

PRESS RELEASE

Food environments: a new approach on nutrition in Nigeria

10 May 2017
Abuja, Nigeria

Following the *Federal Republic of Nigeria's Agricultural Sector Food and Nutrition Strategy 2016-2025*, launched yesterday by The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition is launching today its latest policy brief "*Improving nutrition through enhanced food environments*" which provides recommendations on how the food environment, or the interface between consumers and the food system, can be influenced to promote the consumption of higher quality diets.

The brief shows that if Nigeria is to meet the targets set out in its Strategy, it will require the private sector, civil society and government to work together on the key priorities, including:

- Implementing economic measures (taxation of unhealthy foods, and subsidies for healthy options).
- Encouraging the marketing and promotion of high quality diets whilst restricting advertising and promotion of unhealthy foods.
- Reformulating, labelling and processing foods in ways that increase their nutritional value and safety.
- Providing high-quality foods in schools and workplace schemes.
- Collecting better data on the quality of food environments.

Alongside the Global Panel's Foresight report "*Food systems and diets: Facing the challenges of the 21st century*", this brief will help frame policies going forward, and inform the implementation of FMARD's Strategy. Following the momentum gathering around the African Leaders for Nutrition Initiative (ALN), the time is ripe for policy-leaders in Nigeria to embrace a new approach to combatting malnutrition in all its forms, one where food systems support safe, accessible and affordable high-quality diets for all.

Nigeria is facing significant challenges to meet four of the five 2025 World Health Assembly targets for improving maternal, infant and young child nutrition, coupled with the emerging threat of obesity and a rise in diet-related non-communicable diseases.

With FMARD's new comprehensive Strategy, which takes a long-term, whole food systems approach to the problem, the Nigerian Government is committed to increasing efforts to combat malnutrition. With a focus on agriculture, food systems and nutrition, the Global Panel is in Abuja with other stakeholders to reinforce this approach.

As Nigeria faces new economic, health and social challenges in the coming decades, the government is preparing to transform its food environment in ways that promote greater diversity, availability, affordability and safety of nutritious foods for all.

According to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh: "The development of this strategy means that the expected impacts of agricultural development on nutrition can no longer be left to chance. With this strategy, agriculture and food systems in Nigeria are being deliberately and strategically harnessed to bear on nutrition."

" It is expected that the successful implementation of this strategy will translate to a sustainable reduction of malnutrition in Nigeria in all its forms, thus unlocking the immense potentials of generations of Nigerians to advance our national economic growth and development."

Learn more: Glopan.org/food-environments

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Notes to Editors

Global Panel Director, Prof Sandy Thomas, is available for face to face interviews on 10 May 2017 at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, or on the phone in the following days.

About the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition

The Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition was established in August 2013 at the Nutrition for Growth Summit in London. It is jointly funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development. It is an independent group of experts and leaders who hold or have held high office and who show strong personal commitment to improving nutrition. The Panel is co-chaired by His Excellency John Kufuor, (former President of Ghana) and Sir John Beddington (former UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser). The Panel aims to provide guidance to decision makers, particularly governments, to inform and promote agricultural and food policies and investment for improved nutrition in low and middle income countries. Glopan.org

About FMARD

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), is a Ministry of the Nigerian government that regulates agricultural research, agriculture and natural resources, forestry and veterinary research all over Nigeria. The current Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is Chief Audu Innocent Ogbeh. Established in 1966, the Ministry has the responsibility of optimizing agriculture and integrating rural development for the transformation of the Nigerian economy, with a view to attaining food security and positioning Nigeria as a net food exporter for socio-economic development. The mandate of the Ministry is to be a significant net provider of food to the global community, through the promotion of Agricultural Development and Management of National Resources in a value-chain approach to achieve sustainable food security, enhance farm income and reduce poverty. Fmard.gov.ng

About the Brief: "Improving nutrition through enhanced food environments"

Food systems are failing to deliver secure access to safe, high-quality diets for everyone. In this context, it is essential to improve food environments so that they can deliver a range of benefits: improved nutrition, healthier populations, and more productive economies. This brief considers current evidence on what works and provides recommendations for action that affect supply dynamics of the food system, aimed at both public and private sector actors. Download a free copy of the brief: Glopan.org/food-environments

About the African Leaders for Nutrition (ALN)

The African Leaders for Nutrition (ALN) seeks to elevate the issue of nutrition on the continent and encourage government ministers, philanthropists and businesses to champion and increase investment in nutrition. Created by Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the AfDB, and John Kufuor, Former President of Ghana and Global Panel Co-Chair, the ALN is envisioned to be an African-led effort of current and former heads of state, finance ministers and other leaders that aims to catalyse and sustain political will and leadership on nutrition investment and the economic case for nutrition investment. Glopan.org/african-leaders

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