

A Joint Statement on Nutrition Investment and Partnership in Nigeria

Nutrition is important for health, education, and economic growth—but remains a deep challenge in Nigeria. Despite rapid economic growth, Nigeria is home to the largest number of undernourished children in Africa. Almost one in five children are acutely malnourished and more than one in three children suffers from chronic malnutrition nation-wide, which has implications for their overall health, education, and long-term productivity. The problem is national but significantly more prevalent in the Northwest and Northeast, with these two zones accounting for more than half of Nigeria's stunted and wasted children.

The solutions to undernutrition are multi-sectoral, and include improving food security, increasing access and use of health services, lowering the burden of disease through a safe and hygienic environment, and improving feeding practices particularly for infants and young children.

Today, we are pleased to announce that between our foundations, we have initiated a partnership to tackle this enormous challenge. The Dangote Foundation and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are pleased to announce a commitment of \$100 million over the next 5 years (2016-2020) towards reducing the challenge of undernutrition in Nigeria. This commitment is expected to improve the lives of at least 5 million families by 2020. This investment will promote catalytic, transformational, innovative and sustainable approaches that will create lasting change and empower communities.

We have initiated a joint planning process, wherein both foundations will work together to design and implement programs that address these core issues which are fundamental to improving nutrition. We plan to support efforts that will engage stakeholders from multiple sectors across --agriculture, health, trade, the private sector and the civil society —and motivate actions on preventing and treating undernutrition. We will prioritize investment in states that suffer the highest burden of chronic and acute malnutrition and invest strategically in other states that are already making considerable progress in reducing malnutrition.

We will take a multi-pronged approach, recognizing that both prevention and treatment of undernutrition are necessary to transform the nutrition landscape in Nigeria. Our efforts will focus on community-based approaches and proven interventions linked to behavior change, bio fortification and large scale fortification of staple foods with essential micronutrients and the community management of acute malnutrition. We

would support investments in the local production of nutritious foods. At the core of our joint work is empowerment. We will seek to improve the livelihoods of households by supporting nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs that can increase family income, improve diets, and empower women and youth.

This partnership will promote a collective and multi-sectoral effort to improve nutrition in close collaboration with the government

To sustainably improve nutrition in Nigeria, many actors are needed around the table: the private sector, civil society, and the government.

Leadership is critical. There has been a growing political attention to undernutrition in Nigeria, and the implementation of the *various policies and strategies on food and nutrition security would help* pave the way for stronger nutrition governance, create a supportive environment to increase domestic and international resources for nutrition, and motivate constructive advocacy for more action.

Our efforts will be in support of the Government of Nigeria's commitment to the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, and we will work with the relevant institutions of government such as the Presidency, the National Planning Commission, the Federal Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and others, and the State governments to ensure our work is aligned in support of the food and nutrition security policy priorities of the government of Nigeria. In the spirit of this partnership, we would encourage even more deliberate and significant commitments from the Government of Nigeria at all levels, to step up investments in nutrition as we all work together to make malnutrition history in Nigeria.

Alhaji Aliko Dangote
Chairman
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Date: 01/21/2016

Bill Gates
Co-Chair
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Date: 01/21/2016