



**MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION ASSISTANCE IN NIGERIA**

Development Research and Projects Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By 2025, Nigeria's population has passed 235 million. It is the largest in Africa and the sixth largest in the world. With so many people, the country faces big challenges, and for many families, that means struggling with poverty.

Poverty isn't just about a lack of money. Today, researchers use a wider measure called the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). It looks at whether people have access to things like healthcare, education, decent housing, enough food, and steady income. When these are missing, life becomes harder in many ways.

To address this, the government and its partners have set up different social assistance programs. These are meant to support those who need it most. In some states, many poor households are covered, while in others, large numbers are left out.

This report uses figures from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the National Population Commission (NPC), and the development Research and Projects Center (dRPC). It explores the scale of poverty and how social assistance is spread across the country, pointing out the areas of greatest need and where progress is being made.

01. Overview and Clarifications

Clarifications



Multidimensional Poverty: measures complement the traditional monetary poverty measures by capturing the deprivations that each person or child faces in key dimensions such as health, water, sanitation and education.

Social Protection: consists of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets and enhancing their capacity to manage economic and social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability, and old age.

In this report 3 main programs are be discussed. We have:

1. P-CGS: Public Cash Grant, to provide direct cash transfers of ₦50,000 vulnerable households to help meet their immediate basic needs.
2. VGF: Vulnerable Groups Fund, target disadvantaged groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and female-headed households, offering financial assistance to reduce vulnerability.
3. CCT: Conditional Cash Transfer of ₦25,000, support to poor households, conditional on specific actions such as children's school attendance or regular health check-ups, to promote long-term human capital development.

Overview



62,9% of the population in Nigeria experienced **04** deprivations and are therefore **multidimensionally poor**

Total NSR Coverage
69.94 million individuals (52.6% of poor)

Total Population (2024)
227,096,734

Total P-CGS Beneficiaries
631,389 individuals (0.48% of poor)

Total VGF Beneficiaries
5,640,783 individuals (4.24% of poor)

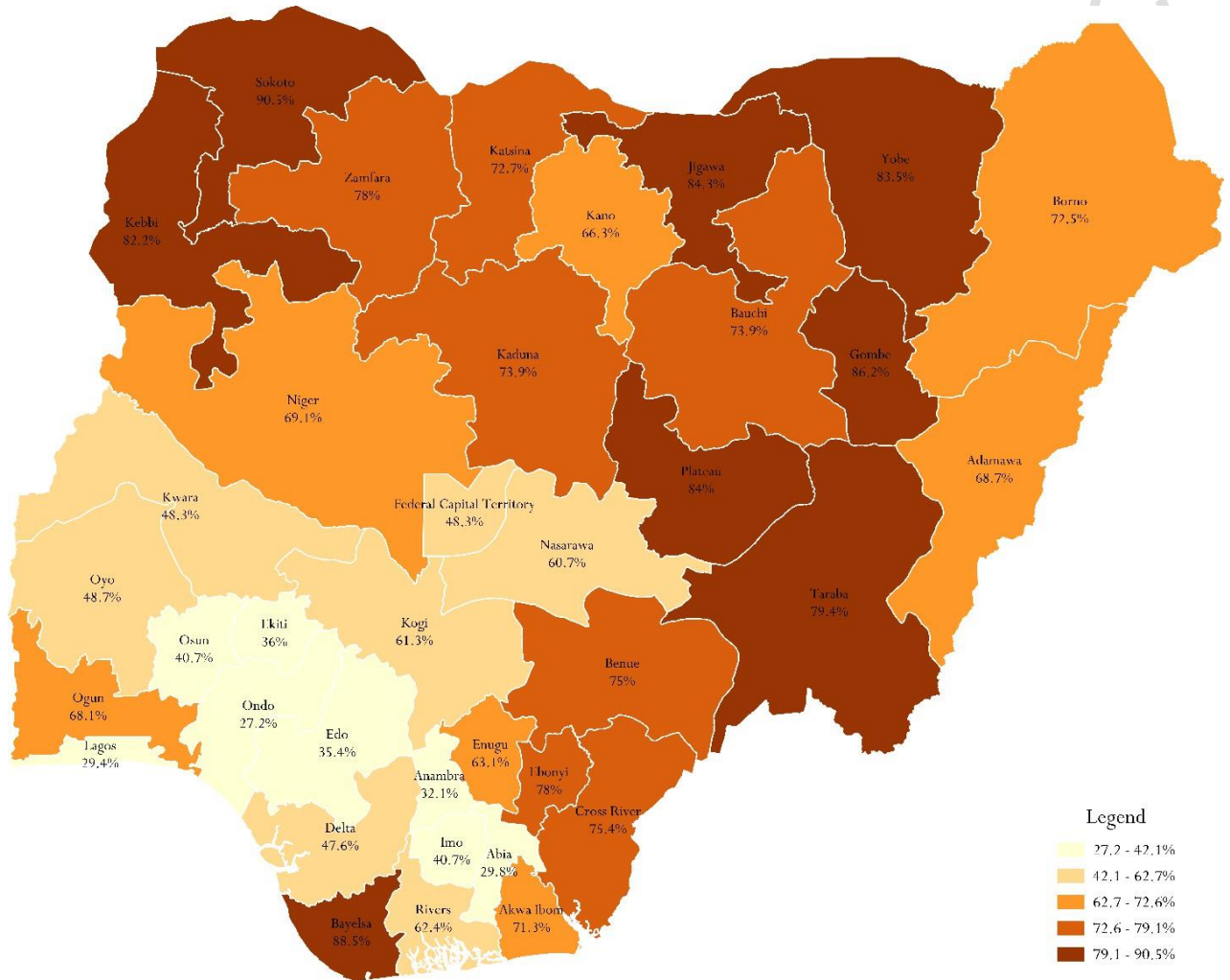
Total CCT Beneficiaries
5,598,665 individuals (4.21% of poor)

02. INCIDENCE OF POVERTY

DISPARITIES ACROSS STATES EXIST IN NIGERIA

More than 80% of people are poor in /okoto, Kebbi, Jigawa, Yobe, Plateau, Gombe, Bayelsa
 22 of 37 states exceeds Nigeria's 62.9% national poverty rate

Percentage of Multidimensional Poor Per State



Extreme Poverty	
State	MPI (%)
Sokoto	90.5
Bayelsa	88.5
Gombe	86.2
Jigawa	84.3
Plateau	84

Best Performing (<36%)	
State	MPI (%)
Ondo	27.2
Lagos	29.4
Abia	29.8
Anambra	32.1
Edo	35.4

Top 5 States by Number of Poor	
State	Poor (Millions)
Kano	10.51
Kaduna	8.04
Jigawa	5.76
Bauchi	5.71
Sokoto	5.81

While /okoto has the highest MPI incidence, Kano accounts for the largest absolute number of poor individuals, highlighting the interplay of poverty rate and population size.

1. The shapefile used to create the map can be found on Kaggle - [Link](#)

2. *Data Source: NBS (2022) Nigeria Multidimensional Poverty Index.*

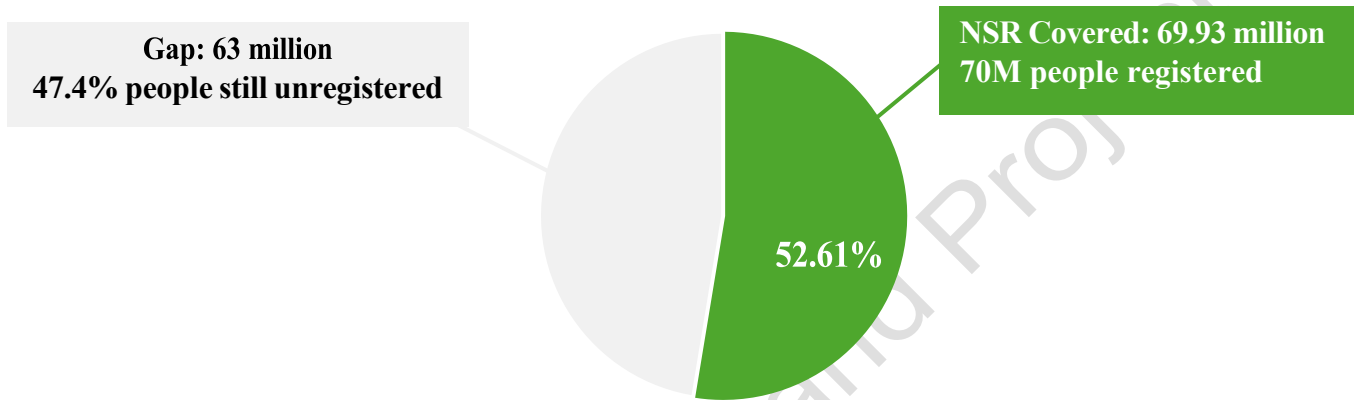
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03. SOCIAL PROTECTION COVERAGE

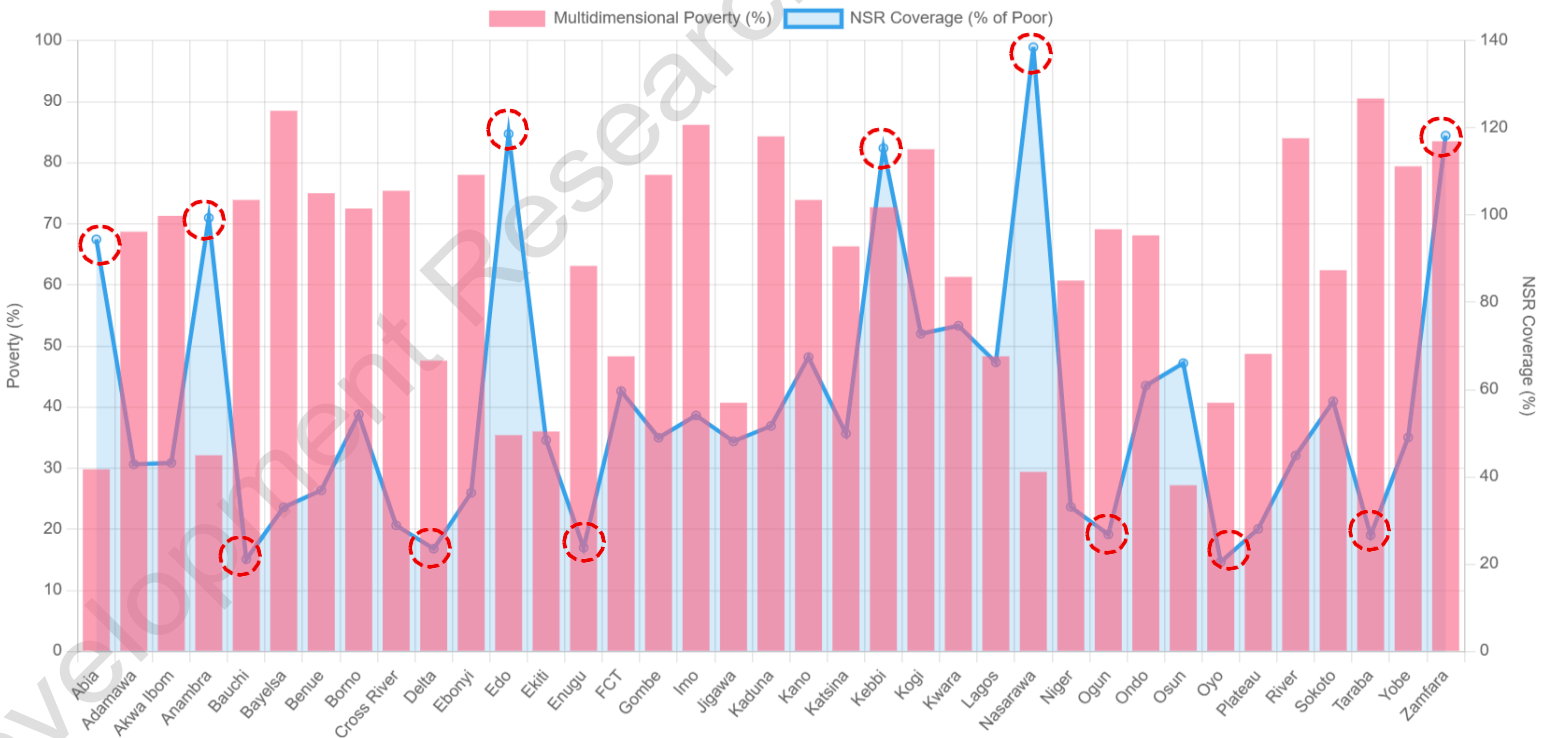
Despite efforts, a significant gap remains between the number of poor Nigerians and those registered in the National /ocial Register (N/R) or accessing social protection programs.

▪ National Social Register (NSR) and gap

In 2022, out of 132.92 million multidimensionally poor Nigerians, only 69.93 million individuals are in the National Social Register (NSR) in 2025. This represents 47.4% coverage gap, indicating a large segment of the poor population is not yet formally identified for social assistance.



Some states are therefore missing large portions of their poor population in the NSR, while others show unusually high registration rates, a mix that points to both serious coverage gaps

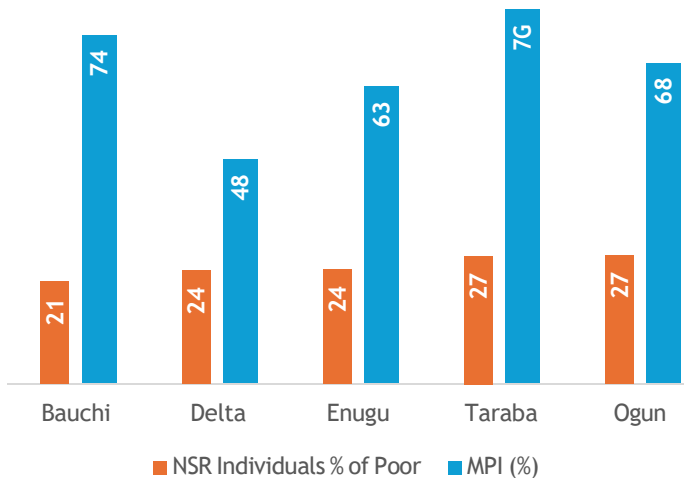


States with highest poverty (80%+ MPI) receive lowest social assistance coverage indicating fundamental targeting failure

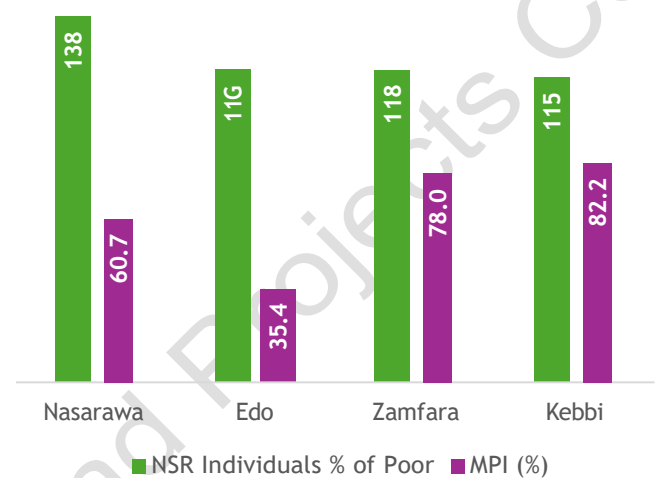
In states such as Bauchi (MPI 73.9%) and Taraba (MPI 79.4%), extremely high multidimensional poverty coincides with very low N/R coverage, leaving large vulnerable populations unreached.

In states like Kebbi (MPI 82.2%) and Zamfara (MPI 78.0%), severe poverty levels are paradoxically paired with N/R enrolments surpassing 100% of the poor population, pointing to possible misclassification.

/ates with Lowest N/R Coverage (<30% of Poor)



/ates with Over-Coverage N/R (>100% of Poor)



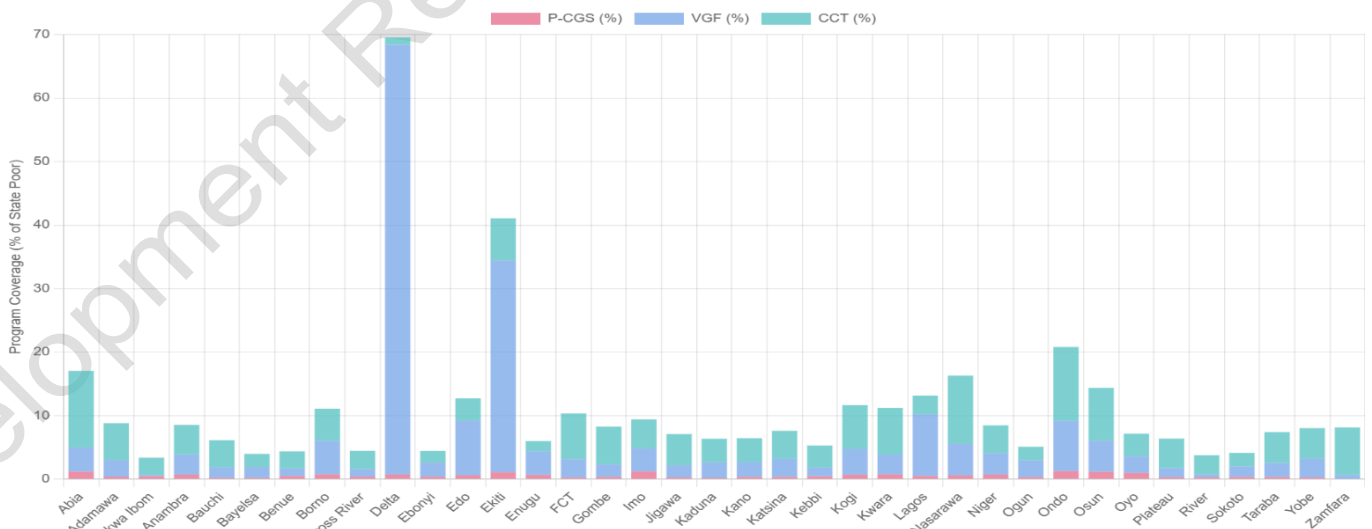
Program Coverage by State

To tackle the challenges of poverty in Nigeria, the government and local authorities have introduced three main social assistance programs (P-CGS, VGF, CCT) to support people experiencing severe deprivation:

Social Assistance Programs



Stacked bar chart of P-CGS, VGF, and CCT coverage (% of state poor) by state.



Despite Delta's (MPI 47.6%), VGF covers two third of its poor while Ekiti, with a higher MPI of 66.4%, achieves one third VGF coverage; in contrast, P-CG/ support remains minimal in almost all states, covering barely 1% of their poor populations

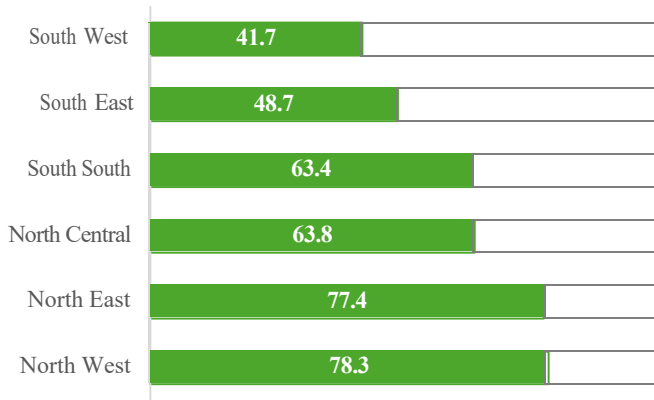
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04. EQUITY AND REGIONAL DISPARITIES

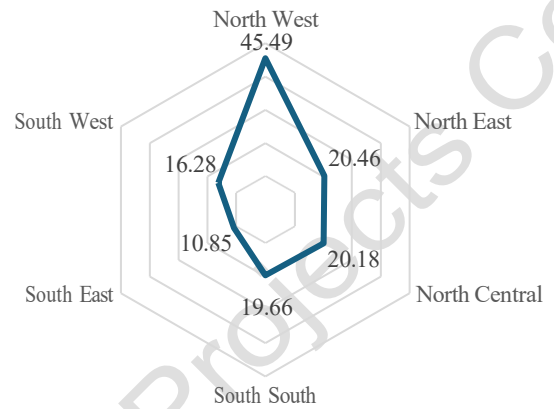
Regional disparities exist in Nigeria

Northern regions, especially North West and North East, have the highest MPI and poor population. Southern regions have lower MPI and poor population, showing regional disparities.

Poverty Incidence per region (%)

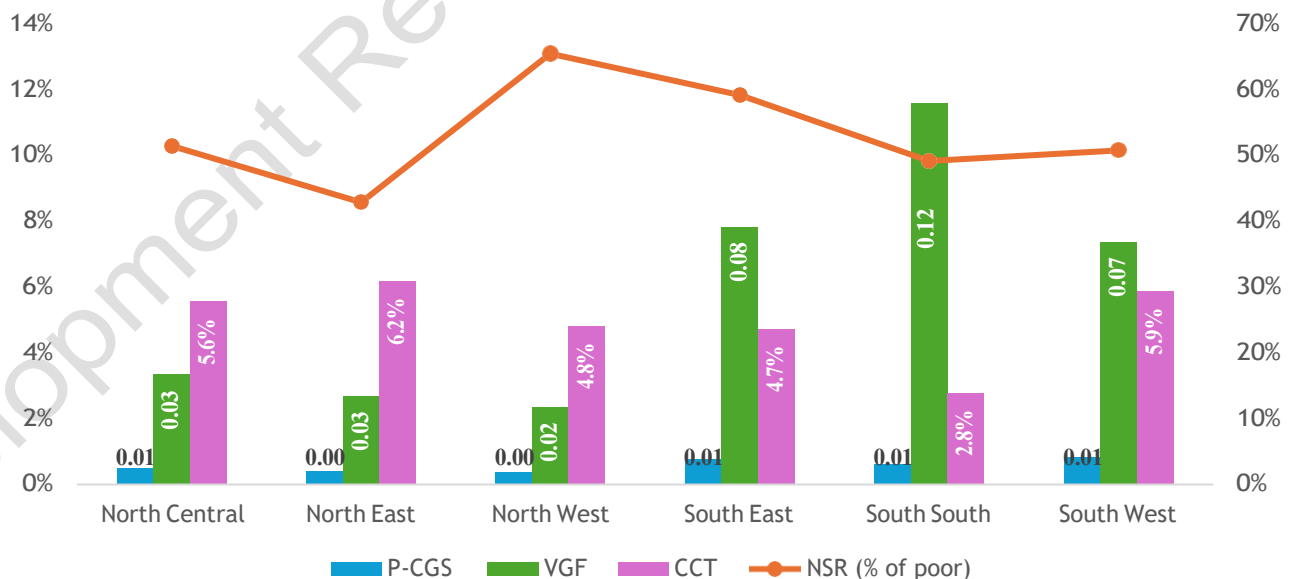


Headcount ratio



NSR coverage across regions

- In the North, we observe the highest poverty levels (MPI > 77%) with large poor populations; N/R coverage is highest in the North West (65.5%) but program reach for P-CG/ and VGF remains very low.*
- South – Lower poverty (MPI < 50%) but higher VGF and P-CG/ coverage, especially in the South South (VGF 11.6%) and South West (P-CG/ 0.84%).*
- In the North East and North West, there is no P-CG/ social assistance for individuals experiencing a high level of poverty and deprivations*



- Geopolitical regions retained is based on information from Wiki: [Link](#)
- Analyses are based on the available data. With the number of poor populations per state each generate the regional data
- Data Source: NBS (2022) Nigeria Multidimensional Poverty Index, Office of the Honourable Minister for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty

Reduction

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05. POLICY TAKEAWAYS

Close the Registration Gap in the National Social Register (NSR)

Nearly half of Nigeria's poor (47.4%) are not registered in the NSR, excluding them from social protection programs. Some high-poverty states like Bauchi (21% coverage) and Taraba (26%) are severely under-represented, while others like Kebbi, Zamfara, and Nigerawa show over-coverage, indicating possible data errors.

Action Priorities:

- Deploy mobile registration teams to remote and conflict-affected LGAs.
- Link NSR enrolment to immediate program eligibility (P-CGS, VGF, CCT) to incentivise sign-up.
- Conduct data audits in over-covered states to remove duplicates

Scale Up Social Protection Program Reach

P-CGS covers only 0.48% of poor Nigerians, VGF 4.24%, and CCT 4.21%, far below need. In many high-poverty states, program reach is negligible.

Action Priorities:

- Triple P-CGS and VGF allocations in extreme-poverty states (e.g., Sokoto, Bayelsa, Gombe, Jigawa, Plateau).
- Use digital payment systems and local bank agents to speed disbursement and reduce leakages.
- Target CCT expansion to households with out-of-school children and those in food-insecure LGAs.
- Pilot integrated packages (school feeding, healthcare subsidies)

Address Regional Disparities with Suitable Strategies

The North West and North East face MPI rates over 77% with large poor populations, but program penetration is weakest here. Southern zones, with lower poverty, have relatively better coverage.

Action Priorities:

- North: Focus on food security (irrigation, grain reserves), basic infrastructure (water, clinics), and literacy drives.
- South: Prioritise job creation, skills training, and resilience programs to prevent new poverty.
- Establish inter-regional learning exchanges so successful delivery models from the South can be adapted for the North.

Improve Targeting and Efficiency of Assistance

Misallocation, over-coverage, and low targeting efficiency mean some programs reach non-poor households while many poor households remain excluded.

Action Priorities:

- Introduce poverty scorecards at the household level for precise targeting.
- Cross-match program beneficiaries with updated poverty and population maps annually.
- Use community validation to reduce ghost beneficiaries and strengthen trust.
- Reallocate budget from over-served areas to high-poverty, low-reach states.

