.

Food security, safety and a good diet are interconnected terms; one does not exist without the other. As such, a regular and healthy diet must be maintained for the achievement of good nutrition which can then give a healthy life. An improper diet on the other hand, would often lead to certain illnesses like obesity, diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease and others.

The WHO has aided in the enlightenment of persons globally with respect to what constitutes a healthy diet. Some of these include:

1. Proper breastfeeding for babies from birth till 6 months
2. Vegetables and fruits
3. Limiting intake of sugar
4. Taking in less foods containing fats & oil
5. Limiting salt intake.

A healthy diet would normally involve a balanced diet which is a meal having all six major classes of nutrients which are Protein, carbohydrate, minerals, fat & oil, vitamins and water. Milk is often considered to be balanced diet because of its richness in all the classes of nutrients. Regular milk intake as such, constitutes a good and healthy diet. This has been recognized by the

FAO of the UN which back in 2013, stated in its publication titled 'Milk and Dairy Products in Human Nutrition', that governments of the world should invest more in milk and dairy products for provision to poor families and aiding such poor families in being able to provide milk within their homes. The FAO also stated the fact that milk and dairy products serve as a backbone to the attainment of a good nutritional outlook for the world's poor which amounts to hundreds of millions of households.

Healthy diets normally deal with intake. Such intake involves calories. Calories here refer to the energy gotten from food intake which the body then expends in performing physical activity. Other recommendations of the WHO on achieving a healthy diet include the idea that the total amount of fat in the human body should not amount to more than 30% of the calories in that body. Also, intake of food which carries calories should at most, be equal with the number of calories used by the body. Sugar intake also should amount to less than 10% of calories in the body. Furthermore, eating of 400 grams of fruits and vegetables every day would suffice as a great diet.

2. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

The right to adequate food has been recognized in several international instruments, most notably in the following;

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Article 25 of the UDHR recognizes the right to an adequate standard of living, which includes the right to food.
2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Article 11 recognizes the right to an adequate standard of living, which notes the right to adequate food as distinct from the right to be free from hunger.
3. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): Article 12 of CEDAW states that pregnant and lactating women have the right to special protection with regard to adequate nutrition. Article 14 also protects the right of rural women to equal access to land, water, credit and other services, social security and adequate living conditions.

4. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): Article 25 recognizes the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and Article 27, the right to an adequate standard of living which, includes food and nutrition in both Articles.

We also have other frameworks in place which form part of the action to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Some of them include;

5. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security (Right to Food Guidelines): This was adopted by the 127th Session of the FAO Council in November 2004 and it reflects the consensus among the Food and Agriculture Organization member countries on what needs to be done in all critically relevant policy areas in order to promote food security through a human rights based approach. It was adopted by the 187 Member States of the General Council of the United Nations FAO. The Guidelines build on international law and contain recommendations to countries on how to implement their obligations under Article 11 of the ICESCR. The Voluntary Guidelines represents the first attempt by governments to interpret an economic, social and cultural right and to recommend actions to be undertaken for its realization. Its objective is to provide practical guidance to States in their implementation of the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, in order to achieve the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The Guidelines provide an additional instrument to combat hunger and poverty and to accelerate attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. They also represent a step towards integrating human rights into the work of agencies dealing with food and agriculture. It is divided into three parts with several guidelines contained in each part which highlights vital points, some of which shall be discussed later.

6. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): The FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. It acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet to negotiate arguments and debate policies. It is also a source of knowledge and information which helps developing countries to transition, modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices, ensuring good nutrition and food security for all. FAO was founded in 1945 with a mandate to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to improve agricultural productivity, and to better the condition of rural populations. Today, FAO is one of the largest specialized agencies in the UN system and the lead

agency for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development. It has 187 member countries and one-member organization, the European Community.

FAO opened its office in Nigeria in 1978 and has been operating for about 41 years in the country. The Country's office currently works directly with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Budget and National Planning, Water Resources and Environment. The FAO provides continuous strategic support to national development programmes and strategies geared towards reducing poverty, improving food security and management of natural resources. From 1978 to 2012, FAO has supported and implemented 111 projects in Nigeria with a total value of approximately US\$70 million. In addition to its resources, the organization also mobilizes financial support for the implementation of country programmes from bilateral donors as well as Nigeria beneficiary member programmes themselves.

7. The Food Security Climate Resilience (FoodSECURE) Facility: This is an initiative under the World Food Programme (WFP). It is a multilateral, multi-year, replenishable fund being developed by WFP to financially support community-centered action to reinforce and build climate resilience.

8. World Food Programme (WFP): WFP is the specialized food assistance organization of the United Nations, and it is the largest humanitarian organization fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Every year, WFP provides food assistance to 80 million people in over 80 countries. In emergencies, WFP is often first on the scene, providing food assistance to victims of disasters such as drought, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, crop failures, war and civil conflict. It also works to strengthen the resilience of people and communities affected by protracted crises by applying a development. The priority of WFP is to achieve 'Zero Hunger' which pledges to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. It works towards the achievement of this goal by partnering with its sister UN agencies in Rome – the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) – as well as governments, other UN and NGO partners.

9. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): IFAD is an international financial institution and a specialized agency of the United Nations dedicated to eradicating poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries. It was established in 1977 in response

to the food crisis of the 1970s. Today, IFAD is the only multilateral organization with a mandate specialized on smallholder agriculture, fishermen and pastoralists. Its programmes aim at improving poor rural people's access to financial services, markets, technology, land and natural resources. As an international financial institution, IFAD also provides grants and loans on favourable terms to countries affected by widespread rural poverty. It is mandated to enable the poor in rural areas to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience. It also provides expertise in the agricultural sector and supports innovation.

3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TOPIC

The topical issue of food safety and good health can easily be understood from a qualitative perspective which would spell out its meaning, importance, effects in today's world development, etc. However, analysis would be incomplete if recourse is not made to quantitative evidence buttressing the foregoing points made on the topic. The different statistics placed below go to extensively support the postulation that is the importance of the world addressing the issue of food safety and healthy dieting. These are factors that determine the future outlook of life itself, world economies and workings. The following standing statistics are stated hereunder.

1. Per the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in March 2018, an estimated 155 million children suffered from chronic malnutrition worldwide, which consequently stunted their growths mentally and physically, and also put them at risk of further diseases.
2. According to the Global Nutrition Report of the International Food Policy Research Institute in 2016, about 3.1 million children under five years of age died from malnutrition.
3. 821 million persons worldwide were estimated in 2017 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to be sufferers of undernourishment, an increase from the amount of 784 million estimated in 2015.
4. Agriculture today serves as the largest employer of labour in the World, especially in developing countries, employing about 40% of the World's labour market. This statistic goes to

prove that in the bid to ending world hunger, policy makers in respective countries do have to create frameworks for the poor in rural households to gain access to agricultural practice. With Agriculture being the primary mode for the provision of food, it is only trite that investments be appropriated into its sector if we are to attain sufficient food supply and food security.

5. Per the UNDP, about 400 million persons worldwide have zero access to health facilities while every 2 seconds, an individual aged between 30 and 70 years dies from non-communicable diseases. One of the targets of the UNDP as such, is to reduce the deaths of children less than five years of age to 25 per 1000 live births and reduce maternal mortality to less than 70 deaths per 100,000 live births.

6. In 2015, the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) recorded a whopping 303,000 maternal deaths worldwide which could have been prevented, had requisite necessities been present.

7. Per the World Health Organization (WHO) as at June 2019, an estimate of 600 million persons fall ill every year due to food borne diseases while 420,000 die every year as a result of such illnesses. Approximately 33 million people worldwide die from foodborne illnesses.

8. Children, being more susceptible to diseases at a tender age such as under five years, are major victims of deaths resulting from food borne illnesses, amounting to 125,000 every year¹⁰. These figures only go to show the rationale behind the bid to attack the vice of foodborne illnesses by spreading knowledge concerning food safety and security.

9. As at 2017, the number of farmers in the United States was approximately 2,000,000; a number amounting to less than 1% of the total population. As a result, there was the Household Food Security Report of the US Department of Agriculture of 2018 which stated that about 11.1% of households in the country were food insecure in 2018.

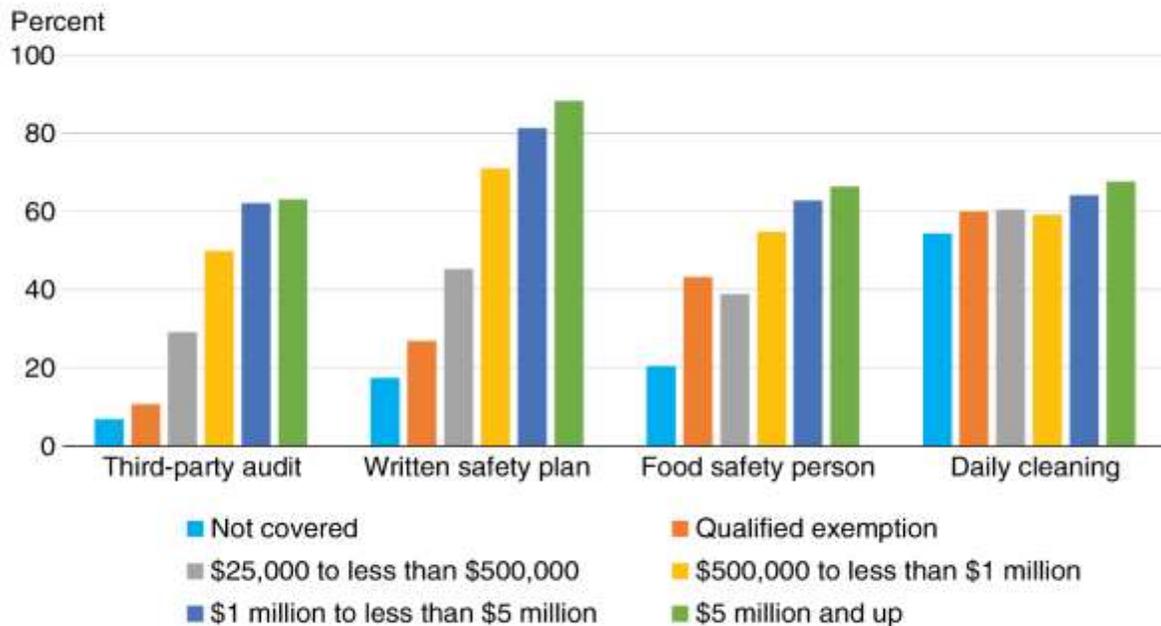
10. Though there aren't well detailed or carved out statistics with respect to the regular outbreak of foodborne illnesses in Nigeria, it is on record that more than 200,000 persons die each year from contaminated feeding and about \$3.6 billion gets pumped yearly into handling outbreaks of foodborne illnesses.

11. Obesity alone per the WHO, accounts for the deaths of approximately 2.8 million persons every year.

12. Per the 2018 Global Nutrition Report, 150.8 million children still remain stunted in growth worldwide and 38.3 million are obese. 2.1 billion adults are also overweight and obese.

13. The figure below shows in simple terms, the fact that food safety practices are to an extent, still not operated by small scale farmers. For developing countries of the world where small scale farmers majorly take up precedence in the industry of agriculture, this posits to be an important flaw that requires reformation.

Greater shares of larger growers—than of smaller growers, those with a qualified exemption, or those not covered—use food safety practices



Note: Dollar values refer to annual grower produce sales.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service and USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Produce Grower Food Safety Practices Surveys, 2015 and 2016.

14. In 2018, 149 million children under 5 years of age which forms 22% of the global under – 5 population were still chronically undernourished.

15. The majority of the world’s hungry people live in developing countries, with 12.9% of the population undernourished.

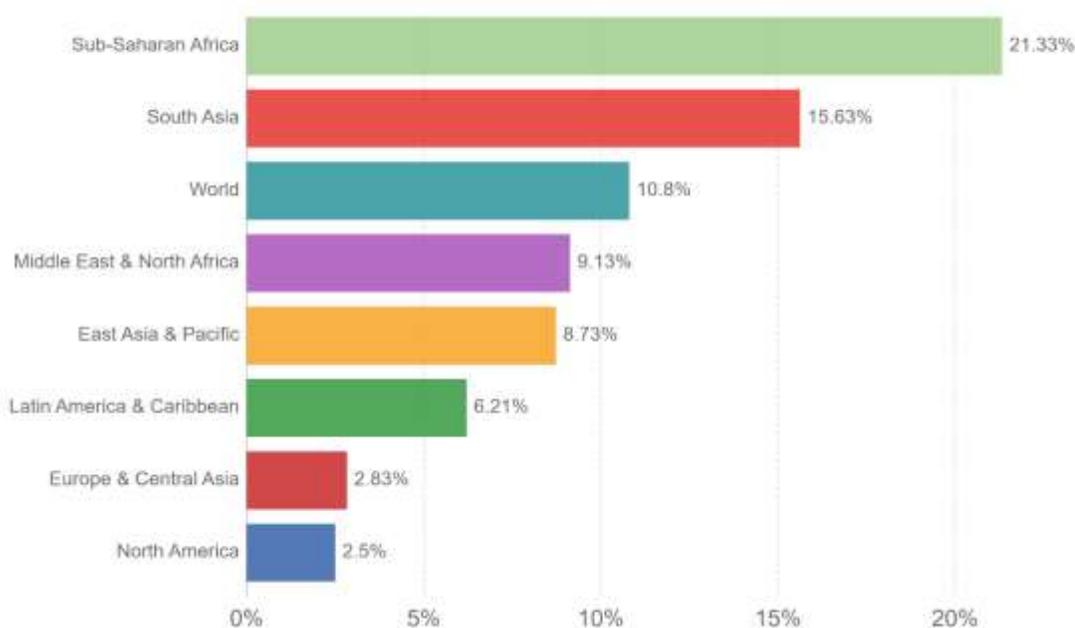
16. 500 million small farms worldwide provide up to 80% of food consumed in a large part of the developing world.

17. If women farmers had the same access to resources as men, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by up to 150 million.

18. Children born into poverty are almost twice as likely to die before the age of 5 than those from wealthy families.

Share of the population that is undernourished, 2016

This is the main FAO hunger indicator. It measures the share of the population that has a caloric intake which is insufficient to meet the minimum energy requirements necessary for a given individual. Countries with undernourishment under 2.5% are automatically given a value of 2.5%.



Source: UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
OurWorldInData.org/hunger-and-undernourishment/ • CC BY

With the foregoing figures seen and stipulated, it goes without saying that indeed, the road to the achievement of food safety and healthy diet, is a squared peg for a square hole, that squared hole being the achievement of world development on all fours. The Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations dealing with zero hunger and good health are trite and if positive review is to be the case by 2030, every nation of the world must be up to the task ahead.

4. SUB TOPICS

AGRICULTURE AS A CATALYST FOR FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTHY DIET

Catalyst: A person or something that speeds up or brings about an event.

Food safety as a term, revolves around the provision of food and imminent security of such food, plus clean consumption by the end consumer. In the achievement of food safety, Agriculture as a constituent part of food production primarily, has been deemed the centrality in ensuring the attainment of zero hunger and good health for all. This is because agriculture involves the production of food resources. It is trite knowledge that without production, no further stages can arise for contemplation.

Per the International Labour Organization (ILO), agriculture refers to ‘all forms of activities connected with growing, harvesting and primary processing of all types of crops, with the breeding, raising and caring for animals, and with tending gardens and nurseries. It is basically a term which refers to the growing of crops and rearing of animals.

The importance of agriculture to the attainment of food safety and security globally has been recognized by all international organizations concerned with the goals of the SDGs such as the WHO, FAO, UNDP, amongst others. For instance, per Christian Schmidt, former Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture in Germany, ‘a productive, sustainable and resilient agricultural sector is key to safeguarding food security all over the world.’

With the fact that agriculture involves the production and supply of food, it has been certified a central part of food safety, security and nutrition. The main problem of the agricultural sector of most countries of the world, however, is inefficiency in production. The fact that food production, processing, storage facilities are either inefficient in effectiveness or insufficient in number, majorly stands as reason for the decrease in potency of agriculture as a means of attaining food safety and security.

Agriculture as a catalyst for food safety boils down to evidentially relevant facts gotten from analysts and thinkers globally which include:

1. The major fact that food safety is ‘a complex process that starts on the farm and ends with the consumer’.

2. The fact that agriculture is the single largest employer of livelihood which tells that it naturally enables an increase in the income of poor households in rural areas and as such, such poor households are allowed to improve their diets.

3. The fact that Agriculture as a revenue breeding premise, stands to be a source of revenue for the government, with such revenue being imputed into areas like food and healthy diet education, enlightenment programmes, etc.

These, amongst others, are primary reasons for the consolidation of agriculture as the foundation of zero hunger and good health. Without the production of food, there can be no existence of nutrition or health. As such, the agricultural sector must be given due attention by respective governments of different countries. Policymakers must create programmes which end in the betterment of the quality of agriculture for rural and small-scale farmers. Programmes such as the Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) of the FAO should be implemented globally as well. The GAPs comprise necessary practices to be followed in on-farm production up until placement of concerned food in the hands of the end consumer. The GAPs are necessary for the achievement of food safety.

There must also be smarter production on the part of agricultural practice. With the prevalent figures on the number of persons undernourished worldwide, it goes to show that mere production of food should not be the focus but the production of necessary nutritious feeding to revitalize good health globally. The problem of climate change which has a huge potency of affecting the safety of food produced, must be combated by respective measures.

As Agriculture also involves food security and storage, besides cleanliness of food, storage facilities must be improved by governments of respective countries.

CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE PREVALENCE OF HEALTHY DIET

It is rather surprising that despite the seemingly general knowledge about good nutrition and the need for its practice in our daily living, statistics stand to show that the widespread of such knowledge is yet to be achieved. The amount of undernourished people worldwide, stands as primary evidence to buttress this postulation. There is still work to be done with respect to

imputing the idea of healthy dieting into the minds of food end-consumers. This is because the issue of malnutrition faced by the world today can be traced to unhealthy dieting.

Some of the challenges affecting the prevalence of healthy diet in family households across the globe include:

1. The market expensiveness of nutritious food: With the number of poor households globally, expensiveness of actual nutritious food stands as a hindrance to nutritious feeding. This is because these households as expected, would resort to cheaper food in light of unaffordable ones, which sometimes may be contaminated and may lead to foodborne illnesses.
2. The mode (professional) of imparting dieting knowledge to rural households: In the process of enlightenment, professionals in nutrition and food dieting often go past the layman perspective to what constitutes nutrients and what does not, in disseminating information to poor households.⁶ It should be understood that these households are mostly illiterate or have no professional linkage with the sciences of nutrition, so an analysis of good nutrition in terms of calories, calcium, iron and zinc, etc. will not be comprehended by the average household, and as such, they would not be able to implement whatever is taught into their daily nutritional routine.
3. Absence of food security: The fact that food security is absent is also a problem for healthy nutrition. When there is no access to food carrying protein or milk which carries balanced diet for instance, there can be no healthy diet attained. This challenge stands to affect the attainment of healthy diet the most. This is why there have been numerous calls to governments of respective countries to pattern pathways for the consolidation of food security in their respective territories.

HEALTHY AND NOT HUNGRY: SUSTAINING A HEALTHY LIFE THROUGH GOOD QUALITY OF FOOD

A hungry world would never be a healthy world. Malnutrition has been a major challenge, and this is shown in the statistics noted earlier in this guide. One in 3 people are malnourished. In 2014, an estimated 158.6 million children under age 5 were affected by stunting which is a

chronic form of malnutrition. Malnutrition places children at a greater risk of dying from common infections and also reduces school work performance.

The proportion of undernourished people declined from 15% in 2000-2002 to 11% in 2014–2016. In the past two decades, the number of undernourished people has dropped by almost half as a result of rapid economic growth and increased agricultural productivity. However, notwithstanding these developments, more than 790 million people still lack regular access to adequate food.

Sustaining a healthy life entails healthy eating, physical activities, weight management and stress management. The Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2 on Zero hunger seeks sustainable solutions towards ending hunger in all its forms by 2030 and achieving food security. The aim is to ensure that everyone everywhere particularly children, has enough good – quality food to lead a healthy life. Achieving this goal will require better access to food and the widespread promotion of sustainable agriculture. This entails improving the productivity and incomes of small-scale farmers by promoting equal access to land, technology and markets, sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices. It also requires increased investments through international cooperation to bolster the productive capacity of agriculture in developing countries.

Overtime, “hunger” has steadily exceeded beyond the availability of food and has extended to food insecurity which is often caused by political instability and natural and human induced disasters. Public investment in agriculture globally is declining; small scale food producers and farmers require greater support and increased investment in infrastructure and technology for sustainable agriculture which would help produce good quality food.

Sustaining a healthy life through good quality food entails the right to adequate food and the achievement of food security. Food security exists 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 healthy life. The four pillars of food security are availability, stability of supply, access and utilization. Youths have a vital role to play in achieving the SDGs because they are, on average, 1 out of every 6 persons in the world. Today, they are 1.2 billion young people aged 15-24 years, accounting for 16% of the global population. The active engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is central to achieving the SDGs.

5. Relating the Topic to the Conference Theme: Youth at the Centre of the Achievement and Implementation of the SDGs.

The Conference theme is ‘Youth at the Centre of the Achievement and Implementation of the SDGs’

According to the United Nations, young people or youths make up 16% of the global population with a number of 1.2 billion persons between the ages of 15 and 24. From this point of view, it can be deduced that young people do hold a vital place in the achievement of the goals of the United Nations, whether from the perspective of quantity or quality. The youth are an important set of persons with respect to the achievement of the SDGs as while the youths may be observers today, they are sure to become instrumental participants in governance situations in the future, and with the evidential growth sprout in world population, the number of youths is only expected to increase with time, giving more room for the accommodation of working hands.

In recognizing the fact that the youth are at the centre for the achievement of the SDGs, it is important to spread awareness amongst this group of persons concerning these goals since the youths are going to be key drivers in the implementation of such goals. In this light, the youth are to be enlightened concerning the goals and the plans established in order to achieve them, the youth should also be duly educated generally as a good thought process breeds positive output. The United Nations has also recognized the need to ensure that the youth are optimally employed and active within the labour market. Different seminars, workshops and conferences would also be organized, with the aim of spreading awareness amongst the youth concerning the 2030 SDGs.

In relating the topic to this theme, it can be deduced that the youth do have a huge role to play in the achievement of zero hunger and good or healthy diet. From this, it is deemed important that there needs to be awareness created about these goals within the populace of the youth. The youth must be involved in activities concerning zero hunger on the one hand plus good health and wellbeing on the other hand. Premises such as agriculture must be expanded to involve the youth in form of employment. There must also be good education given to the youth, and the children who are to become tomorrow’s youths concerning zero hunger and good health.

FURTHER RESEARCH

The following stipulated below are issues which are to be analyzed and understood during the conference:

1. The importance of Agriculture in achieving zero hunger plus good health and diet
2. The situation in selected countries with respect to the scale of achievement of these goals
3. The role of international organizations, besides the United Nations, in the achievement of these goals
4. The probability of successfully implementing these Sustainable Development Goals worldwide by 2030
5. The African Situation concerning the implementation of the aforesaid goals.

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