

Response to Claudio Schuftan on “Three decades of fighting against hunger in Africa: Progress, challenges and opportunities”

Olutosin A. Otekunrin

Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Nigeria

ORCID: 0000-0001-5889-7875

Corresponding author: otekunrinolutosin@yahoo.com

Oluwaseun A. Otekunrin

Department of Statistics, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

ORCID: 0000-0002-4193-1413

Barbara Sawicka

Department of Plant Production Technology and Commodity Science, University of Life Sciences in Lublin, Lublin, Poland

ORCID: 0000-0002-8183-7624

Idris A. Ayinde

Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Nigeria

ORCID: 0000-0003-1815-609X

The authors express appreciation to Claudio Schuftan for his thought-out response on our paper: *Three decades of fighting against hunger in Africa: Progress, challenges and opportunities*, which appeared in Volume 11, Number 3 (Otekunrin *et al.*, 2020) of this esteemed journal.

We also acknowledge Schuftan’s commendation that “*there is nothing wrong with the calls the authors come up with. Key points are all there*” and it gladdens our hearts that we have conveyed the message.

We also note the grouse of Claudio Schuftan on the way we framed our recommendations. Based on our understanding of the serious implications of hunger, malnutrition, food security and conflict events on the people, it is a common knowledge that most international and national agencies (like the United Nations’) targets implementation at governments of affected countries in the world. For example, in the SDG 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development), which talks about implementation of the SDGs, it is crystal clear that its five targets (finance, technology, capacity building, trade and systemic issues) were directed to governments (United Nations, 2020), not “*claim holders*” as you have indicated. This is because implementing the SDGs has been found to be capital intensive as this is evident in Africa and other parts of the world (Roche *et al.*, 2019).

Furthermore, we agree that recommendations can be directed at target participants in some instances, but such recommendation should be micro level issues within the purview or capabilities of the target change agents. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) intervention programmes such as the ‘zero hunger’ and ‘share the meal’ initiatives (targeted to realize achievement of the SDGs) focus on governments and multinational agencies for fund mobilization to implement the programmes (UN-World Food Programme, 2020).

Our recommendations, which are not full of “*should*” were specially couched to reflect the implications of the research findings as corroborated in our earlier article titled *How far has Africa gone in achieving the Zero Hunger Target? Evidence from Nigeria* published in *Global Food Security* (Otekunrin et al., 2019; Otekunrin et al., 2020). However, we should not claim that the partial reports on hunger and malnutrition in Africa are exhaustive. Other researchers can further contribute to the debate on this issue of global concern. Academic researchers are not freedom fighters! As such, recommendations are not meant to be confrontational given the ethical issues involved. It is therefore, important to stress the fact that recommendations or appeal to governments should be formulated in a broader sense and should be signed by many more scientists, including the author of the letter.

References

- Roche MY, Verolme H, Agbaegbu C, et al. 2019. Achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria’s power sector: Assessment of transition pathways, *Climate Policy*, 20(7), Special Issue: National Development and Mitigation Pathways. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2019.1661818>
- Otekunrin, OA, Otekunrin, OA, Sawicka, B, et al. 2020. Three decades of fighting against hunger in Africa: Progress, Challenges and Opportunities. *World Nutrition Journal* 11(3), 86-111. <https://doi.org/10.26596/wn.202011386-111>
- Otekunrin OA, Otekunrin OA, Momoh S, et al. 2019. How far has Africa gone in achieving the Zero Hunger Target? Evidence from Nigeria. *Global Food Security* 22: 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2019.08.001>
- Otekunrin OA, Otekunrin OA, Fasina FO, et al. 2020. Assessing the Zero Hunger Target Readiness in Africa in the Face of COVID-19 Pandemic. *Caraka Tani: Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*. 35(2):213-27. <https://doi.org/10.20961/carakatani.v35i2.41503>
- United Nations 2020. #Envision 2030 goal 17: Partnerships for the goals. Department of Economic and Social Affairs-Disability, United Nations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal17.html>
- UN-WFP (2020). Zero hunger. United Nations World Food Programme. <https://www.wfp.org/zero-hunger>