

NASARAWA 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

CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FMAFS	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
FMoE	Federal Ministry of Environment
FMoWR	Federal Ministry of Water Resources
FRA	Fiscal Responsibility Act
FRL	Fiscal Responsibility Law
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
NADP	Nasarawa Agriculture Development Programme
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 two parts of seven 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 Nasarawa State.

Section 2 highlights the key challenges of the sector and laid 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 contains sections 6 and 7. Section 6 features policy recommendations while section 7 is the conclusion. The highlight of the recommendations are as follows:

- Introduce Strategic Planning for Agriculture
- Prioritize Funding Agriculture in the state
- Increased investment in Irrigation
- Development of Gender Indicators in Agriculture
- Create Special Opportunities for Agriculture financing and Revolving Funds
- Create Links between Research and Practical Agriculture
- Intensify Extension Services
- Invest in Appropriate Locally Available Mechanization
- Sustainable Soil and Nutrient Management
- The Need for Strong Cooperatives

- Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses
- Using Resistant and Genetically Improved Animals and Crops
- Introduce Business Advisory Services
- Mainstream Risk Management
- Measurement, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
- The Continuum: ensure that Laws, Policies and Plans are reflected in the Budget
- Formation of Sector Teams for Future Budget Planning
- Create opportunities for effective consultation
- 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 Nasarawa State Ministry of Finance, Budget and Planning. When finalized, considered and endorsed by the State Executive Council (SEC), it will be transmitted to the State House of Assembly (SHA) for approval¹. 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 sector 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 2024.² Headline inflation stood at 33.69% with food inflation at 40.53%.³ Food and non-alcoholic beverages at the divisional level contributed 17.45% to the headline inflation index.⁴ Agriculture productivity 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

¹ This is as provided by section 16 (2) of the Fiscal Responsibility Law, 2011.

² National Bureau of Statistics, First quarter 2024, GDP Report.

³ National Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, April 2024.

⁴ NBS, April 2024, supra.

worth N1.244 trillion thereby incurring a sectoral trade deficit of N1.037 trillion.⁵ Agriculture is therefore an important sector that deserves the attention of all stakeholders.

The population of Nasarawa State is estimated at about 3.15million in 2024, disaggregated into 51.0% male and 49.0% female and a population density of 87.82 persons per square kilometer on a land mass of 28,735 square kilometres. Agriculture contributes substantially to Nasarawa State's estimated GDP of N1.86trillion. The state is well endowed with fertile soil and its proximity to River Benue creates excellent opportunities to benefit from irrigation farming. The recently elapsed Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy (NEDS, 2019-2023), the state's 4-year development plan tagged '*unlocking opportunities creating wealth*' reaffirms this stance, noting that about 80% of its populace are engaged in agriculture and agriculture-related activities like farming, animal rearing and agro-processing. The sector has enormous potentials, including serving as pedestal for the state's all-round growth through its output.

It is a leading producer of yam tubers accounting for 13% of the total yam production in Nigeria, and in 2014 it accounted for as much as 16% of the total sesame production in Nigeria. Olam, a leading food and agri-business company owns about 10,000 hectares of rice farm and mills in the state⁶. Despite the present focus on agricultural development by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a way of expanding the economy, fundamental parts of this process have not been reflected in Nasarawa despite the fact that the state has comparative advantage in agriculture. Also, there is a high level of insecurity in the state resulting in loss of opportunities to build on previously attained gains. This poses a threat to agricultural growth, particularly to further investment in the sector.

Official preparation of the Agriculture Sector MTSS 2025-2027 by the State Ministry of Agriculture provides SWOFON and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in the Agriculture Sector an opportunity to present memorandum articulating key inputs into the MTSS and the 2025 Agriculture budget. The memorandum is focused on mainstreaming inclusivity especially the needs of small-scale women farmers which constitutes a large number of the farming population, 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, desertification, increased incidence of droughts, etc., are all manifestations of climate change. They have impacted negatively on Agricultural productivity 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 other related agencies in the

⁵ NBS Foreign Trade Reports, *Foreign Trade in Goods Statistics*, 2023

⁶ See the Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy (NEDS 2019 – 2023)

state including the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Planning and the state legislature among other stakeholders and interest groups.

1.3 Outlining Linkages Between MTSS and Annual Budget

Fit and good practices in fiscal responsibility 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 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. 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 other CSOs in Nasarawa 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 Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy (NEDS 2019-2023), National Gender Policy, etc. These policies stated the goals of the sector within the context of overall national goals.

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.

Again, 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 endeavour. According to Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC),⁷ 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 Livelihoods⁸. 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

⁷ Nigeria's First Nationally Determined Contribution, 2021 Update.

⁸ 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.

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 quality⁹.

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 fulfil 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,

⁹ 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 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.

processing, storage and distribution systems of food and agricultural products¹⁰. All these are to be undertaken on a non-discriminatory basis and affirmative action applied in appropriate and deserving cases.

There is presently no subsisting state development plan in Nasarawa¹¹, neither an Agriculture policy. The Agriculture objective and Policy Thrust in the NEDS (2019-2023) reads thus:

..... to commercialise agriculture farming by transiting away from subsistence farming to high-valued commercial agriculture and ensure food security for the people of Nasarawa State while creating employment including youth employment.

The NADP on the other hand has the mandate of *supporting small scale farmers in the State to increase their agricultural production and incomes which will eventually translate to better living standards.*

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

At state level, agriculture is anchored by the State Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources with complementary support from state institutions like the Nasarawa Agriculture Development Programme (NADP), the state FADAMA coordinating office, and the State College of Agriculture, Science and Technology. Each of these institutions have critical roles in advancing agriculture in the state. There are major individual farmers and farmer groups with a few investments by private farming companies in the state.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ The state's latest development plan was meant to run from 2019 to 2023)- (NEDS 2019-2023)

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 the Nasarawa Agriculture within the Context of SWF

The Nasarawa state chapter of Smallholder Women Farmers (SWOFON) had articulated its 'Charter of Demands' which captures the priority needs of smallholder farmers in the state. These include;

- Access to free and/or subsidised farming inputs/organic fertiliser, chemicals, pesticides and hybrid seedlings;
- Establishment of Peace Committees between Community Heads and Local Government Chairmen to tackle the insecurity/farmer-herders crisis in the state;
- Provision of gender friendly machineries for increased farming productivity, such as harvesters, tillers, hand sprinklers, ploughs, planters;
- Allocation of community land - 500 hectares for cluster farming across different value chains;
- Access to grants to support increased production as well as subsidised loans without interest rates or single digit interest rate;
- Building of storage facilities like silos for seed preservation and agriculture business;
- Construction of dams, boreholes and manual water pumps for irrigation farming;
- Construction of rural road networks for easy access to markets; Government allocation of grazing land to herdsmen for ranching, to reduce the farmer-herder crisis and destruction of farms; and
- Provision of community policing and or security patrol with local vigilante groups to improve security conditions within the communities and local government areas.

These also resonate with the sector's challenges captured in the Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy (NEDS, 2019-2023) document which read thus:

- Preponderance of subsistence farmers, most of whom have no or low level of education, which leads to low level of adoption of improved farm management practices, including but not limited to the use of improved seedlings and farming technology.

- Weak access to adequate funding and high poverty incidence among farmers prevents meaningful investment in farm expansion and productivity.
- Absence of irrigation farming, with high-dependence on rain-fed agriculture; only a small proportion of cultivated land is under irrigation.
- Extension work has been limited due to inadequate funding of extension services.
- Poor land tenure management system.
- The role of youth in agricultural development has also been undermined significantly as they remain an untapped and undervalued resource.
- Instability of agricultural produce prices and low prices during the harvest season.
- Shortage of credit facilities and high cost of credit.
- Poorly organised farmer and producer cooperative associations.
- Lack of development of the post-harvest value chain, reflected in high post-harvest losses.
- Poor provision for preservation, processing and storage, access to market and marketing infrastructure.
- Lack of monitoring and evaluation of government's agricultural programmes

All these challenges did not mainstream gender considerations. They assume a one-size-fits-all approach to the sector's challenges without consideration to gender differentials. Women farmers, particularly smallholder women farmers constitute a significant portion of farmers in the state and are exposed multiple challenges beyond the ones identified above.

2.2 Sectoral Goals, Objectives, Targets and Strategies

The over goal is to facilitate a 2025-2027 Agriculture MTSS and 2025 Nasarawa State Agriculture Budget that promotes inclusivity and CSA. Against the background of the challenges listed above, the following objectives, targets and strategies have emerged:

- Improve the funding of the Agriculture Sector with a target tending towards the 10% Maputo benchmark.
- Provide strategic direction for farming and agriculture in the state through developing an agricultural plan with accompanying strategies and indicators for meeting set targets.

- Improve monitoring of projects in the sector so as to take corrective steps where necessary.
- Ensure improved extension services that responds to the needs of smallholder farmers in the state.
- Devote resources to creating secured farmlands and increase productivity of farmers in the state.
- Increase provision for irrigation to facilitate all-year-round farming for increased productivity.
- Make provision for access to agricultural credit to support farming activities in the state.
- Budgeting for improvement of business advisory services.
- Minimize post-harvest losses through provision of storage facilities and enabling environment for farmers to store their products.
- Improving security through the police, local security and vigilante services and community mobilization, etc.
- Provision for affordable and cost-effective equipment that are gender-friendly and have low maintenance cost.
- Create opportunity for inclusivity in the budget formulation process through wide and targeted consultation of women farmers and other normally marginalized groups in the state.
- Introduce resilient genetically improved seeds and animals.
- Link agricultural research to the needs of the off-takers- the real farmers who should participate in the crafting of the research agenda.
- Provision of land for cluster farming

In view of this, the overall purpose of this exercise is to mainstream gender and inclusivity, a low carbon framework for budgeting; fit and good practices, value for money, accountability for results and evidence led budgeting framework in the agriculture sector whilst responding to the food and agriculture challenges/indicators affecting the majority of the population and the farming community. Furthermore, to support Nigeria's food sovereignty, the introduction of genetically modified crops must be handled with utmost care, based on empirical evidence and in line with our national aspirations.

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

3.1 Poor Budgetary Allocation

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 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 market for its produce. The Malabo Declaration was adopted by the AU Assembly Heads of State and Government in June 2014; it 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.

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

Year	Total State Budget (NGN)	Total Allocation to Agric (NGN)	(%) of Agric Allocation to State Budget	Malabo Declaration (10%) Benchmark (NGN)	Variance Against Malabo (10%) Benchmark (NGN)
2020 (Revised)	89,853,815,372.00	2,919,412,850.00	3.25%	8,985,381,537.20	6,065,968,687.20
2021	115,722,814,543.00	6,880,587,716.23	5.95%	11,572,281,454.30	4,691,693,738.07
2022	110,849,954,879.49	4,908,190,631.27	5.44%	11,084,995,487.95	6,176,804,856.68
2023	149,315,944,207.62	11,262,522,399.76	7.54%	14,931,594,420.76	3,669,072,021.02
2024	199,879,370,709.43	9,607,214,703.21	4.81%	19,987,937,070.94	10,380,722,367.73
Total	665,621,899,711.54	35,577,928,300.47	5.39%	66,562,189,971.15	30,984,261,670.70

Source: Nasarawa State Approved Budgets and Performance Reports (2020-2024).

From Table 1 above, Agriculture enjoyed a total five-year allocation of N35,577,928,300 from an overall budget vote of N665,621,899,711. The annual average allocation was N7,115,585,660 constituting an annual average percentage of 5.39% of the total approved state budgets. Within the period the highest allocation is 7.54% in 2023 while the least is 3.25% in 2020. Given the Malabo Declaration of 10% benchmark, the total allocation over the five-year period should have amounted to N66,562,189,971.15. For a state that plans to leverage the potentials in its agriculture sector to attain its development targets, the sector's lack of prioritization in budgetary allocation tells a different story. While the overall budget size has been on the rise, allocation to the sector has continued to fluctuate. The state needs to consciously prioritize agriculture to grow its economy.

3.2 Capital and Recurrent Disaggregation of the Agriculture Sector Funding

There has been a near balanced distribution of the sector's fund between recurrent and capital expenditures; however, 2022 witnessed a massive shift with a clear lop-sided tilt in favour of recurrent expenditure to the tune of 82% while capital received 18%. Table 2 below presents the summary.

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

Year	Agriculture Budget (NGN)	Agric Budget (USD)	Recurrent + Other Expenditure (NGN)	Recurrent Allocation in %	Capital Expenditure (NGN)	Capital Allocation in %
2020 (Revised)	2,919,412,850.00	9,571,845.41	1,465,462,850.00	50.2	1,453,950,000.00	49.8
2021	6,907,085,079.91	18,224,498.89	3,462,911,079.91	49.94	3,444,174,000.00	50.06
2022	8,019,696,190.84	19,560,234.61	6,584,901,283.64	82.11	1,434,794,907.20	17.89
2023	9,078,003,033.44	20,868,972.49	4,293,346,348.78	47.29	4,784,656,684.66	52.71
2024	9,607,214,703.21	12,009,018.38	3,994,839,703.21	41.58	5,612,375,000.00	58.42

Source: Nasarawa State Approved Budgets and Performance Reports (2020-2024).

The distribution shows that recurrent expenditure was allocated 50.2%, 49.94%, 47.29% and 41.58% in 2020, 2021, 2023 and 2024 respectively. On the other hand, capital expenditure was allocated 49.8%, 50.06%, 52.71% and 58.42% respectively for the same period. Thus, the distribution in 2022 is by far different from what obtained in the other years. Nevertheless, it is important to note that different expenditure category titled 'other expenditure' is included in the recurrent expenditure allocation. In the year 2023, 'other expenditure' was allocated the sum of NGN209,000,000 while it was allocated a whopping NGN3,797,762,526.12 in 2022. It did not feature in 2021.

3.3 Performance of Appropriated Funds to Agriculture

This part reviews the performance of the sector's budget over the period recognizing that appropriated funds do not equate released fund. It however assumes that released funds are utilized. The budget performance review focus is on capital expenditures across the years. Furthermore, it recognizes that budgets sometime experience in-year revision, hence the figures may differ between the approved budget and the values as stated in the implementation reports.

Table 3: Nasarawa State Agricultural Sector Capital Budget Performance

Year	Capital Expenditure Allocation (NGN)	Full year performance (Q1 – Q4)	Capital Budget Performance (%)	Balance Against Allocation (NGN)
2020 (Revised)	1,453,950,000.00	16,170,000.00	1.11%	1,437,780,000.00
2021 (Revised)	3,444,174,000.00	572,880,142.96	16.6%	2,871,293,857.04
2022 (Revised)	1,434,794,907.20	655,148,543.05	45.7%	779,646,365.15
2023 (Revised)	4,784,656,684.66	4,288,334,238.61	89.6%	496,322,446.05

Sources: Nasarawa State Q4/ Year-to-end (2020-2023) Budget Performance Reports

Nasarawa state capital expenditure budget performance for 2023 stands out among the years under consideration at 89.6% cost implementation. It was 1.11%, 16.6% and 45.7% in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively. While the 2023 performance is commendable,

those of 2020 and 2021 were outrightly poor. Significant improvement is required in this regard. The extent to which the 2020 performance was affected by the COVID-19 outbreak is however not known. The statistics speaks poorly of the planning system, especially as the reporting is based on the revised budget in which case adjustments might have been made to reflect changing circumstances within the year.

4. KEY AGRICULTURE SECTOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The key achievements in the state's agriculture sector over time include:

1. The state developed a roadmap towards growing the state's economy through an agriculture strategy encapsulated in the Nasarawa Economic Development Strategy (2019-2023)
 - Attraction of private sector investment: Olam, an agribusiness enterprise has over 10,000 hectares of rice farm and a mill in the state.
 - Dangote group investment of hundreds of billions in rice and sugar projects
2. The state is one of the leading producers of yam tuber in the country. In 2012 and 2014, Nasarawa state accounted for 13% and 10% respectively of the total yam production in Nigeria¹².
3. In 2014, Nasarawa produced 16% of total sesame production in Nigeria¹³.
4. NSIA and UFF Agri Investment acquired 3,500 ha for maize and soya farming and processing.

Also, worth mentioning are the following ongoing projects in the state under the NADP

- Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP).
- Fostering Sustainability and Resilience for Food Security in the Savanna Zones of Northern Nigeria.
- Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP).
- Grant Assistance for Grass-root Human Security Project (GGP)
- German International Cooperation Project (GIZ) farming project.

¹² According to the NEDS 2019-2023 strategy document.

¹³ According to the NEDS 2019-2023 strategy document.

5. MDA AGRICULTURE PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES THAT SHOULD BE SUSTAINED

Over the years, the projects captured have remained relatively the same. There is no significant change from year to year. This is especially noticeable with projects in the parent ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources. However, the record of poor implementation¹⁴ of capital budget have consistently posed a challenge to their actualization. The below listed provisions are Agriculture projects that will likely facilitate inclusivity and CSA and should be sustained. The listing is not an opinion on whether the projects were implemented or not.

Table 4: Budget Line Items that Should be Sustained

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ECONOMIC CODE AND DESCRIPTION
PURCHASE OF 50NO. AGRICULTURAL SPRAYERS & MOWERS	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
CONSTRUCTION OF COTTAGE HATCHERY FACILITY ACROSS THE 3 ZONES	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
PURCHASE OF 2 NOS. WATER SURVEYING MACHINE	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIE
DRILLING OF BOREHOLES (SOLAR HAND, PUMP etc)	23020135 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF PERIMETER FENCING OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS
PURCHASE OF MACHINE FOR PRODUCTION, PRESERVATION & BOTTLING OF TROPICAL FRUIT JUICE	23010120 - PURCHASE OFCANTEEN / KITCHEN EQUIPMENT
PURCHASE OF 2 TONES OF BUFFER GRAINS	23010165 - PURCHASE OF FEED MILLER
PROCUREMENT OF MODERN DRILLING EQUIPMENT (RIG) COMPRESSORS, TERRAMETER & ACCESSORIES	23010154 - PURCHASE OF RIG & AIR COMPRESSOR MOUNTED ON TRUC
CONSTRUCTION OF VETERINARY CLINICS AT TOTO & WAMBA	23020173 - CONSTRUCTION/ PROVISION OF VETERINARY CLINICS/HOSPITAL
DRILLING OF 10 NOS BOREHOLES AT VETERINARY CLINICS	23020105 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF WATER FACILITIES
CONSTRUCTION OF SLUICE GATE IN AWUMA FISH FARM	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
ESTABLISHMENT OF FISH VALUE CHAIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
ESTABLISHMENTOF 3 NO PILOT IRRIGATION SCHEME ACROSS THE THREE SENATORIAL DISTRICTS	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
CONSTRUCTION OF KARU WATER SUPPLY SCHEME	23020105 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF WATER FACILITIES
ESTABLISHMENT OF 3NO. LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY FARMS IN THE 3 SENATORIAL ZONES	23020124 - CONSTRUCTION OF MARKETS/PARKS
CONSTRUCTION OF 3NO. LIVEBIRDS MARKETS ACROSS THE 3 SENATORIAL ZONES	23020124 - CONSTRUCTION OF MARKETS/PARKS
ESTABLISHMENT OF 3NO. TANNERIES ACROSS THE 3 SENATORIAL ZONES	23020128 - CONSTRUCTION OF WORKSHOP/ WARE HOUSE
REPAIRS OF 147 BOREHOLES ACROSS THE STATE	23020105 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF WATER FACILITIES
REHABILITATION OF KANTSAKUWA FISH FARM	23030112 - REHABILITATION / REPAIRS - AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES

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RENOVATION OF FERTILIZER STORES AT AKWANGA, KEFFI AND LAFIA	23030112 - REHABILITATION / REPAIRS - AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
PLANTING OF ASSORTED TREES ACROSS THE LGs	23040101 - TREE PLANTING
CONDUCT OF FISHERIES STATISTICAL BIO ASSAY FRAME SURVEY	23050101 - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
SURVEY AND BEACONING OF 8 GRAZING RESERVES AND STOCK ROUTE	23050101 - RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
PURCHASE OF 1 NO. TRACTOR FOR PRACTICALS	23010124 - PURCHASE OF TEACHING-LEARNING/ SPECIAL AID EQUIPMENT
PURCHASE OF 1NO LOW BED HEAD	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
NASARAWA STATE CARES AGRICULTURAL ASSETS FOR PRODUCTION DLI 2.3	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
PURCHASE OF 4000NO. OF 2KG AGRO-CHEMICAL/HERBICIDES FOR FARMERS	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
PURCHASE OF 1NO MOWER	23010129 - PURCHASE OF INDUSTRIAL/ WORKSHOP EQUIPMENT & TOOLS
PURCHASE OF CONFERENCE ZOOMING SCREEN EQUIPMENT	23010147 - PURCHASE OF ICT EQUIPMENT
CONSTRUCTION OF BEES HIVES & KIRTS	23020113 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF AGRICULTURAL FACILITIES
PURCHASE OF 4000NO. AGRICULTURAL MILLERS AND THRESHERS	23010127 - PURCHASE OF AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT
SUPPLY OF THRESHING MACHINES, CHEMICALS AND OTHER AGRIC INPUTS	23010172 - PURCHASE OF FERTILIZER/ AGRIC INPUTS
CONSTRUCTION OF RURAL FEEDER ROADS IN OBI, KEANA, DOMA, AND AKWANGA	23020114 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF ROADS
AGRIC ASSETS FOR PRODUCTION & SMALL SCALE PRIMARY PROCESSING	23020118 - CONSTRUCTION / PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Source: Nasarawa State Budgets

Roads and infrastructure provide ease of access to move farm products from the rural areas to places where they are most needed and command higher prices. Water and irrigation schemes facilitate all year-round farming and improved crop and animal yields. Tree planting improves the environment and low-level mechanization improves productivity whilst reducing drudgery in farming.

Finally, there is the need to move away from the gender neutrality of these projects and start appropriating funds specifically targeting marginalized groups especially, the small holder women farmers in the state.

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 women farmers and making the sector attractive for the youth and private investors in the state.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Strategic Planning for Agriculture

Nasarawa State Agriculture needs a sector-specific strategy for growth of the sector. The strategy should feed into the state development plan. The plan, to be developed through

popular participation, should show a clear roadmap of the direction for improvements with measurable indicators and milestones for effective monitoring of its progress. Aside developing a plan, the same should be publicized to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders.

6.2 Prioritize Funding Agriculture in the state

The state should prioritize agriculture through improved funding of the sector. The state can leverage its current comparative advantage which includes having a vast arable land, cheap and affordable labour, a sizeable youth population, proximity to the River Benue and its proximity to the federal capital territory which guarantees a ready and available market for its produce. Apart from overall allocation to the sector, the state should devote a sizeable sum to capital expenditure because of its potential to facilitate development. Also, it should ensure that appropriated funds are timeously released for agriculture to assume its driving role in the state's growth process.

6.3 Increased investment in irrigation

The state should increase its investment in the area of irrigation to reduce the state's high dependence on rain-fed agriculture and to promote all season farming for increased yield and productivity of the sector. It could leverage its proximity to the River Benue and other available options and opportunities across the state.

6.4 Development of Gender Indicators in Agriculture

The State Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning should collaborate with experts to develop gender and inclusivity 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 Create Special Opportunities for Agriculture financing

The state should work towards attracting a large pool of funds for agriculture at minimal/affordable rates as a way of encouraging increased uptake of agriculture in the state, particularly among women and the youth. The state could engage NIRSAL and other available sources for such opportunity. The Ministry of Agriculture should consider the establishment of a Revolving Agriculture Credit Facility. It should set up a desk to attract resources from Development Banks and Special Agriculture Funds and sensitise and empower small scale women farmers on the procedures for accessing them. The special windows will include the special climate change financing mechanisms.¹⁵

6.6 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. It could also leverage the opportunities available at the State College of

¹⁵ See *Financing Options for Climate Change Interventions*, Centre for Social Justice, 2016.

Agriculture, Science and Technology to provide real time support to farmers and farmer cooperatives in the state.

6.7 Extension Services

As a follow up to the linking research to real life farming, 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 new farming techniques. These include hydroponics vis, growing plants, usually crops or medicinal plants, without soil, by using water-based mineral nutrient solutions in an artificial environment; aeroponics vis, the practice of growing plants in an air or mist environment without the use of any substrate where plant roots are suspended in the air and are misted or sprayed periodically with a nutrient solution or aerosol of nutrient solution; and aquaponics which is a food production system that couples aquaculture with hydroponics whereby the nutrient-rich aquaculture water is fed to hydroponically grown plants.¹⁶

6.8 Invest in Appropriate Locally Available Mechanization

The need for provision of a variety of farm equipment cannot be overemphasized. The link between research and farming will be better enhanced through investments in mechanization that reduce drudgery and provide new implements for farming. These will include tillers, sprayers, harvester, etc., which can be fabricated locally especially at the Innoson Motor Company in Nnewi. Instead of looking for large resources for huge tractors and harvesters, cheaper and hand driven locally fabricated and maintained equipment can fill the void. It will not only improve agriculture productivity but create jobs in their servicing and repair.

6.9 Soil and Nutrient Management

Nitrogen is a very essential nutrient for the growth of crops but too much nitrogen in the soil has side effects. When nitrogen in the soil is too much, some of it will be unabsorbed by plants and will react with air and water to produce nitrous oxide which is a GHG. Fertilizer application is supposed to take note of the amount of nitrogen and other nutrients already present in the soil. The idea of applying the same NPK fertilizer all over the state is unacceptable. Fortunately, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development 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. The Nasarawa State Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources 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

¹⁶ See Wikipedia - the open encyclopedia.

fertilizers. The need for sustainability in farming practices indicates that the state should invest more in producing organic fertilisers 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.

6.10 The Need for Strong Cooperatives

Considering the need for collaterals and formalization of processes in access to credit, beyond SWOFON, rural small-scale farmers need to be organized into cooperatives and registered with the appropriate legal authorities. This will facilitate their processing of loans, access to inputs and as a fulcrum for getting CSA extension services. Cooperatives of small-scale processors, storage providers and other operatives on the value chain can also be formed for ease of access to financial and technical support for inclusivity and CSA. Land reform is also imperative for rural lands to become credit worthy as collaterals for accessing loans.

6.11 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 capital cost of storage facilities that will be located in the farm as well as the cost of transportation infrastructure that will be needed. The challenge of financing these facilities and infrastructure will require Public Private Partnerships and Public Public Partnerships. 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 support from research institutions and extension service workers. This may imply making budgetary provision for capacity building to support farmers in that direction

6.12 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.

6.13 Business Advisory Services

The policy thrust for Agriculture in the state is *'to commercialize agriculture farming by transiting away from subsistence farming to high-valued farming commercial agriculture and ensure food security for the people of Nasarawa state while creating employment including youth employment'*. This can be achieved through the establishment of Business Advisory Services to give meaning to the Agriculture value chain concept. Business Advisory Services will untie and disseminate the business opportunities along the different animal and crops chains and thereby make it possible for SWF to take advantage of investment opportunities. When Business Advisory Services is combined with innovative financing mechanism, productivity and value addition will be enhanced. The service will also be useful for the development of an agriculture development plan for the state.

6.14 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, Nasarawa State Ministry of Agriculture should embrace and provide practical information to small scale farmers on the services of the Nigeria Agricultural Insurance Corporation which provides insurance cover for crops, livestock and related agriculture transactions at fairly cheap premiums. These can be part of knowledge and risk management functions of extension department of the Nasarawa State Ministry of Agriculture.

6.15 Measurement, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

Lack of monitoring and evaluation of government's agricultural programmes is one of the challenges faced by the sector in Nasarawa State. The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources 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.

6.16 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 law, policy, planning and budgeting. This should be further linked to the performance, monitoring and evaluation continuum. This continuum should be reflected in the Agriculture sector specific budget template to be devised by collaboration between the executive and legislature. 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.

6.17 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.

6.18 Create opportunities for effective consultation

A budget will better serve its purposes when the voice of all stakeholders is reflected. The Agriculture sector being key to the state should prioritize consultation in its planning process. It should avoid one-size-fits-all approach to budgeting and create opportunity to consult widely, particularly at the budget formation stage. Women, particularly smallholder women farmers constitute a large percentage of farmers in the state, therefore it is imperative that effective communication and consultation will place the sector in good position to know and plan towards meeting their specific needs in budgeting.

6.19 Improve Security

Farmer-herder clashes have persisted in the state and this has deprived the state and its people of the benefits derivable from farming. Destruction of farms have increased the level of poverty and worsened the livelihood of farmers in the state. There is therefore need to invest in security through community policing and local vigilante services in the state. This will ultimately enhance agricultural productivity.

6.20 Provision of Land for Cluster Farming

The state can take advantage of its large expanse of land by designating and reserving specific areas for cluster farming as a way of supporting farmers, particularly smallholder women farmers to pull resources together for their farming activity. This will offer the farmers the opportunity of enjoying the benefits of large-scale production at reduced cost. This could also support the farmers through joint off-taking of their farm produce.

7. CONCLUSION

The challenges identified in this Memorandum are opportunities for action, to be seized through a collaboration of stakeholders in the executive, legislature, private sector and civil society. What is needed to drive reforms for the benefit of SSWF and to enhance CSA is the requisite political will as well as the support of stakeholders. There needs to be the creativity of taking advantage of existing opportunities. There needs to be a deliberate effort to include all segments of the population as beneficiaries of the Agriculture vote in the budget. The idea of a gender-neutral agriculture votes should be discarded in favour of targeting vulnerable groups and specificity of provisions.



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.