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AN ASSESSMENT OF FOOD SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY IN AFRICA

Dr. Farouk Ibrahim Bibi-Farouk
Department of Political Science and International Relations
University of Abuja
farouk.bibi@uniabuja.edu.ng or faroukbibi2@gmail.com
+234 803 598 8565

Abstract
This paper conducted a political economy assessment of food security and economic dependency in Africa. Despite having great agricultural potentials with arable land and clement weather conditions, Africa as a continent has continued to be a net importer of agricultural goods over the past few decades. In the early 1980s, Africa lost its position as a world-renown exporter of agricultural products (including food) due to a deliberate neglect of agriculture, with consequential negative impact on food security. The systemic consequences of economic dependency have not been taken into account in previous attempts to increase food production in Africa; as a result, this study looked at how economic dependency has impacted food security in Africa. The theoretical underpinning of the paper is the dependency theory, and secondary data sources were analyzed. According to findings, the total economic dependence caused by colonialism which was subsequently reinforced after WWII with the creation of the global system under Breton Wood Institutions is not unrelated to Africa's dependence on food imports. The continent's dependence on imported food has led to the loss of traditional farming knowledge and methods. This disruption lessens local communities' capacity to produce enough food. It also disrupts their capacity to plant a variety of nourishing foods and weakens their ability to adapt to shifting environmental conditions leading to malnutrition, marasmus, hunger, inequality, sicknesses and diseases and other malaises of food poverty in the continent. Therefore, in order to attain food sufficiency, African nations should go beyond food importation and mobilize domestic ability to improve local food production. Research, value addition and infrastructural development and other deliberate strategies need to be adopted by African countries to attain food security.
Keywords: Food Security, Food Insecurity, Economic Dependency, Africa, Development,

INTRODUCTION

In 1974, following famines in the Sahel and Darfur, the term "food security" was introduced (Gerlach, 2015), and it first focused on food production and accessibility. These famines, as well as subsequent ones in Africa, were not caused by a lack of food production in the area. Rather, they resulted from governments' failure to coordinate and monitor rural food production, storage and distribution networks as well as from their incapacity or unwillingness to deliver grains on time (de Waal, 2018). So, poverty, government capacity, and political will to mediate are all integrally tied to food security (Reutlinger & Selowsky, 1976).

Despite Africa's immense agricultural potentials, the continent as a whole, has remained a net importer of agricultural goods for several decades. In the early 1980s, when the prices of raw materials that accounted for the lion's share of Africa's agricultural export earnings (mainly coffee, cocoa and spices) declined and local food production slowed, the continent's agricultural imports started to outpace its exports for the first time. Agricultural imports reached an all-time high of $47 billion in 2007 (FAOSTAT, 2011).

Food systems are particularly vulnerable to the effects of external shocks because of the fundamental physical, economic, environmental, and institutional exposure of agricultural

production. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that over 280 million Africans, or 21% of the continent's population, are food insecure (FAO, 2021). More people struggle with food insecurity in this region than anywhere else on the planet. At least 50% of Africans are employed and make a living in the agriculture and food sectors, which account for about one-fourth of the continent's gross domestic product (Hatab, 2002).

About 85% of agricultural production on the continent of Africa comes from smallholder farmers, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. African countries also heavily depend on the global market to supply the food needs of their rapidly growing population. Between 2016 and 2019 (UNCTAD, 2022) it was estimated that over 80% of the food consumed domestically was imported from outside the continent. This resulted in an estimated annual food import bill of about US$40 billion. Due to these characteristics, the food and agricultural industries in Africa are more vulnerable to exogenous shocks which worsen the effects on food security and nutritional outcomes.

The many complex and interrelated causes of food insecurity in Africa are frequently discussed in reports and inimical factors including low yields and output, subpar tools, a lack of credit and infrastructure investment, corrupt government practices, and policies have severally been identified as responsible for Africa's food insecurity. Studies have ignored the ways in which the colonial system produced economic dependence, which was further cemented through a global economic integration system since after World War II. Therefore, for more than 60 years, international financing organizations have primarily focused on agriculture as a technical issue, trying to address the underlying causes without considering the historical context; this has made it more challenging finding solutions. It is from this background therefore that the paper looks at economic dependence and how it impacts food security in Africa.

METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative, as the objective is to examine variables that are not numerically presented. Since the data for this study is generated from secondary sources, this study adopts secondary data analysis, which is the process of analyzing data collected from other researchers who primarily collected data for other purposes. This method of analysis provides the researcher with enough information and also saves time and resources.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Food Security

It was in discussions of global food issues in the 1970s, that the phrase "food security" was first used; Food Security was defined in terms of food supply at the 1974 World Food Conference as the constant availability of enough basic commodities on a global scale to support a level of food consumption that is steadily rising while balancing variations in output and price (FAO, 1983).

The FAO redefined food security in 1983 by placing emphasis on food availability and the balance between food demand and supply, ensuring that everyone always has physical and financial access to the essential foods they need. Other international bodies have since used different definitions, such as, "Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life" (World Bank 1986). According to the FAO Committee on World Food Security, it is when, "all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food they need…" or, "When all people, at all times, have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life", that we can talk of food security (USAID 1992),

But for the purposes of this study, we will go with one of the most well-known and widely acknowledged definitions of food security which is the definition offered by the 1996 World Food Summit: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".

Food Insecurity

Contrarily, food insecurity refers to a lack of access to enough food which can be either temporary or chronic. Thus, food security is the absence of food insecurity. A persistently inadequate diet brought on by a lack of resources to purchase and prepare food, according to Adeoti (cited by Metu et al., 2016), is the cause of chronic food insecurity. Given that nutrition and health are responsible for the physiological functions of food, FAO (2010) describes food insecurity as the result of insufficient nutrient-rich food consumption.

Families suffer from hunger and ill health when people are unable to feed their families enough. One's capacity to work and lead an active, healthy lifestyle is diminished by ill health. For future generations, a nation's capacity for economic growth is unstable due to poor human development (Otaha, 2013). The opposite of food security, or food insecurity, is the inability of households or individuals to meet the necessary consumption level in the face of fluctuating production, price, and income (Maharjan and Chhetri, 2006). Food insecurity is the lack of access to enough high-quality and quantity of nutritious food for an active and healthy life. When a household lacks reliable access to food that is of high enough quality and quantity to support an active and healthy lifestyle, it is said to be experiencing food insecurity. Food insecurity is when people cannot guarantee what they eat, how they eat, why they eat and when they eat.

Economic Dependency

It is said that there is an economic dependency when one country or region is significantly dependent on another for its economic well-being with the dependent nation or region being economically subordinate to the dominating one, distinguished by an unequal distribution of power and resources. Economic dependency can manifest in a variety of ways, including trade imbalances, foreign investment, reliance on certain technologies, and financial dependence (Frank, 1967).

Economic dependence can have both favourable and unfavourable effects. On the one hand, it might result in more international investments, easier access to cutting-edge technology, and chances for trade-based economic growth. It may, however, also lead to a loss of sovereignty, a limited amount of domestic industrial development, and underdevelopment. Economic dependency entails the inability of a country and people to determine their economic fate and meet their economic needs at a particular time without relying on others.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The paper relied on the dependency theory as a framework of analysis. Dependency is a socio-political and economic theory that aims to clarify why many countries in the Global South, particularly those in Africa, are underdeveloped and have high rates of poverty. It makes the case that these nations' economic development is constrained by their reliance on more powerful and affluent countries, who exploit their resources and uphold unfair trade practices. This theory has been used to assess the issue of food insecurity in Africa, and it highlights the structural factors that contribute to the continent's vulnerability to hunger and malnutrition (Emeh, 2013). Indeed, the earliest promoters of the Theory of Dependency like Andre Gunder Frank posited that underdevelopment is a product of a historical, political and economic

relationship with European capitalism that ensures the exploitation of the global south. (Frank, 1967)

Dosman (2006), while writing on Raul Prebisch explained that the Prebisch-Singer idea explaining effects of dependency of developing nations was developed from the experiences and studies on the United Nations Commission for Latin America and the Caribbeans when it was realized that the terms of trade in international trade in primary export commodities including food crops did not favor exporting countries and is designed to keep them in perpetual bondage and underdevelopment.

The central cause of Africa's food insecurity, according to dependency theory, is its long history of and ongoing reliance on outside parties for its agricultural productivity and food supply. During the colonial era, agricultural systems in Africa were developed by European powers that were primarily focused on exporting cash crops in order to meet the demands of their local markets. Because of this, it was difficult to produce enough food as local food crops were neglected. In addition, colonial governments frequently enacted exploitative land tenure systems that barred indigenous farmers from farming and limited their access to arable land (Emeh, 2013).

After gaining independence, many African states continued to rely on exporting agricultural products, minerals, and oil as a main source of foreign exchange earnings. These countries' reliance on exports made them vulnerable to shifts in the prices of commodities on a global scale. When prices fell, less was invested in agriculture, which increased food insecurity and hurt African economies.

The dependency theory argues against unfair trade relations between Africa and the industrialized nations. African nations frequently face barriers when attempting to access global markets as a result of trade restrictions put in place by wealthier nations. These restrictions include high tariffs, incentives for domestic producers in industrialized countries, and non-tariff barriers like sanitary and phytosanitary regulations. African farmers consequently struggle to compete on a global scale to export their agricultural products. This limits their ability to invest in farming and increase agricultural productivity to improve food security (Rakotoarisoa, Iafrate, and Paschali, 2012).

The theory further emphasizes that political factors like corruption and bad governance contribute to food insecurity in Africa. This idea holds that political elites in African countries frequently collaborate with outside parties to safeguard their wealth and power at the expense of the majority of the population. This cooperation could manifest itself in corrupt activities like embezzling public funds or giving foreign investors the upper hand over local farmers. These behaviors undercut the initiatives to boost agricultural output and food security (Emeh, 2013).

FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA

Food insecurity in the world is rapidly increasing. According to projections, 828 million people, or 10.5% of the world's population, were hungry in 2021, comparatively, 2.3 billion people, or 29.3% of the world population, experienced moderate to severe food insecurity same year. The continent of Africa is the one that has to deal with the most regional disparities. In comparison to 9.1% in Asia, 8.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 5.8% in Oceania, and less than 2.5% in North America and Europe, 20.2% of Africans were estimated to be food insecure in 2021. According to Delgado, Tschunkert, and Smith (2023), things would get worse over the years.

According to the Africa Regional Overview of Food and Nutrition Security and Nutrition Report (2021), Africa is not on track to meeting the objectives of eradicating hunger, ensuring access for all people to safe, nourishing, sufficient food throughout the year, and

eradicating all forms of malnutrition. According to the State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) report for 2021, 282 million people in Africa were undernourished, an increase of 49 million from 2019. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of the affected areas are located, 24.1% of the population and 7.1% of the total population are undernourished (FAO, ECA, and AUC, 2021). The enculturation of Africa into the global economic system that led to dependency status can be viewed as the root cause of food insecurity and teleguidance in Africa. Onyeaka, Tamasiga, Nkoutchou, and Guta (2022) highlighted some immediate causes that are the main reasons why food consumption is higher than production in Africa, they are:

Population Increase: Over the years, Africa has seen tremendous population growth; projections indicate that by 2050, the continent's population will have doubled. Due to the strain on food supplies caused by the growing population, consumption levels have increased.

Inadequate Agricultural Infrastructure: Many African nations struggle with inadequate irrigation systems, restricted access to cutting-edge farming technologies, and inadequate transportation networks. The ability to produce enough food to meet the rising demand is constrained by several variables, which reduce agricultural production.

Environmental Issues and Climate Change: Africa is extremely vulnerable to climate change, which has a negative impact on agricultural production. Farmers face enormous challenges as a result of rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, and a rise in the frequency of extreme weather conditions like floods and droughts. The difference between the amount of food produced and consumed can widen as a result of these climate-related issues, which can also result in crop failures, lower yields, and livestock losses.

Poverty and Restricted Access to Resources: A considerable percentage of the population in many African nations lives below the poverty line, making poverty a pervasive problem. Farmers' capacity to enhance production is hampered by limited access to financial resources, land, and inputs like seeds and fertilizers. Low production levels are sometimes a result of insufficient investment in agriculture.

Post-Harvest Losses and Food Waste: Significant food losses occur in Africa as a result of inadequate storage facilities and subpar post-harvest management procedures. Up to 30% of harvested crops are thought to be lost owing to poor handling or storage. The amount of food that is available for consumption is further diminished by food waste that occurs throughout the supply chain.

Political Unrest and Conflict: A number of African nations have gone through protracted periods of political unrest and conflict, which impede agricultural activity and reduce food production. Increased levels of food consumption compared to production are caused by population displacement, infrastructure destruction, and market disruption.

Limited Market Access: Because of inadequate infrastructure, constrained transportation alternatives, and a lack of market knowledge, many small-scale farmers in Africa have trouble reaching markets. As a result, they are unable to sell their food for fair rates, which discourages investment in agriculture and lowers production levels overall.

Dependence on Food Imports: To meet their consumption demands, some African nations significantly rely on food imports. Numerous aspects, including limited domestic output, trade restrictions, and economic limitations, can be blamed for this dependence. The difference between consumption and output levels widens as a result of import dependency.

A Lack of Agricultural Research and Development: Innovation and the adoption of better farming methods are hampered by a lack of funding for agricultural research and development. Farmers are unable to maximize their productive potential due to limited access to information and technology.

Understanding the Nexus between Dependency on Food Imports and Food Insecurity

In terms of infrastructure, domestic savings, and public finances, the governments of Africa at the time of their independence ruled over underdeveloped economies (World Bank, 1994). Independence did not bring about the necessary cultural, political, and economic changes to ensure that governments met the needs of the people and connected economic development to societal goals (Englebert, 2009). The only continent where increasing export output during the 1980s and 1990s led to a drop in per-capita food production was Africa (Dietz, 2013).

Despite the fact that the majority of African countries were net exporters of agricultural goods, between 1960 and 2000, grain imports rose from 2.5 to more than 15 million tonnes, and by 2010, the average per capita income in Africa was less than half that of other developing countries.

Poverty continues to be the main barrier to getting food. Millions of people, particularly in rural areas, are vulnerable to urban-biased distribution, foreign aid, commodities speculators, fluctuations in foreign exchange rates, and the geopolitics of global food trade (Dodo, 2020). Colonialism made it possible for food systems to become globalized, making African countries net importers of food (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989).

Understanding how dependency on imported food products has led to food insecurity in Africa comes in different dimensions, but rooted in the historical experience of colonialism and imperialism, food dependency becomes a disturbing phenomenon through the following factors:

The Emphasis on Exports: The colonial and post-colonial policies of giving much more emphasis to export cash crops against native food crops has significantly reduced the quantity of local foods available to the people. Africans become more dependent on imported food while the ongoing reliance on export production to pay back development and service debts has proven to be an ineffective approach consequently creating more food dependency.

When commodity prices declined in the late 1950s and early 1960s, farmers were encouraged to increase export crop production (World Bank, 1983). In Ghana, cocoa production doubled between 1958 and 1966 and occupied at least 50% of the country's arable land; in Kenya, tea and coffee production also increased; and by 1976, groundnut production in the Gambia and Senegal had taken up 70% and 55% of the country's arable land, respectively (Darkoh & Ould-Mey, 1992).

Foreign Grants and Aid: African governments are granted aid in form of finished food produce for direct consumption from international donors which inadvently impacts on local productivity. For example, governments accepted nearly half of US loans and grants in the form of cereals, which were sold at or below the cost of production in Africa, pushing down local prices and rendering local production unprofitable (Boussard et al., 2006).

Market Price Volatility: Food prices have not been stable thus making producers very vulnerable to price fluctuations. By maintaining overvalued currencies, maintaining zero tariffs on food imports, prescribing crops, and setting prices, governments discouraged investment in domestic food production and markets and promoted the production of export crops (Goyal & Nash, 2017).

Dependence on Fertilizer: Due to the socio-economic conditions in Africa in the 1960s, high fertilizer prices, a lack of infrastructure, extremely low per capita income levels, and government market interventions was not feasible (Bjornlund et al., 2020). Africa imports more fertilizer than it produces. The application rate of African manufactured fertilizer covers only 5.9 kg per hectare of the 20kg per hectare requirement. Notwithstanding the requirement estimate of 6.7 million ton per annum, Africa has a 0.9 million supply gap. (UNDP, 2022). Prices for fertilizer in Africa are at least two times higher than those in Asia. Furthermore, most of the imported fertilizer does not necessarily suit Africa’s soil specifications. This has

presented problems of nutrient imbalance, soil pollution and other environmental degradations that ultimately reduce soil fertility and yield.

International Development and Finance Institutions: Contrary to the development roles the Bretton-Woods institutions (especially World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund and The World Bank) played in the rebirth of Europe after the Second World War, their relationships especially as regards debt issues in sub-Saharan Africa especially from the 1950s significantly changed when they began to focus on developing nations of the global south. These changes were primarily brought about by the macroeconomic changes in the Global North which required them to be more profit reliant than development benevolent.

The institutions themselves were not equipped to cope with the challenges of poverty and lack of development (Yadda 10th Class, 2010). Between the early 1970s and 1980s, the recession that followed the world oil crisis had a significant negative impact on the economic prospects of the Global South because it worsened terms of trade and increased current account deficits. The Bretton Woods institutions could have avoided the economic dependence and failure of the countries of Africa if they had altered their lending practices, backed initiatives that strengthened national economies, and established fair trade agreements for exports from Africa. The World Bank and commercial lenders sponsored projects without dependable evidence of their profitability or financial responsibility for their outlays (Adams, 1992).

Several African countries were unable to pay back their debts because of careless spending, fluctuating currency values, the rise of the US dollar (1980–1985), high interest rates (Little and Watts, 1994), and declining commodity prices since the nineteen eighties. Between 1980 and 1998, South Sahara Africa made four full payments on its original debt, but the outstanding balance tripled. This effectively classifies the debt burden as a debt trap! The IMF's structural adjustment policies (SAPs), which included limiting foreign companies' access to natural resources and making significant cuts to spending on things like food imports, agricultural subsidies, education, health care, and housing, were subject to refinancing (von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009).

Security Implications of Food Dependency in Africa

It has become common knowledge that food importation is a threat to food security in Africa. While imports can give people access to a wide range of foods, a continent's food security may be jeopardized by an over-reliance on imported food (Rakotoarisoa, Iafrate, and Paschali, 2012). A thorough investigation examining food imports and how it affects food security in Africa observes the following effects:

Reliance on International Markets while ignoring the local Agricultural Industry: It is an irony that while African nations rely heavily on primary export crops for revenues, they depend significantly on foreign imports for food. In order to meet domestic food demands, African nations rely heavily on imports, particularly for basic commodities like rice, wheat, and maize. The reliance on imports from foreign markets for necessary food commodities is one of the biggest food security risks posed to Africans. Due to their reliance on exports, African countries are more susceptible to changes in trade policy, currency exchange rates, and global commodity prices. Food security in these nations is extremely vulnerable to supply chain disruptions and price increases (Onyeaka, Tamasiga, Nkoutchou, and Guta, 2022).

The neglect of local agricultural production might result from an overreliance on imported food. The expansion and improvement of the agriculture industry is hampered when imports are prioritized over indigenous production as it discourages investment in agriculture, limits employment prospects, and threatens rural livelihoods. This neglect may have long-term effects further aggravating food insecurity, it also results in a fall in agricultural output and self-sufficiency.

Vulnerability to Global Shocks: African nations are more susceptible to global shocks like climate change, natural disasters, and political instability because of their reliance on imported food. Droughts or floods brought on by climate change have the potential to disrupt global food supply systems, resulting in shortages and price increases in importing nations. Similar to this, trade restrictions or embargoes can be brought about by political unrest or commercial disagreements between exporting nations, further limiting access to imported food. The impact of these outside shocks on food security in Africa may be significant. A recent example is the wheat scarcity created by the on-going Russia-Ukraine war since February 24th, 2022. It has been estimated that African nations have witnessed price increases as a result of shortages created by Russia's threat to shipping on the Black Sea and its withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative guaranteeing supply on 17th July, 2023. On the 28th July 2023, African leaders visited Moscow to appeal to President Vladmir Putin to ease the restriction of food supply from Ukraine and Russia. Escalation of the Russia-Ukraine war means more barriers to grain transit, and a principal point of impact is East Africa who source 80 percent of their wheat needs from Russia and Ukraine, and will face significant disruption to their supply chains if Russia does not return to the Black Sea Grain Initiative. (Karasik, 2023)

Economic Costs and Repercussions: For African countries, food importation has a big economic impact. Food imports necessitate sizeable foreign exchange reserves, which can strain the balance of payments and raise an economy's vulnerability. Using foreign currency to pay for imports can cause the value of the local currency to fall, raising the cost of imports and escalating inflationary pressures.

Disruption of Local Food Systems: Local food systems have been disrupted by an overreliance on imported food, so have traditional agricultural practices. When imports are given top priority, local farmers may have trouble selling their produce, which may have a negative impact on agricultural incomes and rural livelihoods. This may lead to the loss of traditional farming knowledge and methods, such as seed saving and crop diversification. Additionally, the disruption can lessen local communities' capacity to produce a variety of nourishing foods and weaken their ability to adapt to shifting environmental conditions.

Loss of Cultural Identity: In Africa, food is a fundamental component of cultural identity. The loss of cultural diversity in diets and traditional culinary practices might result from an overreliance on imported food. This loss has an impact on nutrition and health in addition to cultural legacy. Traditional African diets frequently contain a variety of plant-based foods that are high in nutrients and can improve general health. The consumption of locally grown and culturally significant crops may fall as a result of the shift towards imported food, which may have an adverse effect on dietary diversity and nutritional status.

Recommendations to improve Food Production and Consumption in Africa

To address the problems affecting food production and consumption in Africa, a number of initiatives have been put in place at the national, regional, and international levels. These programs aim to improve agricultural productivity, promote sustainable farming practices, boost food security, and address nutritional deficiencies.

However, to increase food production and security in Africa, local agricultural productivity must be increased using indigenous policies and programs. This can be done in a number of ways; for example:

Investing in Research and Development: Growing agricultural R&D spending can result in the creation of high-yield crop types that are resistant to pests, diseases, and unfavourable weather circumstances. This covers the adaptation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) that may boost crop production.

Supporting Sustainable Farming Methods: Encouragement of the use of sustainable farming methods including organic farming, agroforestry, and conservation agriculture can assist increase soil fertility, lessen erosion, and save water resources. Additionally, these practices aid in both reducing resistance to the African climate and also adapting to climate changes.

Providing Access to Quality Inputs: Improving the productivity of smallholder farmers requires ensuring their access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, and other inputs. Subsidies, loan options, and the development of input supply chains can all be used to accomplish this.

Irrigation Development: Increasing irrigation infrastructure can reduce the effects of unpredictable rainfall and droughts. This entails the building of dams, reservoirs, and modest irrigation networks.

Strengthening Market Access: Improving market access is crucial for smallholder farmers to sell their produce at fair prices and access inputs. Several measures can be taken; such as: developing rural infrastructure by building rural roads, storage facilities, and markets can cut post-harvest losses and make it easier to transfer agricultural goods from rural areas to urban markets.

Market Information Systems: Setting up systems that offer real-time data on prices, demand, and supply can assist farmers in making decisions about what and when to produce and sell.

Value Chain Development: Improving the connections between farmers, processors, wholesalers, and retailers can help smallholder farmers have easier access to markets. This involves promoting the formation of farming cooperatives and making loans and technology more accessible.

Capacity Building: To increase food productivity, smallholder farmers' capability must be increased through training programmes, extension services, and knowledge-sharing platforms. Among them are:

Education and Instruction of Farmers: Farmers' productivity and income-generating capacity can be increased by giving them instruction in contemporary farming methods, climate-smart agriculture, financial management, and marketing.

Extension Services: Boosting extension services can make it easier for farmers to learn about agricultural best practices and expertise by increasing the number of extension workers, enhancing their training, and implementing digital technology.

Platforms for Information Sharing: Creating platforms for information sharing and collaboration among farmers, researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders can stimulate innovation, encourage learning, and ease the adoption of new practices and technology.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, economic dependency has significant effects on food security in Africa. It exposes countries to vulnerability from external shocks, limits agricultural development, erodes food sovereignty, and contributes to inequality and poverty, crises and other associated challenges.

The African continent is fertile, but among many factors, decades of colonialism and imperialism have turned Africans from producers of food crops to producers of cash crops, thus reducing food production and making the continent dependent on food importation. Addressing these effects requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on promoting sustainable agriculture, improving infrastructure development, investing in domestic food production, strengthening local markets, and enhancing regional cooperation, as this will help Africa achieve food sovereignty keeping off economic dependency on imported foods.

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