

**FOOD INSECURITY/ACUTE HUNGER
WITH SOUTH EAST IN FOCUS: THE
SALIENT POINTS**

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Abstract

African continent especially the ones that are blessed with arable lands unlike others that are grappling with desert encroachment and drought are presently among the league of nations that suffer food shortage and its attendant effect of acute hunger. Although the ominous signs have been there decades ago after the collapse of the oil boom that comes with the reduction of oil export of various nations by OPEC which Nigeria is part of. The effect of this mono-economy is still taking its toll on Nigerians most especially the South Eastern part of this country that depends much on the insecurity ridden Northern part of Nigeria for their agricultural products. Year after year, prices of food items continue to soar from the third quarter of the year 2023, this reaches its crescendo at the first quarter of the year 2024: prices of food items are up by over 400% and still going up. Staple foods like yam, beans, rice, vegetables and cassava with its by-products: garri and fufu are all beyond the reach of everyone not just the common man as it is generally believed before. Now, no one is talking about sumptuousness but to have food on their tables devoid of meat. This work takes a retrospect of Igbo agricultural prowess, looks into the unheeded primary source of hunger in Igbo

South East Nigeria with a focus on Anambra state, itinerant nature of the Igbo, the sharp drift in Igbo norms that turns out unproductive workforce and dwarfing the think home spirit. This paper brings the fact that whatever any Igbo man or woman is at the moment, they are first farmers and with this mindset, together, collectively will mitigate the issue of food insecurity and acute hunger by complementing their trade with the basic which is farming. The researcher will use the food security theory of 1996 by scholars like Amartya Sen.

Keyword: Food, Agriculture, Igbo, Farming
Hunger,

Introduction

Anambra state is one out of the 5 core South Eastern States of Nigeria also known as Igbo land. The state shares boundaries with Kogi state in the north, Imo state in the south, Delta state in the west, Enugu state in the East (Ejike, Ojiako, Onwuzuligbo, Eze 2017, pg. 28). They are Igbo people, domicile in Igbo land and speak Igbo language. Some of the Anambra people are living in the coastal areas while most of them are in the upland. Before now, Anambra people with 177 communities are farmers with yam as their main crop while those at the coastal communities double their own yam cultivation with fishing although most of them also engage in other trades such as blacksmithing, animal husbandry, palm oil production, buying and selling, palm wine tapping,

pottery, carving, oratory, dancing and others to complement their farming.

Before now, the Igbo man's richness is measured by the size of his barn and being a patrilineal society, yam known as the king of crops is only own and cultivated by their men folk which earns them such name and title of (Diji). In the word of Stephens Stone (2023), "Yam symbolizes the sustainability of life, masculinity, and a man's ability to provide for his family. Whether a man's yam harvest is success or failure is used to some extent to judge his success as a provider for his family". The place of yam among the Igbo prompts the renowned 'new yam festival' a seasonal celebration that heralds the harvest and consumption of the new yam. Although Igbo women do not own yam but vegetables and other crops like cocoyam, cassava, corn, okro, plantain and poultry, NESG report of 2024 says, "...women account for 60% of the farming population working as labour suppliers and farm managers, mainly on rural farmlands." They also "...controlled such occupations as food processing, math weaving, and pottery making and cooking" (Falola, 2024).

Farming in Igbo land requires a lot of energy due to the fact that it is not mechanized but manual. Among the Igbo, there exists division of labour in their farming system. Falola (2021) recalls that in the pre-colonial period, women played a major role

in social and economic activities. Division of labour was along gender lines. While the men are charged with the task of making ridges and molds the women are to weed the farms while both jointly engage in clearing of the bushes in preparation for the proper farming. A woman without a husband (widow) and grown up sons usually engage the services of other men to form her ridges and molds.

Early farming in Igbo land especially Anambra state starts within the months of December and January; it is ushered by the first rain while the cultivation is done within the home front, it is the first yams for the early harvest. Aside the use of weather, the state's natural endowments of several rivers and streams take its advantage to involve in all year round farming irrigation popularly known as (mgba mmiri) among the Igbo. Ejike, Ojiako, Onwuzurigbo, Eze (2017, pg. 29) list the sources as "River Niger, Anambra River, Idemmili River and River Ulasi including other streams." Farming in Igbo land is a family affair where everyone plays active part. It is between the father, mother and the children each according to his or her capacity. This necessitates Igbo urge for a larger family because the more children you have the more bountiful the harvest will be. It is also one of the primary reasons Igbo men marry many wives and produce many children to contribute to the food production of the family. The female children of the family during farming period, automatically

assume the position of their mothers while their male counterpart doing same with their fathers especially the grown up ones being in their productive age, take over the construction of molds and ridges as their father assumes supervisory role.

Younger male folks during the farming period after working in their own or family farms, also engage in work extension: take into service as labourers in order to make money and another way of assisting in the community's food production chain. The services of these extension labourers popularly known as "ndị ọlụ ego" in Anambra state are sort by people with large farms and those without grown up children so as to meet up with their responsibility of feeding their families. Those with extraordinary strength are highly sort for in the labour market and in most cases receive higher pay than others. In every community, such groups of men including women extension labourers (ndị ọlụ ego) have their common converging places where people that need their services can conveniently come and pick as many as they want. This is an early morning affair to enable the labourers meet up with the employers' expectations of having value for their money.

This type of services (ọlụ ego) is not limited to adults alone; teenagers both male and female also present themselves to work in others' farms in exchange of money. While the boys take up the making of ridges and molds, the girls among them

specialize in sowing crops such as corn, okro, spinach (ugu) melon, cassava stems, vegetables and weeding of farms among others. The person that hires them for the day's farm works takes the responsibility of their feeding while in the farm. The food is preferably heavy food like fufu (akpu) that will give them enough energy to work, they abhor light food. On no account should anyone be idle during the farming period. Those without enough land for cultivation can reach out to others for temporary use of theirs so not having land is not an excuse.

Children between the age brackets of 8-12 also play significant role in the food chain of the Igbo people. They help in carrying yams, cassava stem, and keg of drinking water and delivery of food to the workers in the farm. Another prominent role children under 8-12 year play in farms is preventing birds from eating crops by forming a combine team of bird scare using various implements including clapping of hands, shouts and singing songs (ichu nnunnu). They come to the farm periodically for this purpose while their parents create caricature in human to scare birds and other farm devourers away whenever they are not present in the farm

Statement of the Problem

In the 70s and 80s, the three regions that make up Nigeria Eastern, Western and Northern regions each at least has great strength in one agricultural

product that not only serves the entire nation but become source of foreign earning to the nation. The Nigerian colonial economy depended on three major export crops. They were cocoa, palm produce and groundnuts which accounted for about 70% of Nigeria's total export (Olalekan, 2019). Then the eastern part of Nigeria produces palm oil in large quantity, the west is known for quantum cultivation and production of cocoa while the north boasts of groundnut pyramids. Babatunde, (2017, pg. 4) recall that then "... the Eastern Nigerian Marketing Board was in Port Harcourt. It traded in soya bean, bean, benniseed, cocoa, groundnuts. But its major commodities were palm kernel and palm oil." Every family according to their strength contributes to the economic growth of the nation. They all have their private farms where they cultivation.

Yam, cassava, beans, rice, cocoyam, wheat, millet, okra, melon, egusi, varieties of vegetables and other uncountable native products are for their immediate family's consumption while some cultivate in commercial quantities for monetary earnings. While market perform integrative roles by providing the links between production and consumption center of the economies within their location (Mba., Obienusi, Obikwelu 2019, pg.19). Those that have fish bring them to the market, sells and use the outcome to buy what they do not produce while those with rice, vegetable, poultry, cassava, yam and other food items do same. The

various village markets serve as the point of contact for this exchange while some go as far as visiting other communities' markets to sell their agricultural products.

Beyond this, Igbo Families Anambra precisely have gardens within their home front that are easily accessible whenever the need arises where they cultivate, vegetables of different types like, pumpkins “*ụgụ*”, waterleaves, “*gbonodi*” bitter leave “*onugbu*”, scent leave “*arigbi*”, pepper and its likes including cocoa yam. Hardly Igbo (Anambra) families buy these things from the market because they are things that are daily needed in their various dishes. Families that run short of any can easily approach their neighbors and get same from their compound free of charge. It only requires sending one of the children to get their consent to pluck the vegetable they need. Vegetables of this type is not a luxury in Anambra families especially those ones they cultivate within their immediate compound (garden) because they are perishables.

The people of Anambra state then pride its self in agriculture to the extent that Schools in the state have school farms and gardens, this cut across the primary and secondary schools. Some portions of the school land serve as the school farm each class has its portion assigned to them with a sign post for proper identification. The schools dedicate a particular day of the week for the school farming

under the supervision of the teachers. It brings about a healthy competition as every class strives to record bountiful harvest each farming year. During this period, the pupils joyfully try to exhibit the farming knowledge they have in their homes by clearing the grasses, making molds and ridges. They are also the ones that willingly contribute the seeds that will be sowed. No external labourer is needed for this but the students who from the beginning do the clearing, cultivation, weeding to the harvesting.

The pupil's agricultural involvement did not end in their schools; they equally assist their teachers in their various private farms. All these contribute to the immediate family food sustainability and the nation at large. Anambra state has several farm settlements dot in various zones of the state such as Igbariam farm settlement, Omor farm settlement including agricultural land in Nkwelle Ezunaka among others. These farm settlements then make room for the concentration of farmers outside their immediate homes possible contributing to the food security of the people.

From the year 1960 to 1973 there exist a great turn around in Nigeria's oil exploration which in turn increase the country's oil export and revenue generation. Talroth (1987, pg. 20) observes that "... the sharp increase in oil revenues in 1973-74 and again in 1970-80 had a pervasive effect on the Nigeria economy." This period is known as oil

boom, a development that changed the agricultural narrative of the entire country Nigeria ndi Igbo inclusive. Babatunde (2017, pg. 13) recalls that “... during the period of oil boom in the 1970s Nigeria realized huge revenues from oil export” but in disguise, Floyd, Ekpoh (2007 pg. 101) “... the oil boom was probably the most important factor behind the debacle in agriculture, disrupting rural life in a variety of ways.” The focus in agricultural products as means of the nation’s main source of foreign earning shifts to oil the then black gold.

There exists a sharp dwindling in agricultural production that affects not only the Nigeria foreign earnings but also impinges the local consumption. This is not limited to these three mentioned strength of the three regions (palm oil, cocoa and groundnut) but every agricultural product down to the least of them all. Surprisingly this passion for agriculture wither away due to young people’s perception that non-agricultural pursuits are more appealing than farming activities (Emefiele, Nweke, Obi 2023, pg. 31).

This mindset of Nigeria focus on oil the export strength of the nation, give rise to mono-economy which boomerang when the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) the world body that regulates oil distribution cut Nigerian quota in the early 80s. This OPEC singular policy brings nightmare and big challenge to the Nigerian government. The Nigerian economy begins to

shake; life becomes unbearable to its citizens while government on its part introduce harsh policies for the economic recovery. Prior to this period, Emefiele, Nweke, Obi (2023 p. 22) recall that “Nigeria produced enough food for her own needs and was a net exporter of food.” But during the global economic crisis of the late 1970s along with the finding of oil and rising revenues things get worse.

Up till today, Nigeria is yet to come out of the effect of its renege in agricultural production and subsequent succumb to oil economy. Between the last quarters of the year 2023 to date, Nigeria is witnessing serious food shortage. The (NESG, 2024) statistics reports that in January 2024, Nigeria food inflation surged to 35.41% from 33.9% in December 2023. The number of food-insecure Nigeria increased significantly, from 66.2m in Q1 2023 to 100 million in Q1 2024 (WFP, 2024), with 18.6 million facing acute hunger and 43.7 million Nigerians showing crisis-level hunger coping strategies as of march 2024 (NESG, 2024). Subsequent to losing their agricultural stronghold to oil, several other factors such as herdsman which are prevalent in the northern parts of Nigeria and have find its way in the southern and western part of the country give rise to food insecurity which translates to when people don’t have enough to eat and don’t know where their next meal will come from (USDA, 2024). On month-on-month basis, the headline

inflation rate in June 2024 was 2.31%, which was 0.17% higher than the rate recorded in May 2024 (2.14%) (Nwachukwu, 2024).

Several states in the North most especially Borno state whose most communities are under the control of Boko Haram, a terrorist group could no longer have access to their farms. This is also the case with Benue state one of the food baskets of Nigeria: they always record intra ethnic crisis and attacks of herdsmen. Quoting IRC prediction Aghogho (2024) reports that food insecurity would be more severe in the northern states of Sokoto and Zamfara where the where the IPC analysis described the situation as critical. Due to insecurity, there are some areas in the North where farmers cannot go and harvest their crop due to fear (Ugwu, 2024). This is the region South Easterners are dependent on their bulky agricultural supplies.

The growth in the population of the people is another contributing factor as its people still upholds the mundane (manual) method of farming when other advanced countries have since embraced mechanized farming for optimal production of food. A development Ejikeme, Ojiako, Onwuzuligbo & Eze (2017, pg. 27) say that "... created a wide gap between demand and supply." The advancement in agricultural production of all year round farming (irrigation) is yet to find its way in the psyche of Igbo nay,

Anambra farmers as they still await the rainy season for their farming. According to Emefiele, Nweke, Obi (2023, pg. 31) the South East "... adoption of traditional agricultural practices contributed to food insecurity in the region" whereas their counterparts in the north that has drought harsh weather and desert encroachment to contain with has since advanced into the use of tractors and irrigation for their farming. The few hands in the south east that still engage in farming could not produce foods that will be enough for their immediate families how much more going public.

The latest is the activities of unknown gun men that have taken over the entire Igbo land, kidnapping people for ransom, killing and maiming their victims. Anambra Diasporas that usually come home during farming season to put one or two crops in the ground for the fear of the unknown no longer take part. Their parents who earn their living through farming for the fear of these gun wielding men have been moved from their villages to live with their children. The worst is even the able bodied men that usually stand in the gap for those outside Anambra communities by receiving money and farming on their behalf are nowhere to be found. Those that are still in the villages nurse the fear of herdsmen that wander in the bushes in Anambra state who take cows out to pasture not on grasses but on their crops. Beyond the pasturing, if the farm owner happens to be a

woman, she stands the risk of being raped or even get killed peradventure she exhibits sign of resistance. Male farm owners in Anambra state stands the risk of being maimed for life or having their life taken away by the blood thirsty herdsmen.

The Igbo of South Eastern part of Nigeria is known for their itinerant nature which gets them exposed to different types of occupation and at the same time adapt easily in an environment and situation they find themselves. Igbo is number one tribe in Nigeria that prides itself of knowing and speaking other ethnic tribes' languages fluently within the shortest period of time. The Igbo ability to adapt to their immediate environment most time cost them their identity especially the present generation of the Igbo family whose children are not able to speak Igbo language despite residing in Igbo speaking areas. This amounts to lost generation and tribe because one's language is his or identity. The Igbo are subject to imbibe, change and discard what makes them tick such as their dressing mode, native foods prominently their traditional means of livelihood (farming). This sharp swift in the name of modernity is virtually seen in most Igbo sphere.

The use of motorcycle in Anambra state popularly called (ọkada) for transportation which dates back to the late 80s turn out to be Igbo man's albatross. Although motorcycle has been in use before then but as personal means of movement just like ones

private car. Adeniyi (2022, pg. 115) agrees that “... the use of motorcycle is not completely new; it is prevalence in most urban centers in Nigeria such as Lagos, Onitsha, Port Harcourt, Akure, Kano, Kaduna, Lokoja and Kabba in Kogi states.” Its debut for commercial purpose which is first seen around Iweka road, Onitsha operating by few men latter garners momentum as its operators continue to grow on daily basis thereby, taking over from the operations of taxis. This can be linked to the rise in the rate of unemployed in the country and the economy (Obilor, 2023). Similarly, Tefe, Jones, Appiah-Opoku (2014pg. 625) see *okada* as a “... means of survival for most poor unemployed people whose livelihood depends on the proceeds from the business.”

The rate at which motorcycle operators sent the use of taxi into oblivion in Anambra state especially the commercial city of Onitsha where their presence is no longer in existence is unimaginable. At every junction both in the villages, urban and semi-urban areas of Anambra state dots beehives of *okada* operators waiting for passengers. An increase Anigwe, Mbanuzuru, Obiokoro, Edeh, Awugosi, Akwuobi, Emmanuel, Ugwuanozie & Anisiobi (2024, pg. 1409) “... attributed to lower acquisition and maintenance costs when compared to automobiles.” Motorcycle (*okada*) is not just for the people of Anambra state alone as other states of the federation record its emergence. Just as Anambra people nickname it (*okada*) other Igbo

communities like Orlu axis of Imo state calls it (inaaga) meaning, are you going? While among the northerners, it is called (achakpa).

From the look of things, it's obvious that every man that has business setback sees his motorcycle as the immediate hope to lean on, this account to the increase in the number of motorcycle (okada) operators. Most youths who found employment in the "motorcycle industry" were displaced economically especially as no alternative employment was provided Obilor (2023, pg. 108). The reason of the above decision is not farfetched, these young men that are able to buy motorcycle for their personal and private use never waste time to convert it for commercial purpose just as a car owner would equally do by converting the car to taxi popularly known as (kabu kabu) in this clime. The use of what they have to solve their immediate problem no doubt has its place in Igbo wise saying (ihe onye gboo ya mkpa ma ya ezuna ohi) meaning instead of stealing, use what you have to solve your problem.

With this truism at the back of their mind, men who fall into this category take up this alternative means of livelihood (commercial cyclist) at least to ensure the families daily bread. Commercial motorcycle operation is therefore widely accepted as a job alternative for the teeming youth (Anigwe, Mbanuzuru, Obi-Okoro, Edeh, Awugosi Akwuobi, Ugwuanozie, Anisiobi 2024 pg.14). Aside the

conditional/inadvertent commercial cyclists, other younger able bodied men see the commercial cyclist as another easy way of making ends meet: after all its cost effective unlike motor car, it only takes one to buy motorcycle and join their league most importantly it's easy to learn. As a result of this motorcycle according to Obilor (2023, pg. 98) '...seems to have replaced the use of buses especially in places that cannot be reached by cars or buses.'

Those in the villages see the commercial motorcycle business as a status symbol and they did not waste time in embracing it. It's worthy to note that even before the advent of commercial use of motorcycle, an average Igbo man first transcends from buying motorcycle as means of transport to motor car. This is more pronounced among the Nnewi community and its environs where almost every family has at least one motorcycle for family errands. In-as-much as motorcycle is generally called (ọkada) it also known as (nwanyi Nnewi) but that's for a particular brand also known as lady's machine. It is part of the Nnewi culture whereby motorcycle must be one of the key dowries they give to their newly married daughters (idu uno).

The notoriety of the commercial motorcycle operators compels the Anambra state government to first give them time frame to operate and later place a ban on their operations by limiting the

routes they should ply to reduce the rate of crime, accident and curb disorderliness in the state (Obilor, 2023). The government harsh policies of banning motorcycles (ọkada) from plying most commercial cities of the state: Onitsha, Awka, Awada, major roads and environs of Onitsha gives birth to tricycle popularly known as Keke for urban transportation. The same classes of motorcycle (ọkada) riders in Anambra state are the same people that transmute to tricycle operators. The switch over connote only change in working implement (from ọkada to Keke) with unchanged class, attitude and age bracket.

The Salient Point

Statistics shows that the operators of these commercial motorcycles are majorly men within the working-age group of 20-59 years. These are men in their economically productive and biologically reproductive years who are supposed to drive the economy of the Igbo land but end up wasting their productive age, earning their living from hand to mouth through ignoble trade of ọkada riding. For this reason, Floyd, Ekpoh (2007, pg. 101) declare that "... many farmers today are elderly and physically ailing." The dangers associated with motorcycle riders proves that a good number of them have one disability or the other as a result of their line of work. Oladipo (2012,) attributes this to their having little or no regard for road traffic regulations and often exhibit poor riding skills in driving. The rate at which

these young men engage in ọkada ridding makes nonsense of the general saying that time is money by channeling their energy wrongly.

As early as seven in the morning, the ọkada riders station at their various loading points waiting for passengers which he is not sure of getting soon. In the course of waiting for a passenger they form groups discussing either football matches, promoting unfounded stories, gossiping and idling away precious time they supposed to make judicious use of. Due to their exposure to harsh weather most of them resort to taking illicit drugs and alcoholic drinks popularly known as (kai kai or ogogoro) as early as 6 – 7 in the morning believing that it charges their system to be active and to see clearly.

Aside the channeling of energy of Igbo able bodied men who should be the driving force of the state's food chain, the Igbo nay Anambra people in their quest and thirst for comfort have converted almost the arable lands into palatial homes. The little remaining spaces receive the modern touch of German floor or interlock a beauty that rob the family of having gardens around the home a hallmark of typical Igbo family. An Igbo man building of a regal home calls for the cutting every economic tress planted by the forefathers and fathers without recourse of its replacement. In place of having a green environment, the highest the Igbo man does is to plant flowers that are not

edible just for beautification alone including flower pots that can conveniently harbour vegetables such as pumpkin (ụgụ), scent leave (arigbi) peppe (ose) green (inine) amongst others.

Fruits such as guava, oranges (oroma), avocado pears (ube oyibo), pears (ube) cocoa nut (akụoyibo) palm trees (ukwu nkwụ), raffia trees (ukwu ngwọ) breadfruits (ụkwa) sour-sup (showamshop) pawpaw (ọkwurụ oru) that form part of edibles and Igbo dishes have gradually going into extinction. Different types of flowers such as masquerade flower tree, Christmas tree, ixora, have taken the places of economic trees in Igbo land. The Igbo man of the present generation is more western than the westerners by losing grip of what makes them whom they are. The areas where water leaves, garden eggs (anara) pepper (ose) that are to flourish within the family compound has closure with interlocks and German floors. The sides of the fencing also have demarcations of flower kerbs that will conveniently contain as many vegetables as possible such as bitter leave (onugbu) pumpkin leave (ụgụ), green vegetable (inine) (utazi) (uzizi) in place of those flowers. The Igbo man misconstrues modernity to be discarding what they already have or known in place of improving or advancing on that which they already have.

Findings and Suggestions

Anambra State is with a population of 5,527,809

representing 2,819,182 for the male and the females 2,708,626 (NPC, 2006) Akariwe (2022) “with a workforce of 3.1 million 75%”. According to European Commission 2024, this labor force includes both employed (employee and self-employed) and unemployed people but not the economically inactive such as pre-school children, students and pensioners. In Anambra state, good numbers of the state male economically active populations are into commercial motorcycle business popularly known as (òkàdà) and its sister tricycle (keke) that end up burying economic need of its people which is mans fundamental need that boils down to agriculture. Quoting Walter Rodney on man’s efforts to deal with his natural endowment Mbalisi (2019 pg. 133) lists “increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-reliance responsibility, and material well-being” with agriculture as sure bet. But the ventures into commercial motorcycle/tricycle business produce bunch of incapacitated male in Igbo land who are living from hand to mouth.

Unlike before when the Igbo living outside their communities get involve in farming by engaging the services of middlemen during farming season such passion has died away. Then the tricycle or motorcycle commercial operators including other artisans temporarily shut down their business to be part of the years farming activities knowing that farming in the zone has a season. Presently, every Igbo (Anambra) person is either a full time

business man or civil servant unlike their counterparts in the North and south west that believe that they are first farmers and combine their trade with farming.

Anambra Transport Management Code (ATMC) for processing IGR for the state captures over 19,015 tricycle operators in the state motorcycles (ọkada) not inclusive. Peter Ezea motorcycle chairman Akuzor Nkpor unit with less than 10mins drive from the main road due to bad road says the unit has about 120 members between ages 25-60. This sudden surge into the commercial motorcycle and tricycle (keke) business just like Dick Whittington Syndrome that led to unprecedented urban growth and drained the rural areas of their young work force (Floyd, Ekpoh 2007 pg. 101) those that are still staying back in the Igbo villages become local champion looking down on agriculture. The above gives credence to the saying of Akuvuo (2019) that the rising of danger of tricycle on the survival of craftsmanship cannot be left unchecked. The elderly men and women in the various villages that are desirous of farming in absence of young bloods in their midst could not do much at their age.

One of the Igbo concept of “Akụ Ruo Ụlọ” meaning think home is another factor that causes food insecurity in Anambra state whereby every grown up male strives to build a house in their various villages: a good concept but poorly

executed. It is a thing of pride for every grown Anambra man to exit the family house and have a house of his own even before getting married. The building of these houses saw to the cutting of every economic tree planted by the Igbo forebears without recourse and without any plan to reproduce them rather, in place of economic trees, are flowers of various types which they use for beautification of their compounds. Economic trees like palm tree, breadfruit, cocoanut, mangoes, pears, avocado pears, guava, apple (ụdala), oranges, and others are gradually going into extinction.

The one time family compound and the backyard that provides green, okro, peppe, bitter leave, green, vegetables such as pumpkin, cocoyam, paw-paw, African beans “akịdị”, sour-sup, garden egg, for the Igbo family immediate nutrition is taken over by interlocks, German floor and kerbs. Flower pots that would have contain scent leaves, curry leaves, water leaves and pepper are in preference of plants that have no economic value. Tomatoes in a verse will serve two purposes: edible and beautification due to the presence of flower and its curly nature. Few Igbo families that still keep to the ethos of garden could not produce enough to go round. In absence of balanced diet children begin to suffer malnutrition and untold hardship. This scenario attests to NESG (2024) Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report that says as of 2022, 83.5% of children (22.9m) under age 5 were multi

dimensionally poor across all states in Nigeria. The censored headcount of dimensional poverty shows that 54.3% of children are nutrition-poor, and 45.2% children are food insecure. Beyond the south east palm produce strength during the Nigerian regional government, every Igbo person should once again recognize their traditional occupation which is farming and give it its pride of place. Planting of vegetables and economic trees should take the place of flowers that have no economic value. There should be minimal construction of German floor, interlock and kerbs so as to give way for family gardens. Random cutting of trees during construction of new houses should be discouraged while a replacement should be made when it becomes obvious that such an economic tree will be a hindrance.

Government should as a matter of urgency instruct the state ministry of education to once again include in its education policy establishment of school farms in all the primary, secondary and higher institutions in the state as this will awaken the consciousness of the importance of agriculture in the life of the children as they continue to grow. Government also should ensure that agriculture as a subject in the basic and secondary education in the state and as a course in the tertiary institutions should be more of practical than theory. Revival of the state's farm settlements that are redundant will give hope to those with passion for farming but have no land to actualize it. Through the farm

settlement the government of the day will be able to come up with the correct data of real farmers in the state for their various agricultural interventions especially in areas of improved seedlings, trainings and advancement in farming technology.

With the submission of (Abdulaziz, Asghar, Sidiqat, Hafiz, Andrew 2023) that hunger has risen in Sub-Saharan Africa in recent years mainly due to rapid population growth, low agricultural production and economic downturns government should refocus the youths to agriculture through the provision of interest free loan, upgrade farming from its current manual to mechanized farming to accelerate bountiful harvest and reduce energy dissipation. Further modifications to traditional farming systems as Floyd, Ekpoh (2007) suggests should be pursued. Abasilim (2018) recalls that before now, main source of water is through major rivers for farming: once again all year round farming throughout Anambra state is possible by reticulating various rivers and streams that cut across the state for irrigation of farms

To minimize losing the state to the commercial motorcycle or tricycle operations, the state government should float rural and city buses, construct inner roads for easy movement of the buses this will to a larger extent reduce and dissuade people's choice for motorcycle (ọkada) and tricycle "Keke" by so doing it will also go into

oblivion and its patrons would have no option than to go back to agriculture.

Conclusion

With the prevailing food insecurity in Nigeria which Anambra state happens to be part of, it's obvious that though bad governance has its fair share of it the people's loss of grip of whom they are to a greater extent fueled the acute hunger in their midst. Although the northern part of Nigeria is witnessing one of the serious insecurity of the nation's time due to insurgence and terrorist activities, they still remain the food basket of the nation including the Igbo. According to Nwanna (2024), eighty-five percent of farmers in Northern Nigeria last year could not have access to their farms even as most of the northern farm produce like tomatoes, onion, rice, pepper, beans, yam, millet, corn, cassava including livestock get its way to the south East. The Igbo (Anambra) is like a consuming ethnic group in Nigeria. granted that the north has massive land but the Igbo culture of not building on what they have makes jest of the little they would have achieved thereby leaving them with none. Going by the Anambra Transport Management Code (ATMC) data of over 19,015 tricycle operators in the state it is a clear testimony of the state's workforce misplacement of source of living. Despite both federal and state government daily singing of economy diversification, the result shows that it's a mere rhetoric full of anecdote with no harmony. Government at all levels should

take holistic approach that will launch its citizens back into agriculture so as to be free from warning of Gbonegan and Essen (2024) that Nigeria might face serious food crisis if new strategies are not deployed amid heightened climate change insecurity and other factors. Most importantly, the Igbo (Anambra) government and its people should resonate the axiom “aka aja aja butere ọnụ mmanụ mmanụ” meaning working/stained hand lubricates the mouth and its sister “aka e mere na-aja anaghi agba aka apụta” meaning a hand that touched the ground never comes out empty as a morale booster to its youth. Hence Ukonu, Wallace, Lowe (2023) aver that women generally are the most affected by poverty food and food insecurity there should be in place serious intervention approach to save them from the attendant effects of poverty which may include maternal mortality rate, malnutrition, diseases and loss of self-esteem bearing in mind that women are the key players in economy activities of their various communities.

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