



While Nigeria is experiencing a period of slow economic recovery from the 2020 economic recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated policies, other severe risks are likely to increase. High on the list are conflict and insecurity, affecting agricultural activities and investments, and threats from climate-related shocks. In addition, food price inflation rates have soared throughout 2021, and Nigeria's malnutrition burden in rural and urban areas is likely to increase in the absence of interventions in food system policies.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19

The early stages of the COVID-19 crisis ushered in [Nigeria's deepest recession](#) since the 1980s, with the largest impact on the service and industry sectors. This recession stemmed partly from lockdown measures restricting people's ability to work and declines in oil prices, as oil represents more than 80 percent of Nigeria's exports and more than 50 percent of government revenue.

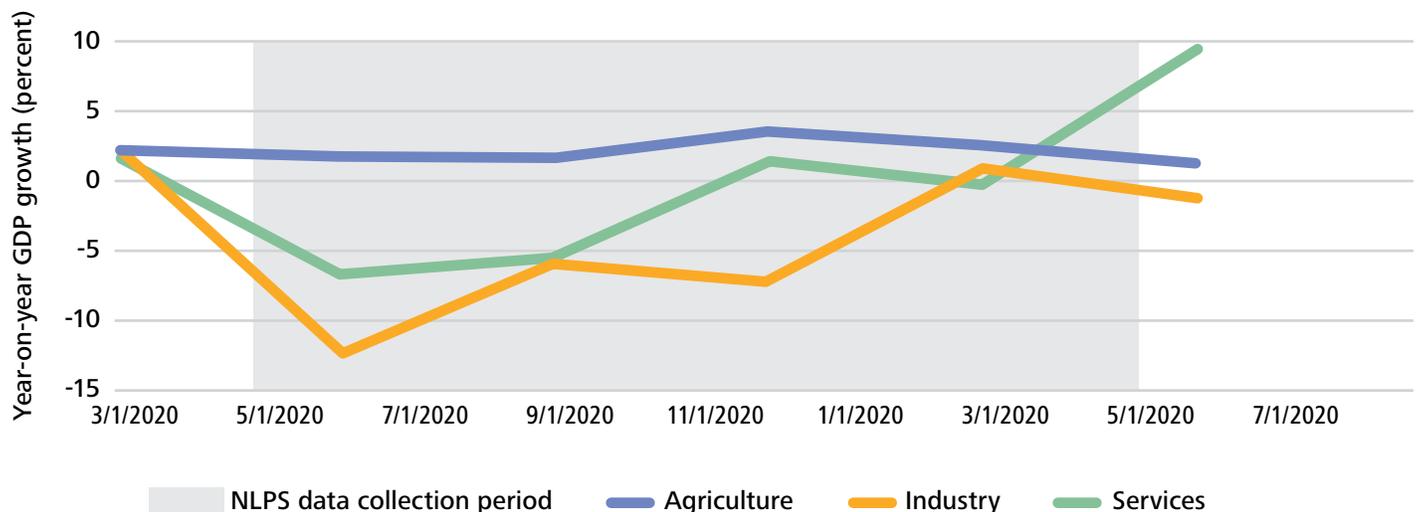
More recently, though economic activity began to recover, [inflation started to accelerate](#), especially for food items crucial for the poor and vulnerable. The crisis exacerbated previous structural distortions stemming from the [2019 border closure](#).

## CGIAR COVID-19 HUB RESEARCH RESPONSE

Though the CGIAR COVID-19 Hub formally began targeted work in Nigeria in late 2020, CGIAR Centers in the country were already collaborating on a joint response to the pandemic to support the government and public. CGIAR communicated with the government through a letter and brief describing CGIAR's work and, in preparation for the launch of the COVID-19 Hub, gave a presentation to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in December 2020. Subsequently, the CGIAR COVID-19 Hub provided a platform for coordinating the work of the CGIAR Centers. Importantly, the Hub promoted stakeholder engagement to ensure that CGIAR work would reflect the priorities of stakeholders. In line with this engagement, the government, through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), provided Nigeria's COVID-19 response priorities to CGIAR as follows:

1. Improve varieties of crops and livestock/fisheries.
2. Enhance seed systems.
3. Revitalize extension systems.
4. Expand storage infrastructure.
5. Empower women and youth.
6. Provide social safety net policies.

## Sectoral GDP Growth



To meet the government's needs, the COVID-19 Hub country team prepared a work plan to address priorities 1, 2, 5, and 6.

Key outputs from the CGIAR COVID-19 response in Nigeria include the production and distribution of high-yield adapted sorghum and millet breeder seed; distribution of breeder seeds for four climate-resilient rice varieties; distribution of farmer-preferred chicken breeds; training of women and youth in agribusiness, followed by the distribution of starter packs to beneficiaries/trainees; training of women and youth on sorghum and millet processing for household nutrition and income generation; demonstration of a crusher for increased utilization of crop residues; identification and training of five decentralized vine multipliers to boost production and supply of commercial orange-fleshed sweet potato vines to households; and further analytical work from phone surveys conducted in July and August 2020 and July and August 2021 to understand the economic impacts of COVID-19. A second-round phone survey was conducted with fish supply chain actors to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on the availability and price of aquatic foods and production inputs.

## USE OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

COVID-19 Hub research findings are arriving at an opportune time for Nigeria's post-COVID-19 recovery. The government considers agriculture a vital component of the economic recovery plan, especially for job creation in the agrifood system. FMARD has recently concluded a draft of the 2022–2025 National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Plan (NATIP), which will serve as the agricultural policy for the country and build upon the achievements of previous policies. The COVID-19 Hub research findings, especially those generating and providing policy evidence, will inform the formulation and implementation of the NATIP.

## CGIAR COVID-19-RELEVANT WORK IN NIGERIA

### Impact of COVID-19 on smallholder poultry farmers in Nigeria

An assessment was conducted 15 months after the onset of the pandemic using structured questionnaires [focused on socio-demography, income, production systems, markets, and food security](#). During the

pandemic, there was a 28.4 percent increase in the number of farmers living below the international poverty line of US\$1.90 per day. In addition, reliance on chickens for food and income was significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) impacted by gender, location, household size, and monthly income. Results show that the pandemic had a significant effect on the livelihoods and food security of farmers. The findings will be essential for developing appropriate post-COVID-19 interventions for smallholder poultry production in Nigeria.

### COVID-19-induced disruptions of school feeding services exacerbate food insecurity in Nigeria

COVID-19-induced disruptions in educational and nutritional services have [exacerbated Nigeria's food insecurity](#). By combining household-level, pre-COVID-19 in-person survey data with post-pandemic phone survey data, along with local government area (LGA)-level information on access to school feeding services, scientists found that the share of households skipping a meal had increased by 47 percentage points. COVID-19-induced disruptions of school feeding services increased household experiences of food insecurity, increasing the probability of skipping a meal by 9 percentage points and the likelihood of going without eating for an entire day by 3 percentage points. Households residing in states experiencing strict lockdown measures reported further deterioration in food security. Overall, single mothers and poorer households experienced relatively more significant food security declines due to school feeding service disruptions.

## NEXT STEPS

While the CGIAR COVID-19 Hub will formally close in 2021, the country team will continue to interact with policymakers in FMARD and other institutions to explore ways to inform the NATIP and other policy processes with research findings. For example, the household survey analysis suggests four policy propositions: prioritize investment in job creation to curb income loss; enable households to build their wealth base (e.g., land tenure security or livestock) to enhance resilience to shocks; revisit the targeted approaches of social safety net programs to improve the effectiveness of such programs; and devise and implement conflict resolution processes to encourage investment and enhance productivity.

The CGIAR COVID-19 Hub is led by the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health.

To learn more, visit [www.a4nh.cgiar.org/covidhub/](http://www.a4nh.cgiar.org/covidhub/)

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