

# **NIGER STATE AGRICULTURE MEDIUM TERM SECTOR STRATEGIES (MTSS) 2025-2027**



**Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigeria  
(SWOFON)**

And



**Centre for Social Justice (CSJ)**  
*(Mainstreaming Social Justice in Public Life)*

**A Memorandum for Improvements in Agriculture  
Sector Budgeting**

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By

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## ACRONYMS

ADP	Agriculture Development Programme
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FMARD	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
FMoE	Federal Ministry of Environment
FMoWR	Federal Ministry of Water Resources
FRA	Fiscal Responsibility Act
FRL	Fiscal Responsibility Law
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GHG	Green House Gases
ICESCR	International Convention Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSS	Medium Term Sector Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NEDS	Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy
PWD	Persons With Disability
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEC	State Executive Council
SHA	State House of Assembly
SWOFON	Small-Scale Women Farmers of Nigeria

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memorandum is divided into 2 parts of 6 sections. The first section is the introduction which deals with the background, the rationale for the exercise and outlining linkages between the Medium Term Sector Strategies (MTSS), Medium Term Expenditure Framework and the annual budget. It identified high level national and international policies and standards on Agriculture and concluded with the delineation of the structure of the sector in Nigeria.

Section 2 highlights the key challenges of the sector and laying out goals, objectives and targets based on the high level national and international policies and standards. Section 3 reviews the trend in budget commitments between 2020 and 2024 and the performance of the sector's budget within the period, including drawing comparison in the value of the yearly allocations. Among other things, it found lack of prioritization of agriculture evidenced by low budgetary allocation across the years as well as low releases towards funding capital expenditure projects as major setbacks.

Section 4 is on key Agriculture sector achievements in the past decade whilst section 5 is on MDA projects and activities that should be sustained in the medium term.

Part 2 of the work contains section 6 which features policy recommendations. The recommendations cut across the entire sections. Highlights of the recommendations include:

- Strategic Planning for Agriculture in the State
- Prioritize Funding Agriculture in the State
- Invest in Appropriate Locally Available Mechanization
- Development of Gender Indicators in Agriculture
- Increased investment in Irrigation
- Establish Cattle Ranches
- Invest in Aqua Culture
- Create Special Opportunities for Agriculture financing
- Soil and Nutrient Management

- Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses
- Using Resistant and Genetically Improved Animals and Crops
- Establish Business Advisory Services
- Create a link between Research and Practical Agriculture
- Invest in Improving Extension Services
- Adopt Risk Management Strategies
- Measurement, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of results in budget cycle
- Ensure Inclusivity in Budget Planning
- Guarantee that Policies, Plans and Laws are reflected in the Budget
- Formation of Sector Teams for Future Budget Planning
- Improve Security



# PART ONE: FOR 2025 AND THE MTSS/MTEF

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for the period 2025 - 2027 is in the process of preparation by the Niger State Ministry of Planning Commission. When finalized, considered and endorsed by the State Executive Council (SEC), it will be transmitted to the State House of Assembly (SHA) for approval<sup>1</sup>.

The Agriculture Medium Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) which should be drawn from the Agriculture component of the MTEF including a focus on inclusivity and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) is expected to:

- Articulate medium-term (three years) Agriculture goals and objectives against the background of the overall goals of high level national and state Agriculture policies, international Agriculture standards and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Identify and document the key programmes and projects the government plans to embark upon to achieve the State Agriculture goals and objectives;
- Cost the identified key initiatives in a clear and transparent manner;
- Phase implementation of the identified initiatives over the medium-term;
- Define the expected outcomes of the identified initiatives in clear measurable terms; and
- Link expected outcomes to the objectives and goals.

### 1.2 Rationale for the Exercise

Agriculture contributed 21.07% to Nigeria's real GDP in the first quarter of 2024.<sup>2</sup> Headline inflation stood at 33.69% with food inflation at 40.53%.<sup>3</sup> Food and non-alcoholic beverages at the divisional level contributed 17.45% to the headline inflation index.<sup>4</sup> Agriculture productivity also plays a key role in the determination of the level of the Consumer Price Index as food inflation is the biggest contributor to overall headline inflation. It is therefore a very important sector to food security, employment generation and economic growth and diversification of the economy. Again, importation of major food items contributes to the determination of the value of the Naira as it imports currency volatilities. In 2023, Nigeria imported agricultural goods worth N2.281 trillion and exported produce worth N1.244 trillion thereby incurring a sectoral trade deficit of

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<sup>1</sup> This is as provided by section 16 and 17 of the Fiscal Responsibility Law, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> National Bureau of Statistics, First quarter 2024, GDP Report.

<sup>3</sup> National Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, April 2024.

<sup>4</sup> NBS, April 2024, supra.

N1.037 trillion.<sup>5</sup> Agriculture is therefore an important sector that deserves the attention of all stakeholders.

The population of Niger State is estimated at about 6.32 million in 2023,<sup>6</sup> disaggregated into 47.80% male and 52.20% female and a population density of 82.7 persons per square kilometer on a land mass of 76,363 square kilometres. Agriculture contributes 80% of Niger State's estimated GDP of N4.58trillion.<sup>7</sup> Over 70% of the state population are engaged in farming.<sup>8</sup> The major crops are rice, maize, sorghum, sheanut, yam and other roots and tubers.

Official preparation of the Agriculture Sector MTSS 2025-2027 by the Niger State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development provides SWOFON and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in the Agriculture Sector an opportunity to present memorandum articulating key inputs into the MTSS and 2025 Agriculture budget. The memorandum is focused on mainstreaming inclusivity especially the needs of small-scale women farmers, a low carbon framework for budgeting, fit and good practices, value for money, accountability for results and evidence led budgeting in the Agriculture sector whilst responding to the food and agriculture challenges and indicators affecting the majority of the population.

The effects of global warming and climate change are all around us; increasing temperature, devastating erosion, floods, soil degradation, sea level rise, etc. are all manifestations of climate change. They have impacted negatively on Agriculture and the right to food. All these are inter alia traceable to the increasing emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere. It is therefore imperative that CSO stakeholders deliberate and consolidate their inputs into a policy paper framework that will be submitted to the State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the SHA and other stakeholders.

By this Memorandum, SWOFON in collaboration with other CSO stakeholders in the state seek to articulate medium-term (three years) Agriculture goals and objectives for mainstreaming inclusivity and CSA against the Niger State Policy on Agriculture. overall goals of high level national Agriculture and Right to Food policies, international standards on the subject and the attainment of the SDGs; identify and document the key initiatives that will be embarked upon to achieve these goals and objectives. It also provides the opportunity to provide insights on how to cost the identified key initiatives in a clear and transparent manner; phase implementation of the identified initiatives over the medium-term; define the expected outcomes of the identified initiatives in clear measurable terms; and link expected outcomes to the overall sectoral goals and objectives.

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<sup>5</sup> NBS Foreign Trade Reports, *Foreign Trade in Goods Statistics, 2023*

<sup>6</sup> Prorated from NBS 2026 national population estimates and the growth rate of 2.8 percent.

<sup>7</sup> Niger State Agriculture Policy.

<sup>8</sup> Niger State Agricultural Policy, *supra*.

### 1.3 Outlining Linkages Between MTSS and Annual Budget

The Fiscal Responsibility Law (FRL) stipulates that annual budgets are to be derived from the MTEF. It further provides that notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the FRA or any law, the MTEF shall:<sup>9</sup>

- 1) *be the basis for the preparation of the estimates of revenue and expenditure required to be prepared and laid before the House under section 121 (1) of Constitution.*
- 2) *The sectoral and compositional distribution of the estimates of expenditure referred to in subsection (1) of this section shall be consistent with the medium term developmental priorities set out in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework.*

SWOFON and CSOs in the state therefore seek to make inputs into the Medium Term Developmental Priorities of the State Government in the Agriculture Sector considering that this will form the basis for the preparation of the 2025 State Agriculture budget.

### 1.4 Identifying High Level National and International Policies and Standards

There are so many national and international standards, laws and policies guiding Agriculture including CSA, the right to food and inclusivity of all members of society. These include but are not limited to the National Development Plan 2021-2025 (NDP), Gender Policy in Agriculture, the Niger State Policy on Agriculture, National Gender Policy, etc. These policies stated the goals of the sector within the context of overall national goals.

The Niger State Agriculture Policy (2020) envisioned Agriculture:

*“To be the engine of growth and transformation of Niger State's economy and a critical facilitator of the achievement of the State's vision of being one of the three most developed State economies in Nigeria by year 2023”.*

The overall goal of the Policy is the attainment of self-sufficiency in food production as well as self-sustaining growth in all sub-sectors of Agriculture and the structural transformation necessary for the overall socio-economic development of the State, as well as the improvement in the quality of life of ‘Nigerlites’. To achieve the goal of rapid transformation of Agriculture and acceleration of economic expansion in Niger State, the Policy has the following objectives:

- Attainment of sustainable self-sufficiency in basic food commodities for the State.
- Increased production of agricultural raw materials to meet the growth of an expanding industrial sector.

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<sup>9</sup> S.19 of the Niger State FRL

- Use of improved technologies for sustainable production, processing, storage and distribution of agro-products for domestic and export markets.
- Creation of job opportunities in the State
- Protection and preservation of environment for sustainable agricultural production.
- Establishment of appropriate institutions to facilitate the development of the State

The NDP states its agriculture objectives to include reduction of post-harvest losses, building a sustainable food production system, increasing female participation, increasing food self-reliance through increased productivity. Some of its strategic recommendations include improving security, improving value addition across the agriculture value chain, reactivation of grain aggregation centres, off grid energy solutions, improved extension services linking research institutions with actual farmers, capacity building for women and youth in agriculture, increased livestock and aquaculture productivity, etc.

The Gender Policy in Agriculture envisions a Nigerian Agriculture driven by gender equity, equality and inclusiveness for women, people with special needs across the value chain with a goal of ensuring equal access to services, resources and programmes irrespective of gender to ensure food security and economic growth. It targets inter alia improvements in increasing resource allocation and targeting of women farmers, labour saving devices, extension services, access to markets, capacity building, strengthening women's agricultural cooperatives, access to farming inputs and supplies, access to credit, business opportunities and business advisory services. Others are collection and use of gender disaggregated information and mainstreaming gender into climate change.

The National Gender Policy envisages an inclusive agriculture that is at the intersection of rural development and value chain enhancement for increased earning and dignity of farmers across gender, geography, generations, and disability. Its objectives are inter alia: targeted actions for gender specific and inclusive agriculture sector, including 'green' agriculture and climate smart agriculture i.e. expanding opportunities for women, youths (boys and girls), and PWDs (females and males) in modern agriculture; implement digital and financial gender specific and inclusion strategies for women, youths and PWDs and ensure GEESI disaggregated data as a matter of policy and performance indicators.

Furthermore, Nigeria is a member of the United Nations and signatory to the Paris Climate Change Agreement and a plethora of international standards that mandate States Parties to be more responsive to the reduction of GHG in all fields of human

endeavor. According to Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC),<sup>10</sup> Agriculture, Forestry and other land Use is the second largest contributor to total GHG emission, approximately 25% of national GHG emissions. The NDC states as follows:

*For agriculture, Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) is a key mitigation measure. Its aims are to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and support equitable increases in farm incomes enhancing food security and development. The sector exhibits high growth and is deemed essential for the creation of youth employment. Farmers take agro-ecological measures that increase the resilience of the farming systems, as opposed to measures that promote high external input farming, industrial meat production and large-scale industrial agriculture, which contribute to climate change. The benefits of improved practices go beyond improved yields. With improved yields come improved diets, growing productivity and reinvestment in rural communities. One example is agroforestry, where trees are mixed with crops and animals on the same land, can be another option for carbon fixing and for providing mulch material. Estimates of the benefits from agroforestry range from total (lifetime) emissions reductions of 158 million tonnes to 712 million tonnes. Another example is a reduction of methane emissions from livestock, through improved feeding and breeding.*

At the regional level, Nigeria endorsed the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), the African Union Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security 2003 securing a commitment to the allocation of at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development policy implementation within five years; and the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods<sup>11</sup>. These standards affirmed a commitment to supply appropriate knowledge, information and skills to agriculture practitioners; inclusive agriculture growth and transformation supporting preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful agri-business; suitable, affordable and reliable mechanisation and energy access; and to deploy deliberate and targeted public support to ensure that all segments of society particularly women, the youth and disadvantaged sectors participate and benefit directly from opportunities to improve lives and livelihoods.

Also, the SDGs No.2 supports CSA and targets inter alia: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that helps maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improves land and soil quality<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Nigeria's First Nationally Determined Contribution, 2021 Update.

<sup>11</sup> At the Second Ordinary Assembly of the African Union in July 2003 in Maputo, African Heads of State and Government endorsed the "Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa" (Assembly/AU/Decl. 7(II)). The Malabo Declaration 2014 reaffirmed the Heads of State commitments.

<sup>12</sup> Other targets include: By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round; By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent

Agriculture is the foundation of the right to food and freedom from hunger. Nigeria is a State Party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The ICESCR in article 11 states inter alia:

*(2) The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take individually and through international co-operation, the measures including specific programmes, which are needed to:*

*(a) To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge...and by developing and reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources.*

Satisfying the right to food will not be possible without inclusivity and CSA which is a reform of agrarian policies to achieve efficiency and sustainable use of natural resources. The state's duties are specifically to respect, protect and fulfill the right to food and this can only be possible if the impediments for the provision of food through farming are removed; and fit and good practices which satisfy the needs of generations adopted. As part of the minimum core obligation of the state, there is a duty to provide information, disseminate knowledge of standards and practices that will guarantee viable production, processing, storage and distribution systems of food and agricultural products<sup>13</sup>. All these are to be undertaken on a non-discriminatory basis and affirmative action applied in appropriate and deserving cases.

### **1.5 Structure of the Sector**

In terms of practical Agriculture, the sector is mainly a private sector driven initiative. The sector is divided into four sub-activities: Crop Production, Livestock, Forestry, and Fishing. Federal and State Governments provide policies, regulation, research, extension services, facilities and knowledge to support the sector. The local governments are the domain of the actual farming activities. At the federal level, FMARD is the lead agency with support from Ministries like the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMoE) and the Federal Ministry of Water Resources (FMoWR). The State Ministry of Agriculture leads state level interventions. The National Council on Agriculture

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girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons: By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment. Others are: By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed: Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, etc.

<sup>13</sup> See Agriculture Promotion Policy - Food as a Human Right at page 14. See further General Comment No. 12 on the Right to Adequate Food by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, (Twentieth Session), 1999.

coordinates policy activities and the Council includes membership from State Commissioners of Agriculture and the aforelisted ministries. Other relevant ministries that attend the NCA include the Federal Ministries of Finance, Trade and Industry. For SHWF, the Ministry of Women Affairs is also involved in facilitating their full participation in public funded interventions.

The Agricultural Sector in Niger state comprises the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries and Niger State Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority (NAMDA), formerly Niger State Agricultural Development Project (NSADP). The sector is the backbone of the state's economy, contributing the largest share of its GDP. Over 70% of the state's population are farmers. It is the largest state in the country in terms of landmass with its 76,363 square kilometer land estimated to be 10% of the entire country's land out of which 70% are arable land<sup>14</sup>. The State is endowed with big rivers; the major ones include Rivers Niger, Kaduna, Gbako, Eko, Gurara, Ebba, Ega and Mariga. It also has all three of Nigeria's hydrological dams, namely Kainji, Jebba and Shiroro. The state's land is fertile and suitable for the cultivation of a variety of crops. This makes the state a haven of some sort for flourishing agriculture and agricultural practices. Despite these endowments, these assets and the inherent potentials are yet to be fully explored.

## **2. KEY CHALLENGES OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR AND LAYING OUT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS BASED ON HIGH LEVEL NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND STANDARDS**

### **2.1 Challenges of Niger State Agriculture within the Context of SHWF**

The Niger State Agriculture Policy also identified the key challenges in the sector to include:

#### **Crop Production**

- Limited usage constrained by high cost and low purchasing power of the farmers of the basic agricultural inputs such as improved seeds and seedlings, fertilizers, tractors, bulldozers, animal traction and agro-chemicals. For instance, only about 5% of agricultural activities have been mechanized and about 10% use animal traction.
- Only 30 percent of arable land is under cultivation and less than 1 percent of irrigable land is under irrigation.
- Knowledge base of farmers is low and they are not receiving necessary support of qualified extension workers and demonstration.

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<sup>14</sup> According to the Niger State Agricultural Policy.

- Poor storage and processing facilities, responsible for high post-harvest losses. The problem is further compounded by inefficient marketing system and lack of small-scale processing plants for surplus perishable farm produce.
- Virtual absence of all-year-round farming in the State due to absence or non-functional irrigation facilities and equipment. Only 25% of the potential Fadama land in Niger State have been developed.
- Low access to agricultural credit facilities of Bank of Agriculture (BOA) and commercial banks by small-scale farmers and;
- Due to non-mechanization of farming practices and inadequate basic social infrastructure in the rural areas, farming still remains unattractive to youths thereby leading to rural-urban migration.

### **Livestock**

- Inadequate grazing land leading to occasional conflicts between farmers and herdsmen.
- Inadequate veterinary facilities, including drugs and personnel, leading to high mortality rate of animal stock.
- Heavy reliance on local breeds with low level productivity; plus inadequate supply of improved breeds of livestock.
- Increasing incidences of cattle rustling and security challenges in the State.

### **Fish Production**

- High cost and low purchasing power of farmers of fishing equipment/inputs such as fishing nets, hooks, fingerlings, boats and out-boards engines; coupled with obnoxious fishing practices resulting in depletion of fisheries resources especially in the numerous inland water bodies of the State.
- Absence of standard fish marketing infrastructure including inadequate cold storage and processing facilities.
- Underdeveloped aquaculture practices.

## **2.2 Goals, Objectives and Targets**

The following are the requests of Niger State SWOFON based on identified challenges faced by SHWF in the State. These requests are stated in their Charter of Demand,



which they believe, if attended to, will improve both their welfare and their productivity. They include:

- A Local Government Committee to tackle the insecurity of farmers herders crisis.
- Access to soft loan from the government
- The provision of gender friendly machineries for increased productivity e.g. hand sprayers, tillers, ploughs, planters, etc.
- Supply and access to free/subsidised farming inputs - fertilisers, chemicals, pesticides, hybrid seedlings.
- Capacity building training on best agricultural practices; e.g. climate resilience farming.
- Construction of good road networks for easy access to markets.
- Engagement of smallholder women farmers; involvement in state budget preparation for the Agriculture Sector.
- Building of central storage facilities in our communities.
- Frequent consultation and town hall discussions between duty bearers and smallholder women farmers.
- Timely release of budget in Agriculture to support Smallholder Women Farmers.

Furthermore, the State Agricultural Policy states its gender goals to include:

- i. There shall be gender inclusiveness in all policy matters of governance related to agriculture. Provisions shall be made in agriculture sector governance in the State to improve women's active participation (of at least 30% inclusiveness) in sector decision-making and institutions.
- ii. Women friendly farm equipment will be promoted and, wherever necessary, convergence between various research and implementation institutions has been brought about. Provision for physically challenged people with special needs in promoting friendly farm equipment.
- iii. More equitable product and service delivery mechanism will be created for women farmers.
- iv. More women agriculturists will be trained and placed in the State agricultural extension system.
- v. Female extension workers will be provided a conducive and safe environment, ensuring enough opportunities for growth for enterprising workers.

- vi. Regular monitoring of the implementation of various schemes will have an additional variable segregating performance based on gender.
- vii. Agricultural extension material will be revised to cater to the needs of women farmers with more focus on backyard livestock/poultry/fisheries and women-friendly crops like vegetables and techniques of production.
- viii. Both farm products and production technologies will be designed keeping women users in mind and efforts to get women friendly farm equipment designed, produced and promoted will be strengthened, wherever necessary.
- ix. The creativity, productivity and entrepreneurship of women and their capacity to further their skills will continue to receive focus. Progressive women farmers will be duly rewarded and recognised.
- x. Regular tracking of the share of women in the total number of beneficiaries in government assistance initiatives will be undertaken.
- xi. Efforts will be made to remove the drudgery of farm women by ensuring access to new tools and implements that increase their efficiency and improve productivity.
- xii. Access to credit will be improved through a special focus on women.
- xiii. Value chain upgrade will be enhanced to support women in agriculture in the transition from subsistence farming to medium and large scale agribusiness.
- xiv. Women farmers in the State will be supported in improving the quality and quantity of food production and consumption to ensure their food security.

### 3. REVIEW OF EXISTING BUDGET COMMITMENTS (2020-2024): KEY ISSUES

#### 3.1: Poor Budgetary Allocation

Table 1 shows the trend of funding over the period 2020-2024.

**Table 1: Niger State Allocation to Agriculture Sector (2020 – 2024)**

Year	Total State Budget (NGN)	Total Allocation to Agric (NGN)	Percentage of Agric Allocation	Malabo Declaration (10%) Benchmark (NGN)	Variance Against Malabo (10%) Benchmark (NGN)
2020 <sup>15</sup>	104,393,378,733.46			10,439,337,873.35	
2021	153,412,621,776.37	7,265,939,666.17	4.74%	15,341,262,177.64	8,075,322,511.47
2022	211,020,677,027.39	5,467,933,512.42	2.59%	21,102,067,702.34	16,634,134,190.32
2023	243,647,189,978.88	9,522,369,403.35	3.91%	24,364,718,997.89	14,842,349,594.34
2024	613,994,801,697.00	31,233,733,543.79	5.09%	61,399,480,169.7	30,165,746,625.91
Total	1,222,075,290,479.64	53,489,976,125.73	4.08% <sup>16</sup>	122,207,529,047.57	69,717,552,922.04

**Source:** Niger State Approved Budget (2020-2024)

The trend analysis of budget votes to the agriculture sector over a 5-year period (2020 to 2024) is targeted at determining the pattern of the sector's funding in line with the

<sup>15</sup> The revised budget.

<sup>16</sup> Average percentage of the five-year allocation.

benchmark of the Malabo Declaration of a minimum of 10% budgetary allocation to Agriculture. This is particularly important for a state that has farming/agriculture as its main economic activity and with comparative advantage in terms of available lands, dams and market for its produce. The Malabo Declaration provides the direction for Africa's agricultural transformation for the period 2015-2025. With less than two years to go, a review of the state's performance in this direction will be helpful for targeted policy decisions going forward.

Agriculture enjoyed a total four-year allocation of N53,489,976,125.73 from an overall budget vote of N1,222,075,290,479.64. The annual average allocation was N13,372,494,031 constituting an annual average percentage of 4.08% of the total approved state budgets. It shows that allocation to agriculture averaged 4.08% of the state budget between 2021 and 2024; the highest being 5.09% in 2024 and the lowest at 2.59% in 2022. It could also be observed that despite over N50 billion increase in the state budget size between 2021 and 2022, the sector got a reduced allocation. The allocations for all the years fell short of the 10% benchmark of the Malabo Declaration and the allocations amount to 43.77% of the Malabo commitment. The allocation to Agriculture is misaligned to its contribution to the state's GDP.

### 3.2 Capital and Recurrent Disaggregation of the Agriculture Sector Funding

This part reviews the composition of the Agriculture allocation for the years under review. Table 2 presents the summary of the breakdown including the USD value of the allocations. Here it is observed that across the years, the allocation to the sector is heavily tilted in favour of capital expenditure items. This implies that substantial sums were devoted towards developmental projects. However, that of 2024 is significantly different from the other years with recurrent expenditure getting as low as 4.69% and capital expenditure as much as 95.31%. While a high capital expenditure is desirable, there is the need for sufficient personnel and overhead costs to run projects like extension services, demand driven research and dissemination, policy oversight and implementation, etc. This will make more resources available for projects and interventions that will address the challenges of SHWF.

**Table 2: Breakdown of Agriculture Allocation into Recurrent and Capital Allocations**

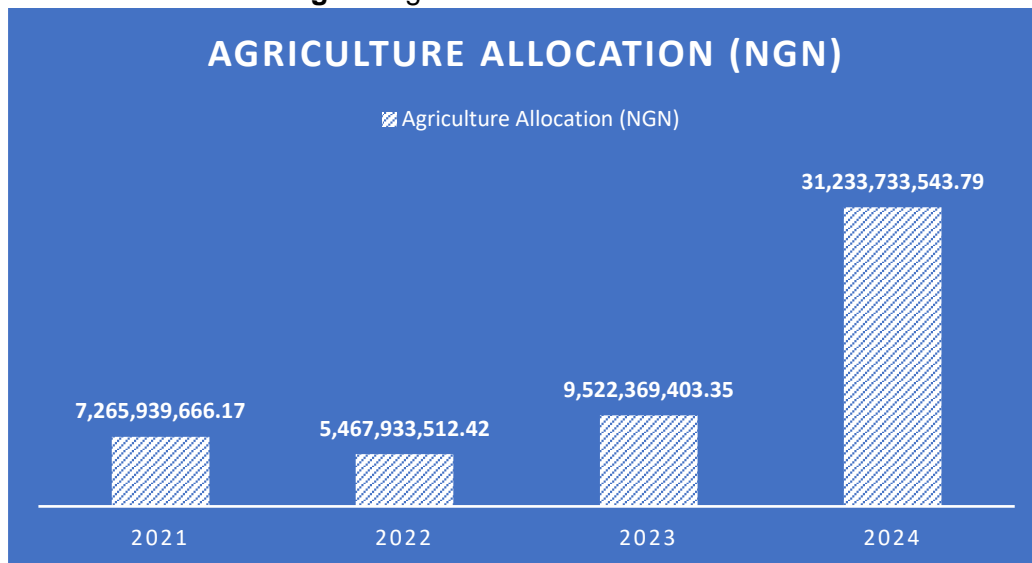
Year	Agriculture Budget (NGN)	Agriculture Budget (USD)	Recurrent Expenditure (NGN)	% of Recurrent Allocation	Capital Expenditure (NGN)	% of Capital Allocation
2020	??	??	??		??	
2021	7,265,939,666.17	19,171,344.77	1,711,092,444.81	23.55	5,554,847,221.36	76.45
2022	5,467,933,512.42	13,336,423.20	1,611,615,885.73	29.47	3,856,317,626.69	70.53
2023	9,522,369,403.35	21,890,504.38	1,652,360,777.59	17.35	7,870,008,625.76	82.65
2024	31,233,733,543.79	39,042,166.93	1,463,936,425.22	4.69	29,769,797,118.57	95.31

**Source:** Niger State Approved Budget (2021-2024)

Figures 1 and 2 below presents a graphical view of the allocation and its comparison between the years in Naira and Dollar terms. The pattern shows that due the size of the allocation for

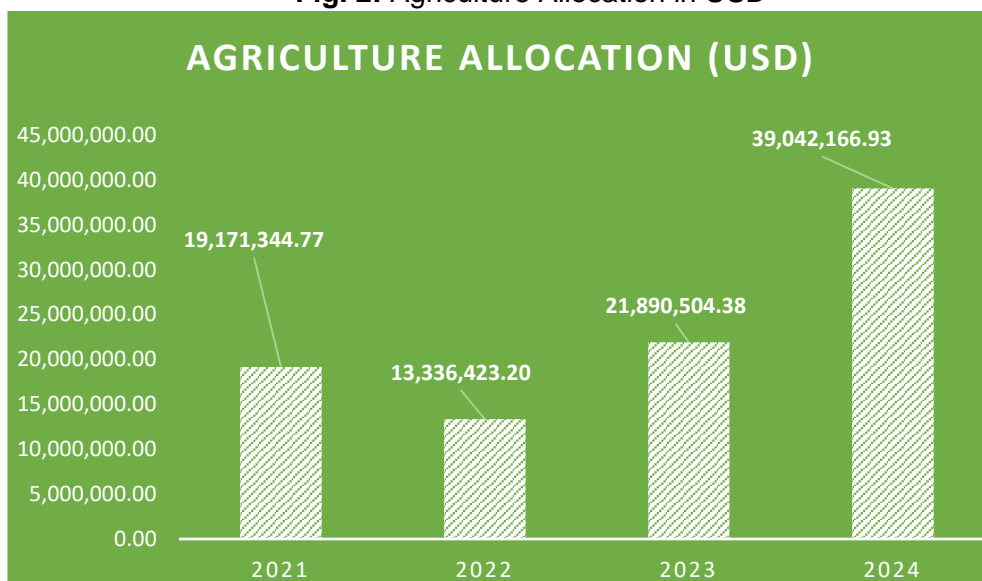
the respective years, there is no significant difference in terms of the value for each of the years. That is, the pattern of the Naira value is almost the same as the pattern of the USD value.

**Fig. 1:** Agriculture Allocation in Naira



**Source:** Niger State Approved Budget (2021-2024) and Author's Calculation

**Fig. 2:** Agriculture Allocation in USD



**Source:** Niger State Approved Budget (2021-2024) and Author's Calculation

**Note:** The official exchange rates are 2020 (N305); 2021 (N379); 2022 (N410); 2023 (N435) and 2024 (N800).

### 3.3 Performance of Appropriated Funds to Agriculture

Allocation of funds in the budget is usually different from the release and utilization of the funds. The revenue projection may be overly optimistic or due to some reasons, the revenues may not be realized and the managers of the economy decide on priorities different from appropriation. Table 3 shows the picture.

**Table 3: Niger State Agricultural Sector Capital Budget Performance Review**

Year	Capital Expenditure Allocation (NGN)	Full year performance (Q1 – Q4)	Capital Budget Performance (%)	Balance Against Allocation (NGN)
2020				
2021 (Revised)	4,437,908,625.36	3,781,950,193.75	85.2%	655,958,431.62
2022 (Revised)	5,992,617,810.00	1,073,226,991.00	17.91%	4,919,390,818.00
2023 (Revised)***	799,300,000.00 (Originally= 7,870,008,625.76)	2,442,834,565.08	305.6%	-1,643,534,565.08

**Source:** Niger State Budget Performance Reports (Q4, 2021-2023)

Capital expenditures are tied to programmes, service delivery and related projects. Therefore, effective delivery and deployment of capital expenditures have greater prospects to contribute to growth in the sector's output. Thus, the budget performance review shall focus more on capital expenditures performances across the years in focus. This section also recognizes that budgets undergo in-year revision, hence sometimes the figures may differ between the approved budget and the values as stated in the implementation reports.

Table 3 presents the summary of the agriculture sector capital budget performance for years 2021 to 2023. The figures/ amount of capital allocation therein stated shows that the budget was reviewed within the implementation period, hence the amounts differ between the originally approved budget and the implementation report. It is also key to note that Niger like most states did not make the revised budgets available in public domain. The performance is based on the revised budget figures as captured in the state budget performance report.

The agriculture sector capital budget performed at 85.2%, 17.91% and 305.6% for 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively. However, in 2021, it was observed that there was a downward review of the capital allocation from 5.55 billion in the originally approved budget to 4.44 billion in the revised budget. In 2022 it was an upward review from 3.86 billion to 5.99 billion. 2023 however witnessed a massive reduction from the originally approved 7.87billion to as low as 799million. This explains the 305.6% budget performance.

A common challenge with the system of reporting budget performance as it applies in almost all the state is that the report does not capture the performance as it pertains to specific projects; thus, it becomes difficult to determine the status of specific projects in the budget.

#### **4. KEY AGRICULTURE SECTOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Niger State Agricultural Policy Document identified the following as some key achievements by the sector within the last decade:

- Employment of 6,000 youths through the Graduate Engagement Scheme (GES) and empowered over 10,000 unemployed youth through skills acquisition programmes.
- Promotion of mechanization and commercial programme which seeks to turn Agriculture into a money spinner. In order to jump start this programme the State Government purchased over 250 tractors and 125 power tillers to be hired in each Local Government Areas (LGA).
- Value chain development programme to improve rice, cassava and sorghum production are processing.
- Provision of subsidized inputs such as fertilizer and improved seeds as well as improved livestock and fish inputs to over 1.5 million registered farmers across the State.
- The State Government has expended substantial resources on revitalizing animal healthcare services and development of fisheries resources for higher productivity.
- Upgrading of 127.6km rehabilitated roads across the State (7 LGAs) and construction of FADAMA inter-community roads as well as 358.64km on-going road construction across 13 LGAs. Twenty (20) river crossings were rehabilitated across 15 LGAs.
- Procurement of 230 units of tractors and repaired 30 grounded ones for hiring to farmers and co-operative groups at affordable rate between 2015 and 2019.

## 5. REVIEW OF AGRICULTURE SECTOR PROJECTS

The Agriculture and Food Security Programme of the Niger State Development Blueprint (2019-2023) recognized Low Agricultural productivity as a strategic issue with the goal of “*attaining self-sufficiency in food production and employment generation*”. The reform objective is targeted at achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (End Poverty in all its forms everywhere); 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); and 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns).

This aligns with the overall goal of the State Agricultural Policy (2020) which is:

*the attainment of self-sufficiency in food production as well as self-sustaining growth in all sub-sectors of agriculture and the structural transformation necessary for the overall socio-economic development of the State, as well as the improvement in the quality of life of Nigerlites’.*

A review of the capital budget items of the MDAs in the sector shows that the state is making efforts in this direction. It is worthy to note however that gender considerations are factored into the planning process so that any category of stakeholders, especially small-scale women farmers, the youth and persons with disabilities are not further marginalized and deprived. Thus, critical and targeted efforts are advised during consultation at the budget preparation stage.

The following projects from the 2023 and 2024 state budget are considered useful and are capable of contributing to the state's strategic targets for the agricultural sector. They are thus recommended to be sustained.

**Table 4: Budget Line Items from 2024 Recommended to be sustained**

PROJECT NAME	FULL PROGRAMME CODE AND PROGRAMME LEVEL DESCRIPTION
REHABILITATION OF WAREHOUSE FOR STOCKING OF GRAINS	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PURCHASE OF 20NO CP15 SPRAYERS AND ASSORTED INSECTICIDES	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PURCHASE OF WOMEN AND YOUTH FRIENDLY EQUIPMENT - 2NO POWER TILLER, 3NO PLANTERS, 10NO MANUAL WEEDERS AND 5NO MILLING MACHINES	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
FENCING AND EQUIPING OF NEWLY CONSTRUCTED FARM CENTRE AND RENOVATION OF THE OLD SITE IN TEGINA	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR IMPROVED FERTILIZER PRODUCTION BY ZUGERU FERTILIZER COMPANY	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
TRAINING AND DISTRIBUTION OF VITAMIN A FORTIFIED MAIZE, ORANGE FLESH, SWEET POTATOES AND SOYA BEANS	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
CONSULTANCY ON AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMME/PROJECTS	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
QUARTERLY MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PURCHASE OF IMPROVED VARIETY OF OIL PALM THREES AT LABOZHI PLANTATION	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
MAINTENANCE OF GREEN HOUSE PROJECT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF 3,000 CITRUS SEEDLINGS AT MAIKUNKELE, BOSSO	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
RAISING OF NURSERY AT THE STATE SECRETARIAT MINNA	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
REFURBISHING OF 4G MOTOR GRADER	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
SURFACING DRESSING OF 6NO. RAMP ROADS 2NO PER SENATORIAL DISTRICTS	010115001014 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)

CONSTRUCTION OF 1NO ANATOMY, 1NO PHYSIOLOGY AND 1NO MICRO BIOLOGY LABORATORIES AT THE SCHOOL PREMISES	050715021003 - ENHANCING SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE (GENERAL)
RENOVATION OF FARM INSTITUTE, NASKO	050715021003 - ENHANCING SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE (GENERAL)
AGRO PROCESSING, PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT AND LIVELIHOOD (APPEAL)	010115102002 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY, GENERATION AND TRANSFER TO FARMERS BY EXTENSION WORKERS	010115102002 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PROVISION OF PRODUCTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AT DEMONSTRATING CENTRES	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
AGRICULTURAL INPUT AND GROUP MOBILIZATION FOR FARMERS ACROSS THE STATE	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
CONDUCT OF AGRICULTURAL SURVEYS	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
COMMUNITY VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT ON RICE AND SORGHUM (IFAD)	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
COMMODITY VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT WITH FOCUS ON RICE AND SORGHUM IN 3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS - AGAIE, GBAKO AND WUSHISHI (ATASP)	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
CONSTRUCTION OF RURAL ROADS IN SOME SELECTED LGAS (RAAMP) ACROSS THE STATE	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME (NFSP)	010115102003 - ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AGRICULTURE (GENERAL)
PURCHASE OF 625 NO OF SIMPLE HAND PLANTING MACHINE	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
PURCHASE OF 3NO. SPRAYERS AND ORGANIC PESTICIDES	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
FENCING AND RENOVATION OF MINNA MECHANICAL WORKSHOP	23030121 - REHABILITATION/REPAIRS OF OFFICE BUILDINGS
PROCUREMENT OF 300 UNITS OF MF 375 POWER STEERING TRACTORS.	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT

**Source:** Niger State Budgets

Most of these projects are provided as gender neutral projects that will require strategic targeting during implementation to ensure that SHWF are reached.

## PART TWO: FOR ACTION IN THE MEDIUM TERM

Part Two is dedicated to action needed to improve budgeting for inclusivity and CSA and the right to food including promoting the welfare of smallholder farmers and making the sector attractive for the youth and other private investors in the state.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS



### **6.1 Strategic Planning for Agriculture**

The Niger State Development Blueprint (2019-2023) and the State Agricultural policy document have lived up their lifespans and need to be replaced with updated and current versions that would speak to the reality of the day. The state's official website presents evidence that a 30-year state development plan is underway. It is imperative for the state to consult widely in arriving at the agriculture component of the plan. It should plan towards harnessing the potentials of the agricultural sector being the bedrock of the state economy.

### **6.2 Prioritize Funding Agriculture in the State**

Funding of the sector has been poor over the past decades and the state has not come close to meeting the Malabo Declaration benchmark. Given the potentials of the state including facilities, availability of land and the fertility of same for cropping, the state should deploy significant portion of its budget to agriculture. With over 70% of the state's people in one or more form of agricultural practice, it could serve to help the state increase its output, attain self-sufficiency and reduce hunger. Beyond increasing the allocation to the sector, releases should also be prioritized to ensure that the goals and targets are met to a significant extent. The target should be the utilization of at least 95% of appropriated funds.

### **6.3 Invest in Appropriate Locally Available Mechanization**

The state has made spent substantial sums in purchasing and repairing tractors for farming purpose. While this is encouraging, they also come with high maintenance cost. The state is encouraged to invest more on locally produced agricultural equipment, particularly those that are gender-friendly including tillers, sprayers, harvesters, etc., which can be fabricated locally especially at the Innoson Motor Company in Nnewi and the Agriculture mechanization research institutes. These locally fabricated implements are cheaper and easier to maintain than the more sophisticated tractors. It will save the state some resources that can be devoted to other critical needs in the sector.

### **6.4 Development of Gender Indicators in Agriculture**

The State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Planning Commission and the Ministry of Women Affairs should collaborate with gender experts to develop gender and inclusivity specific indicators in Agriculture which should guide budgeting and planning in the sector. The indicators will show the action points for budgeting, monitoring and reporting.

### **6.5 Increased Investment in Irrigation**

All season farming will get a significant boost if the state is to invest more on irrigation to the point of state-wide coverage. This is a possibility given that the state houses all the dams in the country. The presence of major rivers in the state is also an added advantage because it implies that sources of water are available and from which government can make water available for all-year-round farming. The fact that just 1% of irrigable land being under irrigation is not acceptable.

## 6.6 Create Special Opportunities for Agriculture Financing

Access to credit is important for increased investment in agriculture. The State should set up a desk to explore opportunities to attract resources from Development Banks and Special Agriculture Funds and sensitise and empower SHWF in the state of the procedures for accessing them. The state should support innovative financing options for farmers and other players across the agriculture value chain such as collaborating with financial partners to make available low interest loans to small and medium-scale farmers. The special windows will include the special climate change financing mechanisms.<sup>17</sup> The state should also consider the establishment of a revolving fund to support SHWF.

## 6.7 Soil and Nutrient Management

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security has done a soil map for Nigeria. The information contained in this soil map is very essential to the reduction of GHG emission. However, Nigerians are not aware of the fact that there is a soil map and its contents. Niger State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development should liaise with federal agencies and disseminate the information in the soil map to farmers in the state who are supposed to be the ultimate beneficiaries of the information. Also, fertilizer distribution by the state government should begin to take note of the content of the soil map for a particular area. Furthermore, the state should increase fertilizer use per hectare through the promotion of organic fertilizers. The need for sustainability in farming practices indicates that the state should invest more in producing organic fertilizers and farm inputs. Beyond making the soils less acidic over the medium to long term, the process of making these fertilizers will create jobs, reduce the waste that has become a challenge to city managers as well as convert same to wealth in a win-win scenario for all.

## 6.8 Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses

Inadequate storage and processing facilities means that huge amounts of the agricultural produce harvested will be lost. Investing in storage facilities means that there will be an increase in productivity and sustainability in supply. Losing harvested crops due to poor storage facilities means that no utility was provided by the crops despite all the GHGs emitted in the process of production. If the lost utility will have to be replaced, more GHGs will have to be emitted through another agricultural production cycle. Consequently, improving agricultural storage facilities will not just make more produce available but will also reduce the GHGs that would have been emitted. However, the major challenge here will be the huge capital cost of storage facilities that will be located in the farm as well as the cost of transportation infrastructure that will be needed. Public Private Partnerships should be used for reduction of post-harvest losses. This will include developing cold hubs for fruits, vegetables and tubers and small scale processing plants. There are also cheaper options that could be explored with

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<sup>17</sup> See *Financing Options for Climate Change Interventions*, Centre for Social Justice, 2016.

support from research institutions and extension service workers. This may imply making budgetary provision for capacity building to support farmers in that direction.

### **6.9 Using Resistant and Genetically Improved Animals and Crops**

Heat and extreme weather conditions have a very negative impact on crop and animal yield. Pest and diseases also greatly reduce agricultural yield. The effect of this is the reduced crops, meat, milk, etc. which will be provided despite the GHGs that have been emitted during the agricultural production process. Consequently, improved crops and animal varieties should be used for agricultural production. These improved varieties can withstand extreme temperatures and other harsh environmental conditions. Consequently, their yield will be more when compared to the less resistant crops and animal varieties. This means that the associated emission of GHGs needed to produce them will be reduced. This is not a licence for the introduction of genetically modified crops and animals.

### **6.10 Business Advisory Services**

When Business Advisory Services is combined with innovative financing mechanism, productivity and value addition will be enhanced. It can also serve to attract more investors into the sector. Big Agribusiness companies can be attracted to the state to invest and boost the state's economy through employment creation. The availability of arable land and labour in the state a good selling points to attract investment from within and outside the country. The service will also be useful for the development of an agriculture development plan for the state.

### **6.11 Link between Research and Practical Agriculture**

Nigeria has 15 Commodity-based Agricultural Research Institutes, 11 Federal Colleges of Agriculture, a Specialized National Agricultural Extension Institute, over 50 Faculties of Agriculture in regular Federal Universities and 3 Specialised Universities of Agriculture. The state can explore a partnership agreement to this end for the purpose of feeding its agriculture sector with research products that could help increase the state's agricultural productivity. The research institutes include National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI), Badeggi, National Institute for Freshwaters Fisheries Research (NIFFR), New Bussa, Niger State College of Agriculture, Mokwa, Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries Technology, New Bussa, Science Equipment Development Institute, Minna (a parastatal under NASENI) and Minna Institute of Technology and Innovation (MITI). The opportunities available at these institutes could be leveraged to provide real time support to farmers and farmer cooperatives in the state.

### **6.12 Invest in Improving Extension Services**

The state should enhance extension services and consider reaching out to farmers through a multiplicity of approaches. These will include physical meetings and deployment of electronic media especially radio and television, as well as through the social media, text messages, etc. The establishment of local government and community level demonstration farms is imperative. Extension services and

demonstration farms provide opportunities for imparting knowledge on fit and good practices and new farming techniques. There is the need to invest in the training of female extension workers.

### **6.13 Establish Cattle/Animal Ranches**

Considering the need for increased production of meat, milk and animal yield, the state should move expeditiously to establish cattle ranches. This will make it easier to state veterinarians to reach and vaccinate animals and provide hands-on support to animal farmers. This will also reduce the farmer herder conflicts. The requisite investment is also needed in improved veterinary facilities.

### **6.14 Invest in Aqua Culture**

It is imperative to invest in fish breeding and processing facilities, capacity building and knowledge dissemination for fisheries and aquaculture. The large rivers, water bodies and vast land in the state will support this investment.

### **6.15 Risk Management**

Collaboration between MDAs will also be imperative. For instance, the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) and weather stations will need to give state level farmers sensitive information through the mass media including radio and mobile phones on weather and climate issues that affect agriculture. Furthermore, Niger State Ministry of Agriculture should embrace and provide practical information to SWF on the services of the Nigeria Agricultural Insurance Corporation which provides insurance cover for crops, livestock and related agriculture transactions at fairly cheap premiums.

### **6.16 Measurement, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification**

The State Ministry of Agriculture should provide resources for monitoring, reporting and verification of the challenges, achievements and investments in the sector including mainstreaming of inclusivity, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. This will close data gaps which frustrates evidence led planning for inclusivity and CSA. Poor measurement, reporting, and verification will deny the state the opportunity of course correction on the path of inclusivity and CSA.

### **6.17 Ensure on Inclusivity in Budget Planning**

Developing an inclusive budget is a first step to actualizing set budget targets. There are diverse interests in the state that needs to be reflected in the state's budget. Some groups are often marginalized in budgeting because of lack of inclusivity. Women constitute a large proportion of farmers and majority of these women are smallholder farmers. Thus, the state should consult widely and consider the specific needs of these category of farmers. The state Agriculture budget should contain affirmative action provisions.

### **6.18 The Continuum: Policy, Plan, Budget Cycle**

Previous and current experience in the implementation of national plans reveals a lot of disarticulations. It is recommended that Agriculture budgets should be backed by a clear

MTSS which is linked to high level national and international standards; fully costed and progressively allocates more resources to Agriculture based on increased availability of resources. There should be an inseparable link between policy, planning, budgeting, performance, monitoring and evaluation continuum. The legislature should insist on the establishment of the link between policies and appropriation during the consideration of the budget. Clarity of the budget template will dictate that projects are clearly and properly described in the budget and repetition of budget heads and items should be avoided.

### **6.19 Formation of Sector Teams for Future Budget Planning**

The executive is enjoined to collaborate with the stakeholders in civil society, farmers, cooperatives, professional associations, organized labour, the academia, etc. to ensure that the preparation of Agriculture MTSS is done by a team that represents all stakeholders including the MDA and its parastatals. This will guarantee comprehensiveness of future budgets and the fact the budget votes will target programme results and goals of the sector.

### **6.20 Improve Security**

Banditry and farmer-herder clashes have seriously affected agricultural productivity in the state. While the federal government attends to the overall security, the state can intervene through organizing of local vigilante groups, deployment of resources towards community policing when the 1999 Constitution is eventually amended. The state can also take advantage of its large expanse of land by creating reserves for herders in the state, that way, agricultural productivity is not hampered and losses of farm products are minimized.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Niger State's arable land, dams and rivers provide opportunity for inclusive farming practices that takes cognizance of the rights and needs of all members of the Niger State family. All the challenges discussed in the earlier part of this Memorandum can be turned into opportunities for action to improve livelihoods, increase employment and enhance value addition in the state.



## ABOUT SWOFON

Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigeria (SWOFON) is a coalition of Women Farmers Associations and Groups across Nigeria. This coalition exists with the goal of advocating for and supporting women farmers especially those in rural areas to spur rural village economic development, increase food production through capacity building of smallholder women farmers to demand for their rights and privileges from the duty bearers while serving as a vocal and visible pressure group on behalf small holder women farmers in Nigeria.

SWOFON organizes and empowers women farmers' association and groups to track and engage duty bearers around agricultural expenditure and investments. We are poised to build a collective voice for all smallholder women farmers associations to express their needs to policymakers and other development stakeholders. SWOFON also engages the government directly to further improve existing agricultural policies to support women smallholder farmers.

## ABOUT CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



Centre for Social Justice Limited by Guarantee (CSJ) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization established to introduce professionalism in civil society work and to deepen economic, social and political change.

**Vision:** A Nigeria where social justice informs public decision making and guarantees respect of human right fundamental freedoms for all.

**Mission:** To be a principal catalyst in mainstreaming social justice in public life through policy engagement and interventions that bring about economic, political and social reforms, rights enhancement and sustainable livelihoods.