Chapter 9
Politics of Food Distribution: Role of the Church in Africa

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ABSTRACT
The chapter discusses politics of food distribution (Acts 6: 1-6) and the role of the church in Africa. The work contends that the church in Africa has not done enough in ameliorating or solving the food crisis resulting from inadequate food production and distribution systems. The purpose of the work is to explicate the politics of food distribution as represented in Acts 6:1-6 and make recommendations to the church in Africa. The methods of investigation are exegesis of the Acts of the Apostles 6: 1-6 and review of existing works. Major findings from the study suggest that politics of food distribution was caused by many factors namely: population growth, racism, ethnocentrism, and discrimination. The chapter recommends that the church should mobilize her human and material resources to enhance food production and distribution for her members and nonmembers. Policies and mechanisms to improve food distribution were suggested.

INTRODUCTION
Food is essential for human survival. This chapter examines politics of food distribution and the role of the church in Africa. It demonstrates that the issue of food distribution systems in Africa is far from being efficient and effective. The chapter is structured as follows: Background, Theoretical framework and methodology, conceptual issues and review of the literature, food distribution and accessibility, food distribution and health problem, food distribution and food sovereignty. Other items that received

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Background

Food is one of the most essential needs of human beings from the creation till now. God knows that human beings will need food, the scripture says: “The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed (Genesis 2:8).

And God said, see, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed, to you it shall be for food.

Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food, and it was so (Genesis 1:29,30).

Food is humans’ sustaining source and succor. The importance of food to human beings lies in the fact that without food, human race will go into extinction. That is the reason God from the time He created mankind provided adequate food. The food God provided for mankind at creation was adequate in terms of variety and nutrients. The Genesis account informs that God gave mankind every herb that yields seed and every tree whose fruit yields seed for food (v.29). Mankind was provided and given healthy and nutritious vegetables, fruits and seeds for food. In this regard, Andrew and Wise (2016:2) concurred to the afore mentioned fact and posit that; “one of the most important ways that God shows His love for creatures is by feeding them. Food is God’s love made nutritious and delicious.” The importance of food and feeding is so crucial in the scripture that we observe God providing food for mankind He created. Jesus in the Gospel also fed the multitude;

Then Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way. And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled… Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children (Mathew 15: 32, 35, 36, 37 38).
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