

3.4. Food security

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Around 70 % of the population is food insecure.1064 The 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI) ranked Nigeria 110th out of 127 countries on 'hunger severity', which is considered 'serious', with undernourishment reaching 18 % of the population in 2024.1065 According to Nigeria's NBS household survey, about two out of three households reported being unable to eat healthy or nutritious food due to lack of money, with 72.2 % and 64 % of female- and male-headed households, respectively, experiencing food insecurity and being unable to eat healthy.1066 A quantitative socio-economic survey commissioned by the Country of Origin Information Unit of the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum to Nigerian polling company NOIPolls Limited,1067 indicated that 16 % of those surveyed managed to afford 'sufficient food for their family', a decrease from 21 % in 2023; whereas 49 % 'hardly managed', and 8 % could not manage.1068 The UN World Food Programme (WFP) indicated that in 2025, 29.4 million and 1.2 million Nigerians were in Phase 3 and Phase 4, respectively, of acute food insecurity1069.1070 Rising food prices due to rising inflation is also exacerbating the cost of living.1071

Constraints in the supply of food include insecurity, low productivity, high transportation costs, depreciation of the Naira, the Russian invasion of Ukraine,1072 and floodings.1073 FEWS NET indicated that flooding in Nigeria usually peaks between July and August each year, and if widespread and above-average flooding occurs, cropped areas, livestock, and infrastructure are negatively impacted, particularly farmland along major floodplains.1074 Flooding events can also lead to detours, increased transportation costs, and higher staple food prices.1075

SBM Intelligence indicated that the national average cost of cooking jollof rice, a main staple and culturally significant dish in Nigeria, increased by 19.7 % between September 2024 and March 2025, and that protein remains the most costly item of the food basket, with the price of turkey, for example, increasing by over 500 % since 2016.1076 Nigeria's NBS household survey indicated that the average consumption rate of meat, fish, and other animal proteins in Nigerian households was 3.2 days per week, with regions in the South having higher consumption rates (South East, 3.5 days per week; South West, 3.9; South South, 4.9) than regions in the North (North Central, 3.4; North-East, 2.4; North-West, 1.6), and urban households having a higher rate (3.5 days per week) compared to rural ones (3.1 %).1077

Germany's BMZ indicated that exposure to poor health and nutrition frequently start at birth.1078 In 2024, about 43.5 % of women of reproductive age consumed a diet that met the standards for minimum dietary diversity.1079 In the first quarter of 2025, the nutrition situation deteriorated 'sharply', with an estimated 3 million children suffering from severe acute

malnutrition (SAM) (an increase from 2.6 million in 2024).1080 In June 2024, UNICEF indicated that one out of three children under the age of five in Nigeria, or around 11 million children, experience 'severe child food poverty', making them 50 % more likely to experience wasting. 1081 According to the GHI, for children under the age of five, 31.5 % were stunned, 6.5 % wasted, and 10.7 % died before the fifth birthday.1082

Northern Nigeria is particularly affected by food insecurity.1083 According to Food Security Cluster, an initiative established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WFP to coordinate food security emergencies, '[f]ood systems in the northeast region remain under severe strain due to insecurity, climate change, economic crisis, and poor infrastructure. Farmers face immense challenges, including land abandonment, loss of livelihoods, and restricted market access, all exacerbated by soaring inflation'.1084 The survey by the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum and NOIPolls Limited showed that about 52 % of those surveyed in Lagos indicated that they 'hardly managed' to afford food, while 11 % indicated that they could not.1085

In Lagos, between 5 and 10 % are food insecure, whereas in Abuja the percentage range is between 20 and 30 %.1086 According to FEWS NET, in October 2024, Lagos and Abuja had an 'acute food insecurity' classification of 1, 'minimal',1087 in contrast to states like Borno, Zamfara, and Katsina where a number of areas were classified as 3, in 'crisis'.1088 The website of the IPC indicated that, for the period between June and August 2025, both Lagos and Abuja were classified as 'stressed'.1089

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  Germany, BMZ, Nigeria – Social situation: Pervasive poverty and corruption, 2 February 2024, url

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  Austria, Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, and NOIPolls, Nigeria: Socio-Economic Survey 2024, url, pp. 6, 11

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  WFP defines ‘acute food insecurity’ as the inability of a person ‘to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger’. WFP, Global Report on Food Crises: acute hunger remains persistently high in 59 countries with 1-in-5 people assessed in need of critical urgent action, 24 April 2024, url

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  FEWS NET, Nigeria - Food Security Outlook, June 2025 – January 2025, 9 July 2024, url, pp. 12-13

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  UNICEF, Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1, January-April 2025, 15 May 2025, url, p. 4

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  Wasting is defined as ‘a life-threatening form of malnutrition’. See UNICEF, 1 in 3 children in Nigeria experiences severe child food poverty due to conflict, climate crises, and inequity, 7 June 224, url

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  GHI, Nigeria, n.d., url

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  Food Security Cluster, Nigeria, n.d., url; Nigeria, NBS, Nigeria General Household Survey - Panel (GHS-Panel) Wave 5 (2023/2024), 2024, url, pp. 38-39

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  Food Security Cluster, Nigeria, n.d., url

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  Austria, Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, and NOIPolls, Nigeria: Socio-Economic Survey 2024, url, p. 7

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  WFP, HungerMap: Nigeria, n.d., url

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  FEWS NET classifies food insecurity into five phases: Phase 1, minimal, Households are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income; Phase 2, Stressed, Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies; Phase 3, Crisis, Households either have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; or are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies; Phase 4, Emergency, Households either have large food consumption gaps which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; or are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation; and Phase 5, Famine, households have an extreme lack of food and/or other basic needs even after full employment of coping strategies. Starvation, death, destitution, and extremely

critical acute malnutrition levels are evident. FEWS NET, What is the IPC?, n.d., url

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