Policy Statement
To chart innovative, effective and sustainable agricultural development programmes for food security and economic empowerment for Niger State

Vision
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.

Mission
To create an enabling environment for agricultural growth and development in Niger State through provision of accessible, timely and cost effective agro-inputs and supports as well as guaranteeing minimum prices for farm outputs with a view to ensuring food security on a sustainable basis and improving the economic well-being of the population.
FOREWORD

I feel highly honored and privileged to write the foreword to this document, the Agricultural policy for Niger State.

The Agricultural Sector is the backbone of Niger State's economy. It not only provides employment directly or indirectly to over 80% of the State's population, but remains the fulcrum for the Economic development of the State.

To say that Niger State is blessed with tremendous agricultural potentials cannot be overemphasized. The issue remains how to exploit these potentials for maximum benefit of its citizens and sustainable prosperity for the State.

To achieve this, we must move Agriculture away from the present subsistent level and see Agriculture as a business and wealth creation sector. The sector must not only ensure that the State is food secure, but also create jobs across its value chains while providing the needed revenue for critical development of the State.

To facilitate the attainment of this objective, there is the need to have an Agricultural policy in place that articulates the general direction and strategies for ensuring sustainable development of the sector. The policy will facilitate the intervention in various aspects of the sector by not only the government but most importantly the private sector as well as International development partners

I commend the Partners and Funding organizations for the support to the State through the State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for making the production of this document a reality. This Policy document will provide a framework and perspective for the government, the private sector, Development partners and other critical stakeholders tasked with formulating initiatives for Niger State's prosperity leveraging on its Agricultural potentials.

Alhaji (Dr.) Abubakar Sani Bello
Executive Governor,
Niger State.
Acknowledgement

We thank the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) with its funding partners namely, UKaid, USAID, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Rockefeller foundation as well as the technical consultants Synergos who collectively provided the financial and technical Capacity support for the production of this document.

Our profound gratitude goes to the Honorable Commissioners, Permanent Secretaries of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Livestock and Fisheries as well as Ag. Managing Director of NAMDA who are in charge of the Niger State Agricultural Sector and the House Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development for their participation and critical contributions to the production of the document.

The State is also indebted to all those who in one way or the other contributed to the development of this document. They include all the line Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the State, the Niger State Planning commission, All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), Commodity Based Associations, Community Based Organizations, Local and International Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations etc.

Finally, we thank the Niger State Government for creating the enabling environment for and support for the finalization of this document.

Hon. Haliru Zakari Jikanjoro,
Commissioner, Agric. & R. D.

Haruna Nuhu Dukku
Commissioner, Livestock & Fish.
# Executive Summary

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

1.2. State Profile

1.3. Climate and Vegetation

1.4. Current Situation in Niger State Agriculture

1.5. Achievements in Niger State Agriculture Sector

1.6. SWOTT Analysis of Niger Agricultural Sector

1.7. Agricultural Governance in Niger State

1.8. Niger State Agricultural Sector and Mandates of Key MDAs

1.9. Approach and Methodology

## 2.0. NIGER STATE AGRICULTURAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

2.1. Briefs on the Policy

2.2. Alignment of the Policy with Agricultural Development Strategy Documents

2.3. The Policy Statement

2.4. Vision and Mission

2.5. Goal and Objectives

2.6. Thrust and Targets

2.7. Rationale for Niger State Agricultural Policy

2.8. Guiding Principles of the Policy

## 3.0. INPUT MANAGEMENT

3.1. Seeds

3.2. Genetic Materials

3.3. Fertilizers

3.4. Crop Protection

3.5. Livestock Breeds/Fish Broodstock, Drugs and Vaccines

3.6. Credit

3.7. Disaster and Risk Management

## 4.0. STRATEGIES FOR DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

4.1. Land Tenure System

4.2. Land Use and Planning

4.3. Land/Soil Management

4.4. Water Management

4.5. Climate Smart Agriculture

4.6. Agricultural Extension Services

4.7. Farm Mechanization

4.8. Irrigation Management

4.8. Processing, Storage and Marketing

## 5.0. INTENSIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION SYSTEM

5.1. Crops

5.2. Horticulture/Tree Crops
5.3. Livestock
5.3.1. Dairy Cattle
5.3.2. Small Ruminants- Sheep and Goats
5.3.3. Poultry
2.4. Fisheries
5.4.1. Capture Fisheries
5.4.2. Aquaculture
5.5. Women in Agriculture
5.6. Food and Nutrition Security
5.7. Sustainable Agriculture
5.8. Market and Infrastructure
5.9. Finance and Administration
5.10. In-School Youths Agricultural Programmes
5.11. Agricultural Research and Innovation
5.12. Promotion of Commodity Chains and Development of Agri-Business
5.13. Promotion of Digital Agriculture
5.14. Institutional and Governance Reform

6.0. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT
6.1. Leadership Structure and Institutions
6.2. State Council on Agriculture (SCA)
6.3. Agricultural Services Management Committee (ASMC)
6.4. Local Government Committee on Agriculture (LGCA)
6.5. Accountability
6.6. Roles of the Private Sector
6.7. Roles of Professional Bodies
6.8. Roles of Development Partners
6.9. Roles of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs)
6.10. Roles of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
6.11. Resource Mobilization
6.12. Legislation

7.0. MONITORING AND EVALUATION
7.1. Essence of Monitoring and Evaluation
7.2. Monitoring
7.3. Evaluation
7.4. Results Framework
7.4.1 Inputs
7.4.2 Outputs
7.4.3 Outcomes and Information Requirements
7.4.4 Impacts
7.5. Assumptions
7.6. Program Logical Framework
7.7. Periodic Review
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABP</td>
<td>Anchor Borrower Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADPs</td>
<td>Agricultural Development Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFCFTA</td>
<td>African Continental Free Trade Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRA</td>
<td>Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIF</td>
<td>Agricultural Innovation Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Artificial Insemination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APCs</td>
<td>Agro-Processing Clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>Agricultural Promotion Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCN</td>
<td>Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASMC</td>
<td>Agricultural Service Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATCs</td>
<td>Agricultural Training Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVC</td>
<td>Adopted Village Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo</td>
<td>Boron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOA</td>
<td>Bank of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOI</td>
<td>Bank of Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAADP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAC</td>
<td>Corporate Affairs Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Common Agricultural Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBA</td>
<td>Community Based Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBN</td>
<td>Central Bank of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPA</td>
<td>Cooperative Milk Producers Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cu</td>
<td>Copper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAP</td>
<td>Development Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFRRRI</td>
<td>Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Electrical Conductivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBOs</td>
<td>Farmer Based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCFFT</td>
<td>Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCT</td>
<td>Federal Capital Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCWM</td>
<td>Federal College of Wildlife Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDFA</td>
<td>Federal Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fe</td>
<td>Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGN</td>
<td>Federal Government of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FISON</td>
<td>Fisheries Society of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FKC</td>
<td>Farm Knowledge Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMARD</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMD</td>
<td>Foot and Mouth Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMWR</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Water Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTMIN</td>
<td>Federal University of Technology, Minna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSPF</td>
<td>Farm Sector Promotion Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAG</td>
<td>Good Agriculture Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>Good Agricultural Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCA</td>
<td>Gross Cropped Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GES</td>
<td>Graduate Engagement Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographical Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Genetically Modified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBBUL</td>
<td>Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT4Ag</td>
<td>ICT for Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFMS</td>
<td>Integrated Fertilizers Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFPRI</td>
<td>International Food Policy Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKS</td>
<td>Indigenous Knowledge System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPM</td>
<td>Integrated Pests Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPMS</td>
<td>Integrated Pest Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPI</td>
<td>Key Performance Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGCA</td>
<td>Local Government Committee on Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARD</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLF</td>
<td>Ministry of Livestock &amp; Fisheries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mn</td>
<td>Manganese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFIs</td>
<td>Micro Finance Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSMEs</td>
<td>Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSS</td>
<td>Medium-Term Sector Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAB</td>
<td>Nigerian Agricultural Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACGRAB</td>
<td>National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACCIMA</td>
<td>Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Mines and Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAERLS</td>
<td>National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAIC</td>
<td>Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMDA</td>
<td>Niger State Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-AMIS</td>
<td>National Agricultural Management Information System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASC</td>
<td>Nigeria Agricultural Seed Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBS</td>
<td>National Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCRI</td>
<td>National Cereals Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCX</td>
<td>Nigerian Commodity Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEEDS</td>
<td>National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for African Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESRA</td>
<td>National Environmental Standard and Regulatory Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIFFR</td>
<td>National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIRSA</td>
<td>Nigerian Incentive Risk Sharing System for Agriculture Lending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NISEPA</td>
<td>Niger State Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLTP</td>
<td>National Livestock Transformation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Population Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPK</td>
<td>Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Potassium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPMSMEs</td>
<td>National Policy on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSADP</td>
<td>Niger State Agricultural Development Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSEEDES</td>
<td>Niger State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS-OSIC</td>
<td>Niger State One Stop Investment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC</td>
<td>Organic Carbon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFN</td>
<td>Operation Feed the Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pH</td>
<td>Power of Hydrogen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSS</td>
<td>Pest Surveillance System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFILS</td>
<td>Research-Extension-Farmers-Input-Linkages-System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Sulphur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEDAN</td>
<td>Seed Entrepreneurs Association of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCA</td>
<td>State Council on Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG 2000</td>
<td>Sasakawa Global 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHCs</td>
<td>Soil Health Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SON</td>
<td>Standard Organization of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOTT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats and Trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIMING</td>
<td>Transforming Irrigation Management in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA</td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAAPP</td>
<td>West African Agriculture Productivity Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
<td>Ward Committee on Agriculture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.1</td>
<td>Administrative Map of Local Government Areas in Niger State</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.2</td>
<td>Production Output of select crops in Niger State (2016-2018)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.3</td>
<td>Ruminant Population in Niger State (2013-2018)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>Features of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Objectives</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List of Annexures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annex</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annex 1</td>
<td>Summary of Levels of State Goals, Sector Goals, Programme and Outcomes</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 2</td>
<td>Outcome Deliverables, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Baseline and Targets</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Niger State is one of the foremost agricultural States of Nigeria and decades of low funding of the agricultural sector has led to declining productivity and low income for the farming population, which constitutes over 70 percent of the total population of the State.

2. In the area of crop production, only 30 percent of arable land is under cultivation and less than 1 percent of irrigable land is under irrigation. Livestock and fisheries production have drastically declined over the past two decades, while mechanization coverage of the State is less than 1 percent.

3. SWOTT analysis of the State agricultural sector reveals a lot of strengths and opportunities that can be used to tackle existing weaknesses and counter threats and align the sector with global trends in good agricultural practices.

4. The State has a robust governance structure at all levels that can be leveraged upon to ensure agricultural development and self-sufficiency in food production. MDAs in the State as well as non-state actors are implementing partners for the Policy.

5. Niger State Policy on Agriculture is a document which provides a framework that enunciates the guidelines, objectives, structures, standards and strategies for achieving the much desired agricultural development in the State. The Policy will be operated within the framework and targets of the overall philosophy of the State on socio-economic development as captured in the Niger State Development Blue Print, 2019-2023 and Niger State Agricultural Sector Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS), 2016-2018 (rolled over for 2020-2022).

6. Relevant documents reviewed and within which the Niger State Agricultural Policy is aligned with, include Niger State Strategic Plans and relevant national, regional and other global documents.

7. The Policy is focused on agriculture value chain actors' well-being. These are mainly those engaged in crops, livestock (including poultry), dairy, fisheries and all other related activities.

8. With the current efforts and drive by Niger State Government to tap into her agricultural potentials, the starting point is to address the huge challenge of inefficient and ineffective agricultural systems, by putting in place a strong and responsive Policy.

9. The Policy will guide all stakeholders in the State's quest for rapid agricultural development including the private sector, which has a key role to play especially in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) concept, as well as in 'stand-alone' investments in line with global best practices.

10. The State Agricultural Policy with a strong legal framework will provide the needed confidence to investors in the agricultural sector as well as hold the State and Local Governments accountable to commitments of adequate annual budgetary allocations to agriculture.

11. The State Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development; and Livestock and Fisheries with all other ministries and agencies with mandates or aspects of their mandates on agricultural development must improve on their collaborations to ensure holistic development of the Sector.
12. Guiding principles of the Policy includes practicing agriculture as a business, as key to long-term economic growth and security, and viewing food availability and food security as a human right among others.

13. The policy addresses provision of quality inputs for agriculture value chain activities such as seeds; genetic materials; fertilizers; crop protection; livestock breeds; fish broodstock; drugs and vaccines; and credit and mitigation of risk and management of disasters in agriculture for enhanced productivity.

14. Key strategies for delivery of effective interventions are highlighted for policy reform, as well as Policy thrusts on intensification and development of sustainable production system.

15. Institutional arrangement, legal framework and financing format for effective implementation of the policy are highlighted, while membership and mandates of different committees in the governance structure and the roles of non-state actors are well spelt out.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the Policy performance consists of tracking human, physical, and financial resources and how they are converted into outputs, outcomes and impacts delivered in the course of implementation. Timely and regular reporting will provide inputs for project planning and budgeting and contribute to improve performance and subsequent periodic reviews.

17. Results framework for the Policy is defined in terms of inputs, output targets, outcome targets and impacts through appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as in the State's MTSS for Agriculture.

18. External factors, influences, situations or conditions which are largely beyond the control of the policy environment that should be prepared for with contingencies for prompt responses in implementation are highlighted.

19. Provision is made in the Policy for periodic review every 5 years as an efficient and constant feedback is critical to ensuring that the Policy is adhered to in order to make timely decisions on what is working, what is not, and what needs to change.

20. The need for periodic review of the Policy implementation is emphasized to monitor and track progress towards meeting targets. Production of reports is important to provide an update to all stakeholders as to the progress of implementation, disseminating lessons learned and opportunities for moving forward.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Niger State is one of the foremost agricultural States of Nigeria. Offering the broadest diversity in agricultural produce amongst States of the federation, the State is a major producer Rice, Maize, Sorghum, Sheanut, Yam and other roots and tubers. Agriculture is indeed the bedrock of the economy of the State and if these potentials are effectively harnessed, Niger State would indisputably become the nation's agro industrial hub and in the near future, a sub-regional food market. Currently, the local market potential of produce, even without value addition, remains under-exploited, while huge market opportunities in the international communities are yet to be harnessed.

Decades of low funding of the agricultural sector has led to declining production and low income for the farming population, which constitutes over 70 percent of the total population of the State. For while population growth in the State is put at 3.4 percent, agricultural sector's growth (as projected by National Bureau of Statistics) is a mere 0.8 percent. In the area of crop production, only 30 percent of arable land is under civilization and less than 1 percent of irrigable land is under irrigation. Livestock and Fisheries production have drastically declined over the past two decades, while mechanization coverage of the State is less than 1 percent.

1.2. State Profile

Niger State, one of the 36 States of Nigeria was created on 3 February, 1976. Administratively, the State comprises 25 Local Government Areas (Figure 1.1), with Minna as the capital. The LGAs are grouped into three Administrative Zones: A, B and C with 8, 9 and 8 Local Government Areas respectively. Each LGA is subdivided into districts and the districts are
further subdivided into 274 wards and villages. By the 2006 population census figures, the estimated population of the State was about 3,950,249, projected (at annual growth rate of 3.4%, as against the national population growth rate of 3.2% per annum) to 5,556,200 in 2018 (as projected by the National Population Commission) with males representing 51.5% of the State's population while females represent 48.5%.

Over 70% of the State population, about 4 million are farmers, while others are engaged in public service, business, crafts and arts. The State is the largest in the country in terms of landmass (about 10% of the country's total) with a total land area of 76,363 kilometer $^2$ (over 7.8 million hectares), of which about 70% (5.5 million hectares) are arable/cultivable land.

Niger State is generously endowed with big rivers; the major ones include Rivers Niger, Kaduna, Gbako, Eko, Gurara, Ebba, Ega and Mariga. The State has all three of Nigeria's hydrological dams - Kainji, Jebba, Shiroro, while construction of new one in on-going in Zungeru. Besides generating hydro-electric power, these dams sustain irrigation projects, and fishing has developed as an industry on their reservoirs. Niger State possesses fertile land as an asset and the potentials are yet to be fully explored.
1.3. Climate and Vegetation
Niger State, located at North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria, lies between Longitude 3°30’E and 7°20’E and Latitude 8°20’N and 11°30’N. It shares boundaries with Kaduna State and FCT (north-east and south-east respectively); Zamfara State (north); Kebbi (west); Kogi State (south); Kwara State (south-west); Republic of Benin (north-west).

The climate, rich annual rainfall and availability of a wide variety of mineral and agricultural resources all attest to economic potential of the State. The State experiences distinct dry and wet seasons and the length of the wet season decreases from South to North with annual rain fall varying from 1,100mm in the northern part to 1,600mm in the southern parts. The rainy season lasts for 5-6 months in the North and 7-8 months in the South. The maximum temperature (usually not more than 30°C) is recorded between March and June, while the minimum (22°C) is usually between December and January. The State's landscape consists of wooded savannas and mostly, the Guinea Savanna.

1.4. Current Situation in Niger State Agriculture
Agriculture is the mainstay of Niger State's economy and major economic activities comprise farming, fishing and cattle rearing. The State is largely an agrarian economy. Agriculture, particularly crop production, is a major component of the State economy, as it engages a little over 70% of its labour force, contributing an estimated 80% of its GDP.

Niger State is naturally endowed with resources that are congenial to commercial agricultural activities both at small and large scale levels. The State has expansive arable land; estimated at about 68,925 kilometer² (or about 6.9 million hectares). The State is also blessed with fertile soil typical of the savannah vegetation which has been categorized among the best globally with high potential for rain-fed and irrigated farming as well as for grazing opportunities. The State is endowed with abundant natural resources and a huge land mass suitable for agriculture. Almost all types of soil typical of the savannah region of
West Africa can be found in the State.

The numerous water bodies provide artisanal fishermen a means of livelihood and an important source of wealth creation. Fish production through artisanal fishing is estimated at about 55,000 metric tons per annum. This is grossly below its potential capacity which is a manifestation of underutilization of existing agricultural resources of Niger State.

The abundant fertile soil with appreciable rainfall provides opportunity for diverse crop production which cuts across major crops that constitute Nigeria's staple foods and cash crops including rice, sorghum, maize, millet, groundnuts, cowpeas, soybeans, beniseed, cotton, yam, cassava, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, melon, vegetables of all kinds, Sheanut, locust bean and oil-palm. Estimated production outputs of some major crops in the State for 2016 and 2018 are shown in Figure 1.2.

A similar trend is observable in respect of livestock production. For instance, Development Action Plan (DAP) (2008) puts livestock population in 1990 at 1.54 million cattle, 0.95 million sheep, 1.59 million goats and 0.21 million other animals (including camel and pigs). The poultry population was about 5.78 million during the same period; comprising chicken, guinea-fowl, turkey, duck and doves. The population trend for ruminants, from 2013-2018 is detailed in Figures 1.3. The estimated population of poultry in the State in 2018 and 2019 were 9.7million and 10.4million respectively (NAERLS, 2019). Fish production output for Niger State was 45,600mt in 2016 (Niger State Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, 2019).
In spite of the volume of crop and livestock production, however, they are far below their potentials and are mostly dominated by small scale activities. The potential for large scale commercial farming (crop and livestock) remain under exploited.
The Agricultural Sector in Niger State faces a number of challenges requiring urgent attention from stakeholders. The key challenges confronting crop production include the following:

I. 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;  
ii. Knowledge base of farmers is low and they are not receiving necessary support of qualified extension workers and demonstration;  
iii. 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;  
iv. 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;  
v. Low access to agricultural credit facilities of Bank of Agriculture (BOA) and commercial banks by small-scale farmers and;  
vi. 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.

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

The key impediments to fish production in Niger State include the following:
I. 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;  
ii. Absence of standard fish marketing infrastructure including inadequate cold storage and processing facilities; and  
iii. Underdeveloped aquaculture practices.

Generally, the fertile soil and hydrology of the State permit the cultivation of most of Nigeria's staple crops and still allows sufficient opportunities for grazing, fresh water fishing and forestry development. The soil types in Niger State are two: the 'Ku' soil which has little erosion hazards and the 'Ya' soil that has better water holding capacity.

The State is agriculturally diverse and production output cuts across all crop horizon including food and cash crops, major ones being rice (upland and lowland), maize, sorghum, millet, groundnuts, cowpea, soybean, beniseed, yam, cassava, sweet potatoes, sugarcane, melon and vegetable of all kinds. Paddy rice is widely grown as a cash crop in...
the floodplains of the Niger and Kaduna rivers, especially in the area around Bida. Naturally growing economic trees for Sheanut, locust bean, cashew and oil palm are also in abundance. Tobacco, Kolanuts, cocoyam, coffee, and fruits (e.g. mangoes, oranges, guava) are also produced in the State.

Livestock production is equally an important agricultural activity of a vast majority of farmers and herders in the State. Cattle, Goats, Sheep, Chickens, and Guinea Fowl are raised for meat, milk, eggs, hides and skin and other products.

The major rivers in the State contribute about 84 million cubic metre of annual surface water. These are natural resources for abundant capture fisheries production especially from Kainji Lake Basin that contributes significantly to Nigeria artisanal fish production. Fish products are important in local trade and these include smoked-dried fish, sundried fish especially clupeids, fresh fish and fried fish. The over 700,000 hectares of flood plains across the State also ensures the potentials for fish culture. Catfish and Tilapia are popularly cultured by fish farmers in the State. The State is divided into 3 Agricultural Zones along the Niger State Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority operational zones example, Zone 1 (Bida), Zone 2 (Kuta) and Zone 3 (Kontagora).

1.5. Achievements in Niger State Agriculture Sector

Despite the economic situation in the country, the Niger State Government has made modest achievements in the agricultural sector between 2016-2018; some of which include:

I. Employment of 6,000 youths through the Graduate Engagement Scheme (GES) and empowered over 10,000 unemployed youth through skills acquisition programmes.
ii. 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).
iii. Value chain development programme to improve rice, cassava and sorghum production are progressing.
iv. 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.
v. The State Government has expended substantial resources on revitalizing animal healthcare services and development of fisheries resources for higher productivity.
vi. 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.

The 2015 mid-year performance review of MTSS 2014-2016 indicated that some modest results were achieved in 2014. Highlights of the performance include the following:

I. Out of the 400 farmer-managed tube wells targeted for production in 2014, only 150 were produced as at December 2014; a short fall of about 82% on pro rata basis;
ii. 350 farmers' cooperatives were targeted to access agricultural credit during the year only 145 groups received as at December 2014 representing 41.4%; 2.296 million
Cattle and 73,980mt of Fish where produced in year 2014;

iii. Yield per hectares for rice, maize, cassava were targeted to increase by 40%, 30% and a.40% respectively; however, the actual achievement for rice, maize and cassava wereb.35%, 9.4% and 5% increase respectively for 2013;

iv. Out of 250,000 farmers targeted for registration under GES, 100% was achieved;

v. Adoption of improved technology, 32,580 farmers adopted improved technology against the target of 1,710,000 signifying 2% achievement of the target. Key explanations for the apparent short falls highlighted above between targets and achievements include non-release of budgeted funds as at when due, non-availability of quality baseline data and absence of livestock census to determine the actual production figures.

1.6. SWOTT Analysis of Niger State Agricultural Sector Strengths

a) The State is located mostly in the Guinea Savanna in the North-Central Agro-ecological Zone of Nigeria with predominantly fertile soils and favourable climatic conditions suitable for the cultivation of virtually all tropical crops. Additionally, 70 percent of its land is cultivable under both rain-fed and irrigation agriculture.

b) The State is adequately watered for agricultural production. The River Niger and its major tributaries—Rivers Kaduna are yet to be exploited for large scale irrigation purposes. The numerous streams, and wetlands that dot the landscape as well as the abundant ground water resources provide excellent opportunities for dry season farming and aquaculture.

c) Niger State is strategically located in Nigeria's heartland. It is the gateway between the North-West and the South. The movement of agro-inputs into Niger State, and food products to any destination is relatively shortened by road and rail transportation.

d) Niger State with its diversity of agricultural produce has the potential for strong raw materials base for agro-industries—an industrial hub for investors in food processing.

e) There is a large domestic market for produce and processed products. Nigeria has a population of 200 million people with advantageous demographics, as over 58 percent of Nigerians are youths with the median age of 18 years, and 27 percent under the age of 30 years (as projected by NBS). The regional ECOWAS market of over 350 million people in which Nigeria plays a strong political and economic role also presents significant opportunities.

f) Niger State has suitable ecological niches and variability of crops, livestock and fisheries; large land mass with 70% been arable; and abundant water resources and large raw material base.

g) The Niger State Government has over the year been showing commitment on agricultural development in various ways.

h) The State is endowed with highly qualified staff in all subsectors at federal, State and local institutions across the State. Such institutions include BOA; FUT, Minna; NCRI, Badegi; NIFFR, FCFFT and FCWM, New-Bussa.

Weaknesses

I. The absence of an agricultural policy on which to predicate strategic plans for sustainable agricultural development in Niger State has been the bane of the sector.

ii. Inadequate infrastructure particularly the inadequate feeder roads farming communities in the State constitutes a major constraint. Produce evacuation from the
hinterlands is difficult. Inadequate power supply, processing and storage facilities, contribute to produce deterioration, poor produce pricing, and huge economic losses.

iii. Difficulty of access to finance and high interest rates charged by banks are hindrances to profitable agri-business. This has hampered the expansion of agro-based businesses and overall development of the agricultural sector in the State.

iv. Poor land use system especially with shifting cultivation pattern and small land holding in most parts of the State does not encourage large scale mechanized agriculture.

v. Low mechanization, inadequate and dilapidated irrigation facilities are formidable obstacles to rapid agricultural development in the State.

vi. Inadequate extension coverage as a result of high extension staff-farmer ratio of 1:3,200 (NAMDA/NAERLS, 2019) instead of a target of 1:800 set by NAMDA. There is need for improvement in the existing situation to close the wide gap and promote knowledge dissemination for high yields, produce competitiveness and maximum return on investment for Niger farmers.

vii. Inadequate processing and packaging facilities resulting in low uptake of produce from the farmers have been discouraging more production. Farmers are discouraged from expanding production for fear of loses that usually result from produce gluts and deterioration.

viii. Over the years, the Niger State Government has been responsible for procuring fertilizers, agro-chemicals and other inputs for sale to farmers at subsidized rates. This system however, has been less effective because most farmers are not able to access the inputs. Lacks of transparency in the transactions create channels through which most of the inputs end up in the hands of middlemen who are not farmers.

ix. Agricultural produce are poorly priced in the State and farmers hardly get commensurate value for their produce. The unstructured nature of produce markets in the State is more profitable to middlemen than farmers. A privately driven commodity corporation would provide market information State-wide to farmers and other stakeholders provide a cooperative platform for eventual link-up with the Nigerian Commodity Exchange.

x. Problem of youth unemployment with the attendant effect on food insecurity of rural areas, although the State Government has prioritized youth empowerment programmes.

Opportunities

The State has comparative advantage in the production of rice with the capacity to feed the whole of Nigeria and for export. Other features that make Niger State an attractive destination for domestic and foreign investors include the following:

i. Increasing domestic demand due to upcoming polices by the Federal Government, banning the importation of major staples such as rice, so as to conserve foreign exchange and stimulate domestic production. Niger State should cash in on this opportunity to quickly accelerate the production of these staples to dominate the targeted value chains.

ii. The State has potentials to become the number one agro-processing destination in Nigeria thereby becoming the number one agro-industrialized State in the country and a foremost agro-processing destination in the West African sub-region. Two large integrated mills are awaiting resuscitation in Badeggi and Bidda (KOICA rice mill).
iii. The State is strategically positioned to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Africa is becoming the new investment bridge globally. Agricultural acceleration alongside infrastructural support, coupled with incentives such as tax holidays ease of land acquisition etc. would attract massive FDI into the State to boost the planned agro-industrial revolution.

iv. Niger State can leverage the Federal Government agricultural development policies by keying into the agricultural financing initiatives of the Federal Government through the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Bank of Agriculture (BOA) and the Bank of Industry (BOI) to attract massive agricultural credit for the farmers in order to support the State agricultural revolution. The State Government can take advantage of the Federal Government plan to establish agro-processing zones and plan infrastructure to support a network of processing nodes in the State.

v. The risk management initiatives of the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company (NAIC) in order to mitigate the effect of losses for crop failure, livestock diseases and other risk factors in agricultural production should be taken advantage of by the State Government. Opportunities offered by the recently established Nigerian Incentive Risk Sharing System for Agriculture Lending (NIRSAL) should similarly be explored.

vi. The Minna Airport, the Baro Inland Port, the railway and network of roads offers the opportunity for a vibrant Export Processing Zone in the State. With the plan to massively accelerate agriculture, it is timely to create and designate an agro-export processing zone to handle export specific produce e.g. Badeggi Staple Crops Processing Zone.

vii. The State is endowed with large expanse of wetland well suited for large-scale irrigated agriculture; expansive arable land for mechanized farming; expansive forest resources; conducive environment for the rearing and management of livestock coupled with diversity of agricultural resource-base and huge market potentials. The State also is in close proximity to Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

viii. Amenable and liberal tax system that is suitable for the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) and informal sector enterprises.

ix. Presence of many financial institutions as sources of fund for agricultural production and marketing activities in the State.

x. Present democratic governance in the State creates a favourable environment for enterprise activities and investment opportunities

xi. Government already making efforts to undertake a Pilot Scheme on drastically reducing Farmer-Herder Conflict

Threats
i. Conflicts and security risks manifest in disruption of agricultural activities by the invasion of herdsmen is a serious threat to the agricultural revolution being planned by the State. A high level national discourse culminating in a legal framework to mitigate this challenge is urgently required. Niger State which is at the receiving end of the menace should show the nation the way out of this crisis by promoting the establishment of private ranches which is the modern alternative to pastoral nomadism.

ii. The dwindling oil revenues in Nigeria has made most States sitting on “black gold” to be caught napping by the near recession status of Nigeria's mono-economy.
iii. Competition from other States is imminent since agricultural development is been promoted across the country. Niger State has other States particularly the North-Central with similar agricultural potentials to compete with. Any State with a passion for agri-business, increased budget allocation to agriculture, manpower development, inputs provision to farmers, facilitation of mechanization and irrigation infrastructure as well as better organization of extension services and marketing will be the clear leader.

iv. Climate change manifesting in evolving climatic conditions occasioning drastic changes in the ecosystem that affect the food chain have had adverse effects on food production. Floods have washed away crops in certain parts of the State while less rainfall than required has affected late maturing varieties.

v. Uncontrolled grazing and livestock migration put tremendous pressure on the environment in the State. This is aggravated by poaching and settlement within protected areas.

Trends

i. Agriculture is a business not mere cultural practice and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) is a global issues.

ii. Value chain activities must align with qualities

iii. Agriculture productions are time bound and must be responded to timely for maximum productivity. Agricultural calendar must therefore be strictly adhered to.

iv. Inputs must be affordable and available to farmers to ensure profitable farm business

v. Agri-business demands continuous education of farmers to improve their technical and managerial skills

vi. Domestic production must be of high quality at par with international market demand for competitiveness as in EU, USDA, WTO and AFCFTA

vii. Traceability of products along the entire value chain for global competitiveness

viii. Promotion of organic farming for resource efficiency and healthy nutrition.

1.7. Agricultural Governance in Niger State

Governance at all levels is defined by the processes through which public and private actors articulate their interests; frame and prioritize issues; and make, implement, monitor, and enforce decisions. Governance is more than ever a driving concern in agricultural development and is critical to achieving strategic objectives. There is a need for the State Government to build institutions and mechanisms that provide international norms, standards and data, promote national and international cooperation, and support an enabling environment for effective collective action to solve problems in the agricultural sector and the larger economy.

Governance lens looks beyond purely technical issues to highlight how people, institutions and authority interact to influence political decision-making. Using political economy and stakeholder analyses, the Niger State Government can identify the most important governance challenges related to food and agriculture, and improve the inclusiveness of policies and programmes to address them more effectively.

The major goal of governance is to improve capacities for effective collective action and to solve problems as diverse as ending hunger, malnutrition and poverty; minimizing climate
change; enabling transition to sustainable agriculture and sustainable use of natural resources; ensuring the health and safety of food and agriculture systems; and contributing to peace through food security. A robust concept of governance recognizes that State-Society relations are constantly evolving in ways that are both cooperative and competitive. The outcomes of this dynamic are new policies, new roles, and new institutional arrangements shaping the behaviour and interests of all actors.

Governance analysis helps to understand how structures, institutions and unequal relations of power interact in the deliberation over ideas, interests and preferences to shape institutions, policies and programmes, create or remove incentives, and condition political outcomes related to food and agriculture. Good governance has a number of dimensions: political stability; the rule of law; voice and accountability; effective governments; regulatory quality and control of corruption, among others.

The Agricultural Sector, which is the backbone of Niger State economy, 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). Niger State Government Ministries with aspects of agriculture/agriculture related mandates or contributing to performances in the agriculture sector of the State include:

i. Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development
ii. Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries
iii. Ministry of Water Resources and Dams Development
iv. Ministry of Environment and Forestry
v. Ministry Local Government Community Development and Chieftaincy Affairs
vi. Ministry of Finance
vii. Ministry of Education
ix. Ministry of Lands & Housing
x. Ministry of Women Affairs & Social Development
xi. Ministry of Youths Empowerment
xii. Ministry of Investment, Commerce & Industries
xiii. Ministry of Works
xiv. Ministry of Information, Communications and Strategies
xv. Ministry of Transport
xvi. Ministry of Justice

Niger State Government Parastatals with aspects of agriculture/agriculture related mandates include:
1. Niger State Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority
2. Niger State Planning Commission
3. Local Government Service Commission
4. Niger State Environmental Protection Agency (NISEPA)
5. Niger State One Stop Investment Centre (NS-OSIC)
6. Niger State Commodity and Export Promotion Agency
7. Small and Medium Microfinance Agency
9. Niger State Geographic Information System
10. Civil Service Commission
11. Law Reform Commission
12. Fiscal Responsibility Commission
13. Niger State Accountant General Office
14. Niger State Transport Authority
15. Niger State Road Maintenance Agency
16. Niger State Board of Internal Revenue Service
17. Rural Water and Sanitation Agency
18. Niger State Emergency Management Agency
20. Public Procurement Board
21. Sustainable Development Goal Office
22. NEPAD State Office
23. Niger State Industrial Development Park
24. Niger State Cash Transfer Agency
25. Anchor Borrower Programme
27. Niger State Universal Basic Education
28. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai
29. Niger State College of Education, Minna
30. Niger State College of Agriculture, Mokwa
31. Niger State Livestock and Fisheries Institute
32. Niger State Innovation Institute

Niger State-based national institutions/agencies with aspects of agriculture/agriculture related mandates include:

i. Federal University of Technology, Minna
   ii. Federal Polytechnic, Bida
   iii. Federal College of Education, Kontagora
   iv. National Cereals Research Institute, Badegi
   v. National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, New-Bussa
   vi. National Institute for Oil Palm Research, Out-station, Bida
   vii. Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries Technology, New-Bussa
   viii. Federal College of Wildlife Management, New-Bussa
   ix. Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, State Office
   x. Baro Port Agency

1.8. Mandates of Niger State Agricultural Sector and Key MDAs
a). Mandates of the Agricultural Sector
The mandates of the Agriculture Sector under the concurrent legislative list are as follows:

I. Promotion of primary production of all items of agricultural produce through the promotion of effective extension service;
ii. Timely provision of inputs for crop, livestock and fisheries;
iii. Ensuring access to land by those who wish to engage in farming;
iv. Development and management of irrigation facilities;
v. Management of impounded water and down-stream structures of large dams;
vi. Promotion of appropriate farm mechanization;
vii. Grazing reserves development and access to water for livestock;
viii. Training and manpower development;
ix. Control of plant and animal pests and disease;  
 x. Promotion of appropriate institution for administering credits to small holder;  
 xi. Maintenance of buffer stocks of agricultural commodities;  
 xii. Investments in rural development, including rural roads and water supplies; and  
 xiii. Ownership, management and control of forest estates, held in trust for the local communities.

b). Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
The specific mandates of the Ministry are:
I. To reduce poverty rate, curb youth unemployment and promote food and raw material production for the people of Niger State.
ii. Generation of employment in Agricultural sector for farmers, youths, women and retired public and private workers.
iii. Facilitate Rural Development  
iv. Promote development of agro-allied industries in Niger State
v. Promote on-Farm Research and Development in Agriculture  
vi. Providing all necessary support for timely accessibility of agro-inputs at affordable costs.
vii. Market development to ensure accessibility and good price for the farmers in Niger State.
viii. Promote value chain development
ix. Liaising with Federal establishments and other stakeholders on general agricultural development issues.

c). Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
The specific mandates of the Ministry are:
I. Establishment of Veterinary clinics and treatment centres for control/eradication of animal pests and diseases.
ii. To regulate the operations of both public and private abattoirs in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Chieftaincy affairs for effective provision of veterinary health and meat Inspection services throughout the State to ensure wholesome meat is consumed.
iii. Ensure judicious exploitation of State's Fisheries resources.
iv. Facilitate availability of inputs such as veterinary drugs, livestock/fish feeds, fishing inputs.
v. Provision of technical advice for the development of aquaculture and artisanal fishing.
vi. Development and control of Grazing Reserves and Range management.
vi. Establishment and control of Stock routes and Control posts for disease surveillance.
ix. Facilitate adoption and adaptation of improved animal production techniques through introduction of genetically improved livestock and training.

D). Niger State Agriculture and Mechanization Development Authority
The broad objective of the NAMDA is to improve farmers' productivity thereby increasing their incomes and standard of living. The specific objectives include among others;
i. To strengthen agricultural services.
ii. To improve the access and maintenance of supporting rural infrastructures.
iii. To strengthen supporting commercial services thereby ensuring supply of agricultural
inputs.
iv. To strengthen the capacity for policy formulations, Planning and expenditure programming in the State Ministry of Agriculture. Major services offered to farmers by NAMDA include:
i. Provision of extension services
ii. Conduction of on-farm adaptive research
iii. Women in Agriculture (WIA) development and Human Nutrition activities.
iv. Improvement of animal/fisheries health services through provision of stocks, inputs and services.
v. Provision of agro-forestry and erosion control services to deal with the serious risk of environmental degradation.
vi. Development and management of seed multiplication farms.
vii. Training of farmers to use animal-drawn implements to reduce drudgery of farming.
viii. Provision of field farm service centres and stores.
ix. Cooperative and credit promotion.
x. Construction of feeder roads and irrigation schemes associated with agricultural development.

1.9. Approach and Methodology
The development of Niger State Policy on Agriculture was based on two approaches - review of literature (desktop and libraries) and interactions with stakeholders (state and non-state actors). Relevant policy documents were sourced from the State's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development, Niger State Agricultural Mechanization and Development Agency, Ministry of Investment, Commerce and Industry (MICI), Niger State One Stop Investment Centre, Ministry of Planning and Bureau of Statistics. Documents reviewed include Niger State Medium Term Sector Strategy 2016-2018 (rolled over for 2020-2022), Niger State Development Blue Print (2019-2023), Draft Niger State Agricultural Policy (2007), Agricultural Promotion Policy (2016-2020) and other relevant national, regional, continental and global documents on agriculture. The draft Policy document was subjected to validations at two stakeholders' workshops and a round table meeting.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0. NIGER STATE AGRICULTURAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

2.1. Briefs on the Policy Document

Agricultural policy describes a set of laws relating to domestic agriculture and imports of foreign agricultural products. Governments usually implement agricultural policies with the goal of achieving a specific outcome in the domestic agricultural product markets.

Niger State Agricultural Policy is focused on farmers' well-being and is formulated to build on the inherent strengths of its agriculture and allied sectors, to address the constraints it faces and to make optimal use of resources and opportunities emerging on account of advancement in technology, and the emergence of accelerated economic growth in the State and the country. This policy aims to give further thrust to the success delivered through concerted efforts directed under the previous agricultural strategies of the State.

The aim is to actualize the vast untapped potential of Niger State agriculture, strengthen the economic and social well-being of value chain actors in all sub-sectors of the State agricultural sector, while ensuring the growth process is environmentally, economically and technologically inclusive, scalable and sustainable.

2.2. Alignment of the Policy with Agricultural Development Strategy Documents

From her earlier strategic documents, the State Government acknowledged the centrality of farmers' welfare in its vision for agriculture. It not only identified ways to improve production and productivity but also focused on activities to improve farmer well-being. This focus was given a further thrust in the Blue Print for Development of Niger State (2019-2023) where enhancing incomes of farmers became the central theme. The current policy builds on that and other Strategic documents in the State, as well as other regional, national and global documents on agricultural development and aims to give an economic,
social, technological and political thrust to promoting agricultural value chain actors in all
sub-sectors as entrepreneurs in production, processing, marketing, inputs trading and
service provision.

The Niger State Policy on Agriculture is a document which provides a framework that
enunciates the guidelines, objectives, structures, standards and strategies for achieving the
much desired agricultural development in the State. The Policy will be operated within the
framework and targets of the overall philosophy of the State on socio-economic
development as captured in the Niger State Development Blue Print, 2019-2023 and Niger
State Agricultural Sector Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS), 2016-2018 (rolled over for
2020-2022). Relevant documents reviewed and with which the Niger State
Agricultural Policy is aligned with include:

a) Niger State Documents
   i. Niger State Development Blue Print, 2019-2023
   ii. Niger State Agricultural Sector Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) 2016-2018
       (rolled over for 2020-2022)

b) National and Development Partners Documents
   In order to take advantage of the agricultural development initiatives of the Federal
   Government of Nigeria, funding agencies and development partners, this policy aligns
   with their recent policies and strategies on agriculture which include:
   iii. Agricultural Promotion Policy (Green Alternative) 2016-FGN
   v. Agricultural Transformation Agenda 2010-FGN
   ix. National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), 2004
   xi. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2015
   xii. Feed Africa: Strategies for Agricultural Transformation in Africa 2016-2025: AfDB
   xiii. Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Program (ATASP-1) 2013 –AfDB
   xiv. Food and Agriculture Policy Decision, 2014 : FAO
   xv. Value Chain Development Document 2012 - IFAD

c) Other Multi-Sector Relevant Documents
   Agriculture is multi-disciplinary and cuts across various sectors including: Industry,
Trade, Economy, Science and Technology, Health, Education, Nutrition, Water Resources and Environment amongst others. In recognition of this fact, various sectors have developed policies and strategies that touch on the agriculture perspective of their mandates such as:

i. National Gender Policy in Agriculture (NGPA) - 2016  
ii. National Policy on Education (NPE) - 2013  
iii. National Policy on Science, Technology and Innovation (NPSTI) - 2012  
iv. National Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP) - 2014  
v. National Policy on Food Safety and its Implementation Strategy (NPFS) - 2014  
vi. National Gender Policy Strategic Framework 2008-20013  
vii. National Security Strategy Document (NSSD) - 2018  
viii. National Population Policy (NPP) - 2004  
ix. National Health Policy (NHP) - 2016  
x. National Policy on MSMEs (NPMSME) – 2007  

2.3. The Policy Statement  
To chart innovative, effective and sustainable agricultural development programmes for food security and economic empowerment for Niger State

2.4. Vision and Mission

Vision  
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.

Mission  
To create an enabling environment for agricultural growth and development in Niger State through provision of accessible, timely and cost effective agro-inputs and supports as well as guaranteeing minimum prices for farm outputs with a view to ensuring food security on a sustainable basis and improving the economic well-being of the population.

2.5. Goal and Objectives

The overall goal of the policy is 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, this Policy has the following objectives:

I. Attainment of sustainable self-sufficiency in basic food commodities for the State.
ii. Increased production of agricultural raw materials to meet the growth of an expanding industrial sector.
iii. Use of improved technologies for sustainable production, processing, storage and distribution of agro-products for domestic and export markets.
iv. Creation of job opportunities in the State
v. Protection and preservation of environment for sustainable agricultural production.
vi. Establishment of appropriate institutions to facilitate the development of the State
agricultural potentials.

Figure 2.1: Features of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Objectives

2.6. Thrust and Targets
This policy will be focused on Agriculture value chain actors' well-being (those engaged in crops, livestock, poultry, dairy and fisheries; and all other related activities) with the following targets:

i. Continuous growth in farmer incomes
ii. Making the growth process inclusive of small and marginal farmers
iii. Ensuring sustainable, stable and scalable agricultural growth.

Targets in policy have been guided by aspirations in the Niger State Development Blue Print 2019-2023 and Niger State Agricultural Sector 2016-2018 Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) (rolled over for 2020-2022).

Specific targets for Niger State Agriculture as spelt out in the various strategy documents that can be achieved through adequate funding in executing the State Strategic Plans on agriculture and other interventions from the Federal Government and Development partners are:
I. To increase budgetary allocation to agricultural sector from the present average level of 5% to at least 10% in accordance with Maputo Declaration 2001
ii. Achieve self-sufficiency in food production by the year 2024.
iii. To improve the quality of life for the citizenry of Niger State and thereby reduce poverty rate from 61.2% in 2017 to 40% by 2024.
iv. Increase average annual income of farmers in the State from N250,000 in 2018 to N500,000 by 2024.
v. Improve Internally Generated Revenue base of government through contribution of agricultural sector from the present 5% to between 7% and 10% of revenue by 2024.
vi. Adoption of fully mechanized farming by at least 20% of farmers in Niger State by 2024
vii. Rehabilitation/development of 17 irrigation schemes to ensure all year round farming and increased productivity.
viii. Ensure that at least 20% of value chain actors add value to agricultural produce for increased profit by 2024.
ix. Increase population and productivity of livestock and fish output by 10% annually.
x. Reduction of extension agent: farmer ratio from 1:3,200 in 2019 to 1:1,500 in 2024
xi. To increase job opportunities through Graduate Engagement Scheme (GES) and skill acquisition programmes from the present 20% in 2019 to 40% by the year 2024.
-xii. Increase capacity utilization of agro-allied industry from 35% in 2015 to 50% by 2024
xiii. To increase the hectares of land under cultivation by 15% annually.

2.7 Rationale for Niger State Agricultural Policy

By the time Niger State was created in 1976, the Federal Government had initiated a plethora of Agricultural Projects, such as: Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution, Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) across the country. Through these projects, huge sums of money were used to procure machinery and agricultural inputs which were routinely sent to the States for distribution to farmers. These interventions buoysed the State agriculture while they lasted. This phase was followed by the Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) initiative of the World Bank which created the Bida ADP as an enclave in 1980 and later Niger State Agricultural Development Project (NSADP) in 1985. The project sustained agricultural services in the State albeit at a sub-optimal level. With the cessation of the World Bank funding, the inadequate support from the State government after the project life cycle saw a sharp decline in agricultural services in the State. Since then, agriculture has continued to under-performed like in many other States in the country with the consequence of threatened food and nutrition insecurity. A major reason for the present situation is the absence of a clear vision articulated in a mission in form of a policy on agriculture, which should guide and ensure the commitment of all stakeholders to Agricultural Development.

With the current efforts and drive by Niger State Government to tap into her agricultural potentials, the starting point is to address the huge challenge of inefficient and ineffective agricultural systems, by putting in place a strong and responsive Agricultural Policy. This will guide all stakeholders in the State's quest for rapid agricultural development including the private sector, which has a key role to play especially in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) concept, as well as in stand-alone investments in line with global best practices.
An Agricultural Policy with a strong legal framework will provide the needed confidence to investors in the agricultural sector as well as hold governments (State and Local) accountable to commitments such as the Maputo Declaration of 2003 which requires African Governments (National and Sub-national) to allocate at least 10 percent of their annual budgets to agriculture. The renewed commitment to the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) in the Malabo Declaration of June 2014 shows that there is a clear and urgent need for the State to put together a legalized policy on agriculture. This will provide focus, direction and assignment of roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders. It will also ensure continuity, accountability, stability and equity in line with global best practices.

In Nigeria, agriculture is on the concurrent legislative list of the 1999 constitution, as amended. The diversity of Nigeria's agro-ecology with varying agronomic-potentials, as well as differing socio-economic conditions in turn dictates varying agro-development trajectories. It becomes imperative for the State while aligning with suitable policy initiatives of the Federal Government, to fashion out a policy on agriculture, suited to its regional and socio-economic circumstances. This policy is a bold step towards articulating a responsive, dynamic and functional agricultural road map that will engender sustainable agricultural development and create a platform for the much desired agro-Industrialization and rapid socio-economic development of the State.

The State Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development; and Livestock and Fisheries with all other MDAs with mandates on agricultural development in the State must ensure the holistic development of the State's agriculture in line with the vision outlined in the Blue Print for Development of Niger State 2019-2023 and Niger State Agricultural Sector 2016–2018 Medium-Term Sector Strategy (rolled over for 2020-2022). The Niger State Agricultural Policy builds on these achievements. But to harness the complete potential of the State's resources in an inclusive and sustainable manner, necessitates scoping challenges and constraints.

Major constraints in Niger State agriculture include the following:
1. Highly labour-intensive production processes: Shrinking landholding sizes and low levels of absolute incomes restrict the investment capability of a farmer; consequently, the dominant role of labour in the cultivation process in the State for most crops has continued over the years.
2. High dependence on weather and climate: During the last five years, variability in production (mainly of paddy) points to the need for more effective climate resilient strategies. While the importance of paddy to the farmers in the State cannot be overlooked, the productivity of large areas under paddy cultivation is low, resulting in very low returns to the farmers.
3. Low cost–low value trap: Niger State is a low-cost producer of most crops but due to market problems (aggregation, accessibility and adequacy), the value realized by farmers is low. Due to a sharp rise in costs of production, driven mainly by rising labour costs, and a slower growth in the market value of produce, farmer's profitability in most crops has been shrinking.
4. There is perennial paucity of data on Livestock and Fisheries coupled with low budgetary allocation and inadequate infrastructural development of these sub-sectors.
despite their potentials as prime movers of agricultural diversification and development in the State. In addition, there are problems of extremely low milk yields, and very low levels of organised milk processing in the State. Although the poultry sector has expanded, it has not been inclusive of the small farmers. Value chain actors in livestock and fisheries in the State are disadvantaged due to inadequate marketing, technology and extension support.

5. The high Farmer: EA ratio (3,200:1) makes it difficult for farmers to be practically reached in the disseminating agricultural innovations through extension agents

6. Most agricultural products in the State are devoid of value addition that could make products varieties to be available to consumers. Value addition increases the marketability of products and increase in value chain actors' income.

7. Inadequate access to finance has been a recurring problem to small-scale farmers in financing their farm operations. This limits there potentials for scale expansion, productivity and enhanced income.

8. Low rate of irrigation in the State limits farmers to rain-fed agriculture and deny them the opportunity for all-year round farming with the attendant benefits.

9. Low mechanization is a bane to small-scale agricultural production in limiting farmers to subsistence operation with obvious disadvantages.

To build on the strengths and harness the opportunities, while addressing the weaknesses and threats with farmers' welfare as its central theme, the Niger State Agriculture Policy guiding principles are presented below.

2.8. Guiding Principles of the Policy

1. Agriculture as a Business – focusing the policy instruments on a government-enabled, private sector-led engagement as the main growth driver of the sector. This essential principle will remain a cardinal design in moving Niger State agriculture forward.

2. Agriculture as Key to Long-Term Economic Growth and Security-focusing policy instruments to ensure that the commercialization of agriculture in the State includes technologies, financial services, inputs supply chains, and market linkages that directly engage rural poor farmers because rural economic growth will play a critical role in the country's successful job creation, economic diversity, improved security and sustainable economic growth.

3. Food as a Human Right – focusing the policy instruments for agricultural development on the social responsibility of government with respect to food security, social security and equity in Niger State; and compelling the State government to recognize, protect and fulfill the irreducible minimum degree of freedom of the people from hunger and malnutrition.

4. Value Chain Approach – focusing the policy instruments for enterprise development across successive stages of the commodity value chains for the development of crop, livestock and fisheries sub-sectors of the State, namely input supply, production, storage, processing/utilization, marketing and consumption. Building complex linkages between
value chain stages will be an important part of the ecosystem that will drive sustained prosperity for all Nigerlites.

5. **Prioritizing Crops** – focusing policy on achieving improved domestic food security and boosting export earnings requires a measure of prioritization. Therefore, for domestic crops, the initial focus in the policy will be expanding the production of priority crops for domestic and export market. Investments in closing infrastructure gaps to accelerate productivity and investment in these crops will also be sequenced to reflect capital availability and management attention.

6. **Market Orientation** – focusing the policy instruments on stimulating agricultural production in the State on a sustainable basis, and stimulating supply and demand for agricultural produce by facilitating linkages between producers and off takers, while stabilizing prices or reducing price volatility for agricultural produce through market-led price stabilization mechanisms (commodity exchanges, negotiated off-take agreements, extended farm-gate price under value chains coordination mechanisms, agricultural insurance, etc.)

7. **Factoring Climate change and Environmental sustainability** – focusing policy instruments on the sustainability of the use of natural resources (land and soil, water and ecosystems) with the future generation in mind while increasing agricultural production, marketing and other human activities in the agricultural sector.

8. **Participation and Inclusiveness** – focusing instruments on measures to maximize the full participation of stakeholders including farmer’s associations, cooperatives and other groups, as well as NGOs, CBOs, CSOs, development partners and the private sector. This places a premium on the role of these organizations or groups as agents of economic change in general and agricultural economy in particular, thereby drawing benefits from their policy advocacy roles as partners to and watchdog of government.

9. **Policy Integrity** – focusing policy instruments on measures for sanitizing the Niger State business environment for agriculture, in terms of accountability, transparency and due process of law, ensuring efficient allocation and use of public funding and fighting corruption on all programmes involving public resources. This also applies to compliance with international commitments, protocols and conventions that Nigeria is a signatory to.

10. **Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture** – focusing policy instruments on addressing the issues of stunting, wasting, underweight and other manifestations of hunger and malnutrition with particular reference to the vulnerable groups, which include children under 5, nursing mothers and persons with chronic illness and disabilities.

11. **Agriculture's Linkages with Other Sectors** – focusing policy instruments on the connected relationship between agriculture and other sectors of the State, particularly industry, environment, power, energy, works and water sectors.

Within this overall set of policy principles, the Niger State Government will concentrate on providing an enabling environment for stakeholders in the State to play their distinctive
roles. The policy emphasis will be on providing conducive legislative and agricultural knowledge framework, macro policies, security, enhancing physical infrastructure and institutional mechanisms for coordination and enhancing access to adequate inputs, finance, and information on innovation, agricultural services and markets.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0. INPUTS MANAGEMENT

This Section is target at challenges earlier identified in terms of inputs for the agriculture sector in the State. Provision of good quality inputs at affordable prices and in time is important in agricultural development. To achieve this, the combined effort of the government, research organisations, public and private sectors is crucial. While the policy environment is important to ensure this, proper implementation and real-time monitoring is critical. The policy outlines the various interventions and processes to achieve this.

3.1. Seeds

Seed is one of the most important inputs that enhance agriculture productivity. Use of quality seeds adaptable to the State will be encouraged through a programme of differentiated subsidy and other incentives. While the general policy of subsidy for seeds will continue, it will be calibrated to encourage most appropriate seeds from a regional, ecological and farmers' income point of view. Use of sub-optimal seeds will be discouraged.

The State will lead the adoption of improved seeds through the following measures:

a. The State Government through the Phytosanitary Unit of MARD in collaboration with NASC would ensure that only seed lots that meet prescribed minimum seed certification standards are offered for sale to farmers. To ensure this, joint monitoring and field inspection of breeder, foundation and certified seed plots shall be undertaken in accordance with prescribed procedures and standards stipulated in the Nigeria Seed Council Policy, 2015 and the Harmonized Seed Rules and Regulation 2018.

b. There shall be established standard seed testing laboratories comprising the Central Seed Testing Laboratory and the Zonal Seed Testing laboratories to be equipped and
strengthened with adequate quality control equipment, manpower and facilities. The monitoring of this shall be the responsibility of the Phytosanitary Unit of MARD in collaboration with NASC and SEEDAN.

c. **Seed Quality:**
   I. The quality of all seeds will be monitored as per parameters outlined in the Nigeria Seed Council Policy, 2015.
   ii. Seed testing facilities will be upgraded in the State in terms of both personnel and technical expertise. Regular performance monitoring will be undertaken to maintain the quality of test results.
   iii. To tackle the problem of heterogeneity in seed licensing procedures across the State, model guidelines for seed licensing will be issued.
   iv. In addition to seed supplied through the State Government agencies, certified seeds of private companies will be encouraged. The variety/seeds developed/produced by private sectors will be duly evaluated before giving to farmers.
   v. Quality enforcement unit will be set up to ensure the quality of seeds in accordance with the provisions of the Nigeria Seed Council Policy, 2015
   vi. Seed treatment will be made a priority. All seeds meant for sale will be mandatorily treated with the necessary plant protection chemicals, farmers will be encouraged to treat the seed saved by them for future use in a scientific manner.

d. **Involvement of Nigeria Agricultural Seed Council (NASC), private sectors and farmers will be made, and enough seeds will be procured and supplied.**

e. **Strategic Seeds Reserve Stock:**
   I. The Niger State Government in collaboration with NASC shall establish a buffer stock for seed to meet seasonal changes in demand or to replace crops lost during times of natural disaster as well as to preserve seeds at a time of glut. Also, private sector agencies shall be required and encouraged to maintain a reserve stock of five per cent of the season's paddy requirement and 10 per cent of the non-paddy requirement by seed supplying agencies for disaster contingencies as a renewable seed reserve.
   ii. In addition, the State Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development shall work out the seed requirements of different agricultural zones in the State in heavy rainfall and drought situations and keep a realistic seed buffer through NAMDA.

f. **The possibility of selling certified seeds to farmers through wallet will be piloted.**

3.2. **Genetic Materials**

a) Development and use of biotechnology in the seed industry will be encouraged by the State Government, provided it will not infringe on existing legal channels of introducing new varieties into the country as contained in the National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB) Guidelines for Registration and Release of New Crop Varieties in Nigeria, 2016.

b) Use of Genetically Modified (GM) seeds in the State would be subject to availability of local capacity and with proper testing and adequate monitoring under the Nigerian Biosafety Guidelines. The necessary human capacity building, infrastructural
facilities and equipment for risk analysis and detection shall be established in the Seed Testing Laboratories before introduction of GM products to Niger State.

c) Genetically Modified (GM) seeds with terminator genes would at no time be commercially allowed into the State.

### 3.3 Fertilizers

Increase in agricultural productivity depends a lot on the fertility of the soil. The use of chemical fertilizers is the quickest and the most popular option. Since fertilizer consumption per hectare is very low in the State, use of chemical fertilizers will continue to be supported, but the focus will be on balanced fertilization to avoid over use of chemical fertilizers.

The areas of focus will be as follows:

1. Promoting balanced fertilization:
   a. The soil health and nutrient status for each Local Government Area will be profiled and the results will be used to identify and recommend optimal and efficient amount and composition of fertilizers needed for the soil-type. The data from soil health cards (SHCs) will also be used. This is the status of the soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely NPK (Macro-nutrients) ; S (Secondary-nutrient) ; Zn, Fe, Cu, Mn, BO (Micro-nutrients) ; and pH, EC, OC (Physical parameters).
   b. Data processed under SHC will be strengthened and the database will be aligned with the Integrated Fertilizers Management System (IFMS).
   ii. Use of plant and animal waste and bio-fertilizers will be promoted with appropriately designed incentives. An awareness campaign on the use of agricultural wastes and bio-fertilizers will be launched to ensure that over-use of chemical fertilizers does not lead to soil health deterioration and water pollution.
   iii. A monitoring system will be set up on the sales of fertilizers and disbursement of subsidy to ensure its proper use.
   iv. The fertilizers value-chain licensing process will be streamlined to ensure transparency and effective distribution. Initiatives such as fertilizer advisories to dealers and farmers through Whatsapp, radio news and paintings of soil fertilizer index maps in communities will be initiated/stepped-up.

2. Production of balanced fertilizers
   a. A Crop Pest Surveillance System will be created that will be a web and mobile based, ICT enabled pest surveillance Information System.
   b. Regular pest surveillance and monitoring will be organized to assess pest/disease situation and study agro-eco-system to advise timely IPM control measures;
   c. Extension activities will be strengthened to popularizing IPM approach among farming communities;
   d. IPM and use of bio-pesticides will be promoted as the preferred option.
   Farmers’ own products of bio-pesticides through IKS will not require any approval except for commercial sale.
The pesticide regulatory framework will be aligned with food safety laws to make adoption broad based.

ii. An integrated ICT based data backed decision support system for Pest Management in the State will be developed. This will enable forecasting model to predict pest incidence based on weather parameters, historical and scientific data.

iii. Pesticide supply chain improvement: Pesticide procurement will be strictly based on quality. A monitoring of effectiveness will be done and low performing pesticides will be removed from the list.

iv. Quality Control: A prescribed minimum number of samples of approved pesticides will be taken every season and tested and necessary disciplinary/legal action will be initiated against defaulters.

3.5. Livestock Breeds/Fish Broodstock, Drugs and Vaccines

Livestock breeds and fish broodstock are important in producing 'foundation seeds' for increased productivity by:

I. Enhancement of availability of improved breeds of livestock and fish, promote availability of pest and disease control and surveillance services.

ii. Promotion of efforts to improve the genetic potentials of livestock and fish to increase their outputs.

iii. Ensuring (in fish breeding programmes) the selection of fish with desirable hereditary qualities and well-developed sexual organs; and rearing of these selected fish to produce healthy potential spawners, with dormant eggs well developed in the females. "Drug/Vaccine" includes any substance or mixture of substances manufactured, sold or represented for use in:

- the diagnosis, treatment, mitigation or prevention of a disease, disorder or abnormal physical state, or its symptoms in human being or animals,
- restoring, correcting or modifying organic functions in human being or animal, or
- disinfection in premises in which food is manufactured, prepared or kept.

Vaccines are the most effective intervention for reducing animal diseases, livestock deaths and improving human health.

i. Multivalent (bivalent, trivalent and polyvalent) vaccine should be given preference over monovalent vaccines to cover more than one disease prevalent during control programmes to save money, time and other expenses and also to reduce the burden on implementing agencies (veterinarians and livestock workers).

ii. Vaccines should be purchased from accredited producers who must have used certified seed strains preferably supplied by a competent authority like NVRI.

iii. All the vaccine batches must be sampled and tested as per rule by competent staff like drug inspectors, and before dispatch, the samples must be coded at the level of the sampler.

iv. Vaccines to be tested must meet the following national and international standards; antigenic mass; sterility for killed vaccine and freedom from any extraneous organism in live vaccine; Innocuity (harmlessness); freedom from any non-inactivated virus or bacteria in inactivated or live vaccine; emulsion stability for oil-adjuvant vaccine; safety; and potency/immunogenicity/protection power.

v. Approval/release of the vaccines to be used in disease control programmes must have been properly evaluated for their safety and efficacy under the Nigerian conditions through first, second and third phase clinical trials.
3.6. Credit
The objective under the current policy is to expand credit coverage and improve the credit culture in the State. The emphasis is to ensure timely access to sufficient funds for the State's agricultural workforce, particularly for value chain actors with very small land holdings and those engaged in allied activities.
To streamline access to credit further, the following measures are identified for action:
I. New channels of credit will be promoted through MFIs (micro finance institutions), which work on social collateral and other credit agencies;
ii. Actively promote new beneficiary target groups in coordination with relevant agencies to identify schemes where State support is required, viz.,
   ➢ Promotion and development of farmer producer organisations, Farm Sector Promotion Fund (FSPF) – farmers' club programme, capacity building for adoption of new technology
   ➢ Ensure wider coverage of the agricultural loans that are given at single digit interest rate
   ➢ Modification in the State government credit guarantee scheme in agricultural loans will be initiated to ensure that benefit reaches particularly the real small and marginal farmers.
iii. Warehouse receipts: Provision for pledge loans against warehouse receipts will be taken up as a priority.

3.7. Disaster and Risk Management
There shall be promotion of weather-based insurance and insurance coverage especially on the hazards of climate change and other natural disasters. NAIC and NIRSAL provisions will be taken advantaged of for insurance for crops, livestock, and fish framers and this will be enlarged to cover more than 50 per cent of the farmers in these categories.
CHAPTER FOUR
4.0. STRATEGIES FOR DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Strategically, it is evident that the State is placed on a high growth path in agriculture and it is important that the Niger State government builds on these successes, recognizes the constraints and formulates a policy to overcome the challenges and harness potential and opportunities that the fast-emerging markets within the State and outside provide while keeping the policy focus steadfast on farmers' well-being. Interventions shall be in the following areas.

4.1. Land Tenure System
Government and stakeholders shall make legislation to provide for ease of acquiring agricultural land by investors. Review shall accommodate women, youth, individuals and vulnerable groups

4.2. Land Use and Planning
I. Government shall commence land use planning for the purpose of preserving agricultural land
ii. Government shall make legislation to control and enforce the movement of animals across farmlands.
iii. Government shall closely monitor the implementation of the legislation to ensure security of individuals and investors in farms - crops, livestock and fisheries.
iv. Government shall facilitate the acquisition of land through the normal statutory procedure by ranchers.

4.3. Land/Soil Management
Soil health improvement and its conservation is fundamental to raising farm productivity. Sustainable enhancement of soil health and fertility will be the focus of all efforts in this regard. Interventions in this regard will include:
I. Development of soil fertility maps at LGA level. These will be based on
the available data.

ii. Bringing more technical competence in sample collection and testing of soil and encouraging the private sector to supplement government efforts. New technologies will be utilized for this effort.

iii. Investments in soil testing infrastructure will be scaled-up

iv. Updating soil health status every three years at the village/LGA level

v. Soils are also a reservoir of water. Soil moisture retention capacity, soil microbial activity, and soil fertility play a seminal role in mitigating the effects of dry spells in rain-fed areas. Government shall provide suitable incentives for farmers for the addition of organic matter.

vi. To check for the quality of water being used for irrigation, soil health card (SHC) test labs will be used

vii. Soil test-based fertilizer use: Particularly for the areas with high salinity, fertilization will be mapped with the soil requirements (identified using the soil health card results)

viii. Government and partners shall facilitate a State wide soil survey to generate soil reports and fertility maps.

ix. Government shall collaborate with relevant agencies and organizations for the purpose of routine laboratory soil analysis

x. Government shall collaborate with accredited laboratories and Regulatory Agencies for quality assurance of agrochemicals brought into the State.

xi. Government shall strengthen monitoring strategies and training towards environmental and public health protection as a measure to stem the indiscriminate use of agro chemicals

4.4. Water Management

Timely access to adequate quantities of water is crucial for agriculture. Irrigation resources in the State are underutilized - there is a large gap between its irrigation potential and irrigation utilized. This presents a unique low-hanging opportunity for productivity enhancement in the State without having to invest heavily in new projects. The aim is two-fold: increase the irrigation potential and ensure its maximum utilization.

To achieve and address these issues and concerns, focus of Department in the following five years will be on:

I. Increase irrigation coverage of Gross Cropped Area (GCA) by at least 5% per annum from 2020-2024 in line with APP 2016 target.

ii. Use of renewable energy: Solar powered irrigation pumps will be encouraged to meet farm energy requirements.

iii. There shall be promotion of conjunctive use of water resources through government and private canals, public and private tanks, ponds, other village level water harvesting structures and public and private tube wells.

iv. Efficiency of water-use will be promoted through various measures including micro-irrigation and sub-surface irrigation.

v. Focus will be on irrigating the plant and not the soil, therefore surface drip irrigation, subsurface drip irrigation, and use of sprinklers will be mapped for their crop-wise efficiency and encouraged for adoption;

vi. Water conservation schemes will be taken up and techniques of retaining residual moisture will be emphasized.

vii. Wasteful methods of irrigation and techniques of production (like flooding in paddy) will be discouraged and efficient and
effective technological alternatives will be identified and communicated to farmers
viii. Cropping patterns system will be adjusted for optimal utilization of available water resources.
ix. Awareness generation, appropriate use of water and community management shall be taken up through PRA exercises, training programmes, and simulation games.
x. Revamp of drainage facilities: Attention will be paid to projects for drainage where water logging is frequent and problematic.

4.5. Climate Smart Agriculture
i. Adaptation and mitigation strategies to address climate change challenges have to be at the fore-front of any agricultural policy agenda. Government shall promote weather tolerant crops across the LGAs of the State and strategies shall be put in place to reduce the negative impacts of climate change on crops, livestock and fisheries production in the State

ii. Agricultural value chain actors in the State shall have their capacities built on alternative livelihoods to mitigate against foreseeable income shocks from negative impacts of climate change

4.6. Agricultural Extension Services
The development of Niger State agriculture demands re-orientation and strengthening of its current public agriculture extension system through recruitment of more EAs. While the current extension system will be strengthened in terms of number and outreach, the knowledge gap of extension agencies will be addressed on a priority basis and re-skilling done.

Effective agricultural extension and advisory services are widely recognized as essential for any program to transform agricultural systems and address global social and economic development objectives. Extension systems are required for smallholder farmers to adapt to an ever-changing production, socio-economic and environmental condition. The idea of extension as solely the purview of government extension agencies is history. There shall be collaboration with private sector extension service providers to reduce short fall in high ratio of farmers to EA in the State. Both public and private organizations are active in extension and advisory services, which constitute an integral part of the agricultural innovation system. Major extension providers include public agencies, agribusinesses (input suppliers, product buyers and financial agencies), producer organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society interest groups, mass media, and private farm advisors.

The policy thrust shall be the following:
I. Government will ensure the introduction and use of latest technologies and practices. The extension machinery of the State will promote the adoption of, precision agriculture, energy friendly irrigation pumps, micro irrigation, climate smart technologies and use of technology in animal husbandry to monitor animal behaviour, health, production and markets, wherever possible.

ii. Government shall promote mobile based advisory services since most farmer have access to mobile phones, a system of communication through mobiles will be established to enable farmers get regular advisories on weather, plant protection,
farming operations and markets.

iii. Extension services will promote value-addition:
   a). NAMDA will focus on providing interventions on integrated farming across the farming value chain, covering production, post-production, processing and other value addition activities.
   b). To reduce post-harvest losses and increase value-addition, farmers will be encouraged to convert their raw produce to processed products (this may include undertaking grading of the produce and packaging the produce in a customized manner).

iv. There is a need for private sector enabled sustainable option/strategy to strengthen grass-root extension delivery in Niger State by addressing the extremely low and inadequate numbers of frontline extension agents using:
   ➢ Community Based Advisor (CBA) model (integrating strategies on AGRA/NAERLS/SG 2000 CBA concept and the NAERLS community based participatory extension).
   ➢ Adopted Village Concept (AVC) by WAAPP/ARCN/NAERLS
   ➢ ICT enabled agricultural extension.

v. Government and other relevant bodies shall adopt a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for extension services delivery in the State and promote the community based extension advisor (CBA) model to make available private sector partnership and enabled options that broaden farmers' knowledge and improve their access to appropriate high yielding farming methods and inputs.

vi. Government shall build the capacity of CBAs (lead farmers) to service farmers groups effectively and they shall be supported to become agri-preneurs in their immediate locality. The CBAs will in partnership with the private sector and the public extension system facilitate farmers' access to a range of agricultural inputs as well as deliver advisory services through demonstration plots and field days on their own lands where farmers have a chance to learn by doing.

vii. The CBAs serve as intermediaries between smallholder farmers, the agricultural private sector and agricultural research and extension system. The public extension system will continue to play strong coordinating role in training on Best Management Practices and Innovative Market Products that offer small-holder farmers products that empower them to increase their current production and incomes.

viii. Support will be provided for frontline extension agents and CBAs to facilitate linkages with private sector input agencies to provide access to seed of improved crop varieties, improved livestock and fisheries inputs, fertilizers and mechanization options and access to aggregators/off takers.

ix. Government shall promote the use of integrated extension activities through Innovation Platform concept as useful tool to work with farmers in addressing challenges along the entire agricultural value chains.

x. There shall be integration of traditional extension approach that includes farm visits, field days, demonstration plots, workshops, newsletters and distribution of printed materials with use of ICT4Ag such as e-learning options, social media.

xii. Government shall, in line with the Federal Government's Agricultural Extension Policy, continue to use NAMDA and strengthen it as the existing unit for extension service delivery in the State.
xii. The State will create an Agricultural Innovation Fund (AIF) for technical hand-holding, imparting knowledge and free dissemination of technical know-how. This will be a multi-disciplinary activity. It will be guided by multi-disciplinary scientific team.

xiii. The fund shall be registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and shall be managed by a Board of Trustees with a chairman, who shall be a private reputable citizen of Niger State.

xiv. Membership of the AIF shall be drawn from the private sector, representatives of relevant MDAs including the Ministry of Agriculture and the ADPs, as well as representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) and Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA).

xv. Financial contributions to the AIF shall include 20 percent of produce tax across the State to be paid into the fund, contributions from State Government, Local Governments, FBOs, Donor Agencies, Banks, NACCIMA, NGOs and CSOs.

xvi. Government shall restructure extension system through PPP and install quality control measures to ensure that the system is demand driven with value chain approach, client centered, farmer led; and women, youths and vulnerable groups inclusive.

xvii. Government shall strengthen and adequately fund Research-Extension-Farmers-Input-Linkages-System (REFILS) to ensure adoption of relevant innovations and feedback from farmers.

xviii. The management of agricultural extension services shall be handled by the State Government, LGAs, FBOs and other relevant stakeholders.

xix. E-extension shall be established and promoted in the State.

4.7. Farm Mechanization

One of the reasons for low incomes from cultivation by the farmers in the State is the high cost of labour that squeezes farmer incomes. With low incomes, these farmers are unable to access quality inputs. It is a trap for the small and marginal farmer of Niger State. To break the trap, Niger State government will ensure timely access to adequate machinery for all in an affordable manner.

Modern agriculture has raised productivity through mechanization to increase the quality and precision of the operations. This will be the focus of the mechanization programme. Many operations like land leveling, sowing and planting, application of fertilizer, harvesting and threshing has undergone improvement in efficiency using farm machines. The State has a very low level of farm mechanization. There is scope for increasing the level of mechanization to improve productivity and income of farmers.

The policy focus will be on:

i. Designing a service-support mechanism for farm machines: For small and marginal landholders, a new mode of support will be designed where the State government will encourage hiring of farm equipment by subsidizing the service costs.

ii. Women friendly equipment will be prioritized. Increasing feminization of agriculture demands more 'women friendly' (smaller) machines and these will be encouraged with higher incentives compared to normal farm machinery.
iii. Government and communities shall initiate an agricultural land reform process to encourage farmers and settlers on cultivable lands to aggregate same for easy mechanization operations. Government shall also provide incentives for clustering, such as schools, clinics, electricity, water supply and feeder roads.

iv. Government shall encourage establishment of private sector marketing and maintenance shops for agricultural machinery in the State.

v. Relevant stakeholders shall provide support to small holder farmers' groups/ cooperatives through loans to enable ownership of small machinery and farm tools.

vi. The private sector shall promote agricultural machinery fabrication through local, institutional and international partnerships.

vii. All relevant stakeholders shall support farmers with subsidy for farm tools.

4.8. Irrigation Management

i. Government shall collaborate with the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and the upper Niger Basin Development Authority to fully exploit the irrigation potential of the River Niger and its tributaries.

ii. Government shall create irrigation sites across the State (including constriction of earth dams, tube wells) and provide extensive capacity building for women and youths in irrigation agriculture.

iii. Government and other stakeholders shall organize the supply of irrigation pumps as starter packs for trained irrigation farmers.

iv. Government shall carry out extensive sensitization on effective use of available water bodies in the State.

v. Align with TRIMING Project on capacity building for women and youths in irrigation agriculture;

vi. Promote efficient usage of irrigation facilities and water.

4.9. Processing, Storage and Marketing

Government shall enhance the food processing capacity of the State by:

a) Attracting investment in processing industries to the State by providing investment ready concepts in areas of comparative advantage;

b) Connecting farmers to off-takers

c) Encouraging local processors to settle in Agro-Processing Clusters (APCs)

d) Providing incentives for the establishment of crop pack houses and cold chain infrastructure across the State

e) Enlightenment of farmers and commodity dealers on safe and healthy methods of produce processing and storage

f) Providing standards for storage structures by relevant bodies

g) Support partnership with the Federal University of Technology, Minna, College of Agriculture, Mokwa, and other relevant institutions for research and innovation in meeting mechanization and processing needs of the State

h) Assisting local fabricators of agricultural machinery to setup and improve on existing workshops

i) Review Agricultural Training Centres (ATCs) to function as Farm Knowledge Centres (FKCs) for training of youths and other farmers in modern techniques using local languages

j) Ensure enforcement of best practices in processing and storage of agricultural produce.
k). Efforts will be made to shift farmers to agro-business and impart them with farm related skills, which are currently in short supply. The State government will create and nurture 'agri-preneurs' (agricultural graduates and other qualified entrepreneurs) to achieve greater value addition through agro-processing and propagation of modern extension services.

I). Extension Service providers shall help the farmers with timely information on markets, particularly regarding (i) crop, livestock breed and fish species selection (ii) demand for and supply of crop, livestock and fish produce (iii) expected price of commodity and (iv) availability of infrastructure facilities for storage, transport and marketing of produce, will be encouraged.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0. INTENSIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION SYSTEM

The key targeted priority value chains for agribusiness interventions, aggregated through SWOTT, enterprise prioritization and enterprise analysis were a combination of staple and high valued chains. The staple crops include Rice, Cassava, Maize, Sorghum and Soybean. The high valued enterprises are Cashew, Sheanut and Ginger. Prioritized livestock enterprises were ruminant fattening, broiler and layer production; while, aquaculture was the sole prioritized intervention under fisheries.

5.1. Crops

I. Government shall facilitate and encourage the production of Rice, Maize, Sorghum, Yam, cassava, Soybean, Groundnut, Sheanut, Cashew, Cowpea, Oil palm, Sugar cane, and Ginger as priority crops.

ii. Government shall pay particular attention to the mandate crops across their value chains

iii. Improve farmers' access to inputs and ensure that structures for good seed quality are In place

iv. Ensure availability, affordability and accessibility of good quality production inputs, such as agro-chemicals and fertilizers

v. Provide adequate and effective pest control services

vi. Enhance extension service delivery

vii. Promote adaptive research

viii. Synergize with agriculture related institutions and agricultural research institutes on innovations in seed technology and other research products

ix. MARD, NGOs NASC, NAMDA shall work on improving certified seeds and seedlings for the production of mandate crops.

x. There shall be formation of cooperative societies along the mandate crop value chains for obvious advantages to farmers.

xi. There shall be designation of registered and certified seed producers in the State

xii. MARD, MLF, NAMDA in collaboration with credible agro-input dealers shall organize the timely provision of good quality agro-inputs.

xiii. Facilitate the process of making State Regulatory Laws on seeds and other agricultural inputs and ensure quality.
xiv. MARD, MLF and Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in collaboration with NESRA, SON and pest control services providers shall organize the formation of Pest Service Control Monitoring Unit.

5.2. Horticulture/Tree Crops
The State enjoys a natural comparative advantage for horticulture but its potential has not been completely exploited. The agro-climatic conditions in the State are suitable for fruits, spices and vegetables. Additionally, as the per hectare income generating potential is higher in the case of horticulture compared to cereals or legumes, this policy gives a major thrust to horticulture production in the State and aims to create an enabling environment for sustained and inclusive growth.

The following interventions are envisaged:

i. Cluster-based production centres for various fruits, vegetables and spices crops will be created. Under the cluster-based approach, regional production belts and clusters will be identified and supported through relevant federal and State government schemes and programmes. Efficient value-chains from cluster-based production centres will be created to ensure maximum value-capture by farmers.

ii. Acreage under fruit, vegetables and spices will be increased. Acreage will be expanded, particularly in areas with irrigation potential. Additionally, farmers will be encouraged on horticultural crops to enhance their incomes.

iii. In addition, acreage under fruits, vegetables and spices will be promoted by designing an incentive mechanism to make farmers embrace horticultural crops and increased production will be dynamically linked to markets.

iv. Production plans will meet the food safety concerns of the consumer and advisories on use of plant protection measures will take market needs into consideration.

v. Efforts will be made to identify and promote new techniques and technologies of production such as high-density plantation and protected cultivation.

vi. Getting the markets right is crucial for value capture. Production will be part of an integrated package. For important vegetables, cold-chains will be set up, mostly in the private sector and farmers' participation with cold storages, refrigerated vans, ripening chambers, etc.

vii. FPOs will be encouraged to link up with the market directly or through large processing or retail companies to produce to the market, both in terms of quantity and quality.

viii. Markets will also be linked to production clusters. It is proposed that an Agriculture Marketing Board be established in the State. This will create the required market friendly specifications for each product and provide infrastructure for grading, packaging and storage at selected locations across the State.

ix. Efforts will be made to create brand equity for crops of value to the State, mango, etc., by creating a market mechanism based on compliance to specifications, processes, and regulations and by creating a dispute resolution mechanism through a participatory model. An incentive package based on the proposed clusters will be announced. The package will provide economic and physical access to quality seeds and planting material, irrigation support and infrastructure for post-harvest grading, storage, and sales. Production plans will be market driven to ensure that there is no over-production.

x. Government shall collaborate with the relevant research and training Institutes to improve the genetic quality of wild species of economic values, especially those used
for various soups and condiments such as Parkia and Moringa.

xi. The private sector should be challenged to pay attention to identified forest food resources with the objective of increasing dietary diversity and exploiting their export potential.

5.3. Livestock

Livestock has contributed significantly to the increase in farmers' incomes in Niger State. This has been the main source of income for herders/pastoralists and marginal farmers. The Policy for livestock development will focus on dairy cattle, poultry, sheep and goats. A linkage to nutrition of the poorer sections will be provided through dairy and poultry. The Government, using the concept of ease of doing business in Nigeria, Government shall promote and facilitate a private sector led development in the livestock industry. In line with 2016 Agricultural Promotion Policy of the Federal Government, the following shall be the policy thrust on livestock in Niger State:

I. The Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries shall collaborate with relevant agencies to supervise livestock control posts and checkpoints for effective disease surveillance, monitoring, revenue collection and data collection.

ii. Regular conduct of methodology driven livestock surveys and livestock census every seven (7) years in order to drive evidence based decision making.

iii. Enhancement of availability of improved breeds, access to finance and information about improved production methods, markets and prices

iv. Enhancement of disease resistance breeding; promote availability of pest and disease control services, and enhanced livestock identification and traceability; zoning and compartmentalization of livestock; disease surveillance system; quarantine services; and facilitation of nationwide livestock census

v. Incentivizing set-up of modern ranching, abattoir and processing system

vi. Promotion of micro-livestock rearing by raising awareness about their benefits through use of radio and TV campaign, school programs; e.g. beekeeping via dedicated FMARD and NAMDA experts working with farmers to install and monitor top-bar hives; etc. would be a back-up awareness building process.

vii. Government shall establish rabbit multiplication units in each of the 3 agricultural zones and promote other micro-livestock rearing and production in the State

viii. Livestock insurance and access to credit for small holder value chain actors will be promoted with larger coverage and higher support from the Government.

ix. Women Small Holder Groups (SHGs) will be leveraged for developing the livestock sector and gender equality ensured in livestock operations and activities

x. Medium-term credit for purchase of animals will be made available through banks

xi. The livestock extension system will be expanded and re-skilled. NAMDA will give emphasis on livestock extension and establish various method and result demonstrations to promote modern practices in dairy management.

xii. Progressive farmers (Community Based Advisors) will be used as village level extension workers, who can assist and further train livestock producers in the adoption of new technologies and advanced husbandry practices and in the identification of diseases.

xiii. To ensure that farmers get feed of the right quality for milch animals (animals kept for milk production) and poultry, appropriate standards will be notified for commercially produced ruminant animals and poultry feeds.
xiv. Livestock cooperatives shall be supported for easy access to credit, grants, training and expanded production

xv. Modern abattoirs, organized meat markets and processing plants and improved cattle markets; and work with relevant agencies to ensure that meat are transported hygienically in refrigerated vehicles

xvi. Government shall encourage the establishment of cattle, goat and sheep ranches across the State as a step towards the intensification of livestock rearing system for better milk and meat yield and minimization in farmers/pastoralist conflicts.

xvii. Regular sanitation of abattoir and processing of abattoir wastes shall be a priority to minimize their effects on the environment.

xviii. Continuous awareness campaign for proper dialogue between farmers & herders to prevent frequent clashes, improve security and reduce cattle rustling in the State.

Specifically the following livestock value chain commodities shall be prioritized:

5.3.1. Dairy Cattle

Dairying is predominantly ancillary to agriculture but forms a sustainable source of income for marginal and landless farmers who own more than 80 percent of bovines in the State. Interventions in dairy include:

i. Promotion of efforts to improve the genetic potential of cattle for increased milk output per animal. Cross-breeding with high genetic merit bulls of good Nigerian and foreign breeds will be promoted through the strengthening of semen stations, expanding artificial insemination (AI) coverage and putting in place systems for effective AI delivery through information driven management for accountability. Artificial insemination centres shall be established in the three senatorial districts of the State.

ii. Training/re-orienting of the artificial insemination (AI) technicians will be taken up in relevant Research Institutes and Universities to ensure strict adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in performing artificial Insemination.

iii. The reproductive efficiency of dairy animals will be improved by using advanced breeding technology for sustained breed improvement.

iv. Sex-sorted semen will be introduced and made affordable to improve the productivity and profitability of the sector.

v. Organised breeding will cover 1.5 million breedable bovines between 2020-2024.

vi. A comprehensive digitized system of recording animals for facilitating selection will be developed and implemented.

vii. Dairying through cooperatives will be encouraged by creating infrastructure for cattle feed manufacturing, milk procurement, processing & marketing.

viii. The private sector will be incentivized to create a value chain for dairy products at the village level.

ix. Cooperative Milk Producers Associations (CMPA) will be established and the milk cold chain expanded, particularly at the village level through collection centres supported with coolers, to cover all viable village co-operatives within the next five years.

x. Preventive animal health care services for control of major diseases like foot and mouth disease (FMD), brucellosis, and other diseases like mastitis etc. would be taken up. A campaign to eliminate FMD through vaccination will be taken up to cover 100 percent of animals in the State.
xi. Standard veterinary clinics and diagnostic laboratories shall be established or upgraded in each of the 3 agricultural zones of the State.

xii. An IT-based network for epidemiological surveillance will be developed and availability of veterinary services will be expanded to cover all villages with a minimum of 100 animals.

xiii. A fodder development programme to grow fodder will be put in place.

xiv. Ration balancing programme for milch animals will be introduced and expanded to cover the State and farmers will be trained to formulate balanced ration by utilizing locally available feed ingredients as livestock feed. To improve the availability and quality of feed, farmers will be encouraged to use silage.

xv. Establishment of pastures & storage facilities for dry seasons, feeding of livestock shall be prioritized.

xvi. For feed from crop by-products, infrastructure will be created for collection of crop residues, baling, enrichment and storing by introducing modern equipment like mowers, reapers, balers, straw makers, etc., at the village level. These machines can be housed at Farm Centres for hiring at subsidized rates.

xvii. To mitigate scarcity of quality fodder, measured to promote cultivation of newly developed and notified varieties/hybrids of fodder crops, perennial grasses and legumes and unconventional/under-utilized feed resources like Moringa, etc. will be taken up.

xviii. Standardize compound feed production by feed mills will be incentivized to cater to the nutritional requirements of animals with different productive potential.

5.3.2. Small Ruminants- Sheep and Goats

I. The sale of live animals has increased in Niger State, providing better incomes to large numbers of marginal farmers and rural households.

ii. The State will set up rearing centres to make available one-month old small ruminants Available to farmers; and a separate marketing infrastructure for sale of live animals through a transparent platform with the requisite support for quality assurance.

iii. The meat processing industry will be incentivized and increased participation of private sectors and FPOs will be explored.

iv. Since goat rearing has a large potential in the State, a package consisting of the following will be launched:
   - Small ruminants' rearing will be encouraged in village clusters and efficient system of marketing sheep and goats will be set up.
   - Veterinary services for rearing will be enhanced and vaccines will be provided at subsidized rates to rearers; and full vaccination coverage will be given.
   - Medium-term credit for purchase of animals will be made available through banks.
   - Trade of live sheep will be improved and the improvements will aim to ensure higher value for farmers, based on the weight of the animal.
   - The private sector will be encouraged to set up modern abattoirs in important markets.

5.3.3. Poultry

Backyard poultry generates additional income and improves the nutritional status among the poorest of the poor. Backyard poultry plays a pivotal role in providing livelihoods and achieving nutritional security in rural areas.

The following constitute the policy thrust:

i. Poultry production at MSME levels will be encouraged through various agricultural development initiatives to cater to local markets.
ii. Government will boost entrepreneurship development and employment generation and allow 'Agripreneurship' in poultry by involving Women Small Holder Groups (WSHGs). These SHGs will be encouraged to confederate for better marketing.

iii. Large integrators in the poultry sector will be incentivized to set up decentralized production models to usher in rural prosperity through a poultry revolution.

iv. Establishment of standard hatcheries for poultry by private investors will be encouraged.

v. Vaccinators will be trained to provide vaccination at village/farm level and vaccines will be made available through government veterinary clinics. Vaccines will be provided on subsidy basis for small/backyard poultry units and use of antibiotics in poultry will be regulated and efforts made through effective extension machinery that antibiotics are used only for disease treatment and not as growth enhancer.

vi. Medium term credit for purchase of birds will be made available through the Micro Finance and other financial institutions.

vii. Standardized poultry feed factories will be incentivized by encouraging the private firms to put up poultry feed factories to support the sector.

viii. Entrepreneurs would be promoted for establishment of organic manure plants using poultry manure as raw material.

ix. Vertical integration would be developed where processing and value addition of poultry meat would be done and private sector participation will be encouraged in setting up modern units of poultry processing.

x. Farmer Producer's Organisations would be supported for aggregation of poultry egg and meat in the rural areas.

xi. Education and awareness about nutritive value of eggs and poultry through various platforms would be intensified.
5.4. Fisheries
This section caters for artisanal fresh water fisheries and aquaculture. Niger State has great potentials for capture fisheries and aquaculture, and if these are well harnessed, it can be one of the growth propellers in moving the State agriculture forward. The policy thrust aligns with Niger State MTSS and 2016 APP and is generally aimed at:
I. Enhancing fish breeding, promoting availability of pest and disease control services, and enhance traceability.
ii. Support the conduct of fisheries data collection regularly for adequate planning and development of the industry.
iii. Make fisheries/aquaculture inputs available by promoting hatchery development, standardization of hatchery and fish breeding processes.
iv. Re-enforcing the regulatory framework for fishing activities and tackling insecurity on fishing grounds, landing sites and processing centres.
v. Promoting quality fish processing, products varieties and marketing.
To give an impetus to the sector, the government will ensure the following:

5.4.1. Capture Fisheries
I. Infrastructure at fish landing centres will be improved to ensure that the quality of fish does not deteriorate. This will include hygienic platforms, space for cold stores, provision of ice slabs, etc.
ii. Welfare schemes for fishermen will be introduced including life insurance, assistance to buy fishing boats, nets, etc., and climate information services to fishers to manage weather-related risks.
iii. Digitization and geo-tagging of fisheries assets in the State will be taken up using GIS and spatial planning tools will be used to plan fisheries development in the State efficiently.
iv. Inland fisheries will be encouraged through revisiting the leasing policy of ponds/water bodies (in collaboration with FMWR) and making it fisherman friendly; long-term leasing of freshwater ponds/water bodies and government land to take up freshwater fishing by fishermen, entrepreneurs, educated, unemployed youth and women SHGs.
v. Fisherman co-operatives/SHGs/FPOs will be given preference in the leasing of ponds.
vi. The State's Fisheries Edict will be modified in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Water Resources (FMWR) to lease out all water bodies above 10Ha to Fishermen Cooperatives, Women SHGs and unemployed youth agripreneurs to boost fish production and enhanced income under the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries by FAO, 1995.

5.4.2. Aquaculture
I. Government shall support good quality fish seedlings to fish farmers through upgrading of existing/establishment of more government hatcheries and creating conducive environment for private hatcheries operators for year-round production of quality/genetically improved fish seeds.
ii. Government will ensure that farmers get feed of the right quality for fish, appropriate standards will be notified for commercially produced fish feed and localized quality fish feed production through SME enterprises will be promoted to reduce feed cost that constitute about 70% of production cost to not less than 30% in the next 5 years (2024).
iii. Government shall collaborate with the Federal Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (FDFA) and the Fisheries Society of Nigeria (FISON) in implementation of fish hatchery certification programme under the national guidelines, for quality fish.
seeds production in the State
iv. Government shall ensure the promotion of species diversification by introducing and scaling other species other than Catfish and Tilapia through partnership with NIFFR through the establishment of hatcheries, farm demonstrations and domestic market promotion.
v. Promoting inland aquaculture for high value species through horizontal expansion of freshwater fish farming in the State by promoting suitable fish rearing facilities; promotion of two crop system per year by stocking advanced good quality fingerlings and thus doubling catfish productivity from the present national average of 2.8 mt/ha/year to 6 mt/ha/year in the next five years in Niger State.
vi. There shall be promotion of solar water pumps and ground water tube wells to facilitate year-round fish farming; promotion of ornamental fish production in cluster approach with market linkage support and promotion of integrated fish farming systems through low cost production model for sustainable aquaculture.
vii. Enhancement of reservoir fish production by encouragement of primary fish farmers' co-operative societies, women SHGs and young entrepreneurs for cage culture in reservoirs
viii. Promotion of aqua parks in large reservoirs and fish farm estates across the State for the establishment of export oriented and vertically integrated cage culture by entrepreneurs.
ix. A special skill development module for inland aquaculture will be launched in the State for capacity building for fish breeders and farmers, established fish co-operative organisations and run village-level schemes in collaboration with NIFFR with to disseminate best practices and research
x. Access to soft loans by fish farmers/fisherfolks will be encouraged for enhance fish productivity. As fish farming is a capital-intensive activity, bank loans are essential for the digging of ponds and procurement of farm agro-inputs such as fish fingerlings, feeds, aqua drugs, etc. and fishing inputs for fisherfolks. Backyard fish culture will be encouraged through fish farmer friendly initiatives and fishermen's co-operatives will be assisted to access funds from BOI, ABP, NAB and others
xi. Promotion of nutrition-sensitive and climate resilient aquaculture in backyard tanks and small water bodies will be enhanced, especially in vulnerable communities.

xii. Cold chains for fish marketing will be encouraged; ice plants, pre-processing sheds and processing plants will be established; transportation of fresh fish products with insulated vans, ice box, motorcycles with ice box and bicycles with ice box will be promoted across the State to enhance quality delivery and reduced post-harvest losses.

xiii. Value addition plans will be established for fish products to enhance product varieties to fish consumers. Specifically, fish fillets, fish powders, fish biscuits etc. will be promoted as food supplements for schools and school feeding programmes.

xiv. Marketing infrastructure for fish will be strengthened by setting up exclusive fish processing and sale centres in various parts of the State. Hygienic fish markets will be opened in all LGAs as well as cost-effective technology for hygienic fish marketing; small fish sale kiosks will be promoted; and existing village-level small-scale fish retail vendors will be supported to establish hygienic sale counters.
5.5. Women in Agriculture

Women are engaged heavily in all phases of the agricultural cycle, i.e., sowing, cultural activities, harvesting and post-harvest management. Women-owned landholdings are limited and uneconomical, resulting in their higher involvement as agricultural labourers. Women will be treated as a special target group for development intervention in agriculture. Women are important project partners in agricultural development; emphasis thus will be laid upon capacity-building and their empowerment. This Policy shall focus on the following in line with the National Gender Policy in Agriculture (NGPA) 2016:

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.
5.6. Food and Nutrition Security
i. Enhance value additions for improved nutrition.
ii. Diversify household food production and consumption especially targeting women, the elderly and children, thereby increasing access to adequate nutrient rich foods.
iii. Improve food safety along the value chains
iv. Build resilience and social protection nets through food systems for vulnerable groups
v. Promote nutrition research and information systems
vi. Improve the capacity to address food security and nutrition issues within the agricultural sector
vii. Promote nutrition education, social marketing, Behaviour Change Communication and advocacy
viii. Nutrition surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation
ix. Government shall take full advantage of the home grown school feeding programme by promptly providing the counterpart funding to improve the nutrition status of school children in the State.

5.7. Sustainable Agriculture
From ensuring economic and physical access to relevant and efficient inputs to standardizing post-harvest management to developing markets both domestic and global, the Policy aims to create conducive framework to promote organic farming in the State. Some parts of the State, particularly those located in rain-fed, dry land and hilly areas, are prone to weather and climate vagaries. Increasing agricultural productivity and farmer incomes in these areas has always been a daunting challenge. While encouraging a shift to organic farming, the emphasis will be on market driven production programmes where the produce can be sold at premium prices. Systems will be put in place to ensure easy certification of such organic produce.

i. Government shall identify areas of the State with poor endowments like rain-fed and hilly tracts, where consumption of external inputs is low and per hectare yields are also low and organic farming will be promoted there.
ii. Promoting organic farming of niche commodities shall be in areas where the State has comparative advantage. To begin with, organic farming for low-volume high-value crops like spices, medicinal plants, fruits and vegetables will be promoted.
iii. Availability of organic manures in adequate amounts and at affordable costs to the farmers will be ensured.
iv. Government shall make targeted efforts to create a market for niche products. Spices and vegetables unique to the State will be branded to encourage their production and certification facilities provided.
v. The government will set up pilots for integrated farming in selected locations to demonstrate the value of integrated farming and to test options that will optimize the income of farmers. The pilots will also test an integrated extension system and provide inputs and technology support.

5.8. Market and Infrastructure
Reforming markets will be one of the most potent tools under this policy. The Niger State Government drive to produce higher quality and higher quantity of crops per hectare and livestock and fisheries per holding will be simultaneously supported by policy incentives that will deliver deeper, border and transparent markets. Efforts will be made to deepen access to fair and remunerative markets and to bring transparency in the system. Models that offer options for storage linked to credit will be used to discourage distress sale by farmers who lack storage facilities.
Government shall promote farmer producer organisations (FPOs) and development of export-oriented clusters with financial and technical support.

Government and the Niger State Chamber of Commerce, Mines, Industry and Agriculture shall facilitate the establishment of a private sector led Commodity Corporation

Government shall also put in place a regulatory framework to establish and monitor standards of produce quality and enforce such standards with legal instruments

The corporation shall adhere to standards of quality specified by the regulatory board.

Sorting and grading including metrology shall be performed by the Commodity Corporation with standards set out and enforced by the Produce Inspection Board (PIB)

The commodity corporation shall set up markets at different commodity centres in the State.

5.9. Finance and Administration

Agricultural development needs proper funding especially due to its key role as facilitator of economic development. The 2019 sectoral budgetary allocation of 7% to agriculture is below the minimum and the State must double the provision of the Maputo Declaration in its budgetary provision in order to remain agriculturally relevant in Nigeria. In this policy therefore:

I. Government shall allocate a minimum of 10% of its annual budgetary provisions to agricultural sector for accelerated development.

ii. Government shall assist resource poor farmers and women groups to access low interest rate loans from financial institutions to scale up agricultural production.

iii. Government shall ensure the provision of growth enhancement schemes to assist resource poor farmers.

iv. Innovative financing would be promoted as alternative to cash transfer.

v. Government shall strengthen agricultural credit schemes and make their services more accessible to farmers

vi. Accountability, transparency and due process of the law shall be promoted by the State Government.

vii. There shall be efficient allocation and use of public funding including support by partners.

viii. Government shall place strict emphasis on anti-corruption measures

On administration:

i. Government shall reduce bureaucratic bottle necks and time for acquiring land title documents to enable farmers use same as collateral security

ii. Government shall ensure a virile and productive workforce in the agricultural sector and place emphasis on improved labour productivity

iii. Government shall maximize the benefits of the presence of FUT, NCRI, NIFFR, FCFFT and FCWM, IBB University and Niger State College of Agriculture and Niger State College of Education in Niger State and approach the issue of synergy with these institutions in all the sub-sectors at the highest level of government.

iv. Government shall endeavor to provide an enabling environment for good agriculture governance

v. Government shall promptly release budgetary provisions for agricultural services to conform to the farming calendar of the State.

vi. Government shall create enabling environment for the implementation of secure transaction of movable collaterals & others including ware housing receipts systems.

vii. Government shall endeavor to fully implement provision of the agricultural policy.
5.10. In-School Agricultural Programmes
i. The Niger State Government shall encourage the involvement of youths through an apprenticeship program for students of agriculture and related disciplines. The program would be applicable to the undergraduate and postgraduate students in agriculture, livestock production, animal health and fisheries. The students would be involved in multiple extension activities planned during the year and will help the department in strengthening these activities on the ground.

ii. Government shall encourage the establishment of young farmers clubs in schools to stimulate youth interest in agriculture

iii. Government shall introduce and enhance agriculture in school curricula

iv. Government shall facilitate the establishment of school farms and gardens

5.11. Agricultural Research and Innovation
To reap the benefits of the presence of two Universities, a College of Agriculture, two research institutes and other training institutions, a framework shall be put in place to position the Niger State agriculture value chain actors as the immediate beneficiaries of innovation from these institutions.

The Niger State Government shall collaborate with the Faculty of Agricultural Technology, Federal University of Technology, Minna and fund the State owned Ibrahim Babangida University, Lapai; and the College of Agriculture, Mokwa besides producing quality technical manpower, to focus on fundamental research in agriculture and allied field, and develop technologies and innovation for improving productivity, nutritional security and income of farmers under climatic change while taking care of the natural resources and its sustenance. To give thrust to this approach, the following interventions are envisaged:

i. To undertake research, the aforementioned institutions will work closely with NCRI, Badegi and NIFFR, New-Bussa

ii. Role of NAMDA:
   a. Refining the available technologies for the local needs.
   b. Make demonstrations; impart training to extension workers and farmers.
   c. Adopt few villages as model villages for taking the refined technologies to the farmers

iii. Suitable agro-ecological agronomic innovations such as IPM, organic agriculture, conservation agriculture, intercropping, poly-cropping, etc. shall be taken up in the State. Government will take up documentation of farmer agronomic/traditional cropping methods/system and agro-ecological practices shall be promoted.

5.12. Promotion of Commodity Value Chains and Agri-Business
i. Farmers shall be integrated into modern value chains that can raise their incomes and also minimize the risks arising from middlemen and markets.

ii. There shall be integration of post-harvest, marketing and processing infrastructures, adding value and quality to the raw produce of farmers.

iii. Government shall provide infrastructural and training support building capacity of value chain actors.

5.13. Promotion of Digital and Precision Agriculture
i. Use of ICT shall be promoted for timely delivery of cropping, weather and price information to farmers.

ii. Information on markets leads to better price discovery and enables producers to capture a higher proportion of the marketable value.

iii. Delivery of E-extension through digital means shall be promoted.
Various departments and agencies of the government deliver different inputs and financial benefits to crops, livestock and fish farmers/fisherfolks. The governance around farmers should be efficient, timely, relevant and responsive. Keeping these objectives in focus, the following shall be done:

i. A robust institutional mechanism for convergence will be created. All actions at the area, block, cell and village level of agricultural operations will be converged so that there is a single point of contact for the farmer. This person will be supported by the technical departments required to ensure that farmers’ needs are met.

ii. Government shall ensure reforms in agricultural marketing, warehousing, land-leasing and mechanization services.

iii. Since the Niger State Government allocates substantial amounts of money for agriculture related activities, it is important to get the best outcomes for farmers in the State. With this in view, a monitoring mechanism will be put in place to improve the performance and the outcome of all schemes. A platform will be created to capture the performance of various agriculture and allied departments and to take timely corrective action if gaps are found.

iv. A robust performance metrics will be defined at all the levels and technology system would be used to ensure the accountability of the officers to the same. High performing officials will be rewarded or acknowledged appropriately.

v. Government shall strengthen the institutional credit structure through the establishment of data on agric. business institution and operations as well as financial institutions.

vi. There shall be revitalization of the farm extension network, to build the capacity of youths for setting up scientific agri-food system enterprises.

vii. Improving post-harvest management and promoting farmer producers' organisations and companies shall be a priority to government.

viii. An efficient feedback mechanism will be set up to enable agriculture value chain actors in the State communicate suggestions, feelings and concern over any issue on agriculture to government agencies. Similarly, a grievance redress mechanism will be setup for the MARD, MLF and NAMDA officials to resolve the establishment related queries instantly.

ix. Managerial, technical capacities of all actors at different levels of agricultural governance in the State will be built to ensure efficient delivery of government schemes and services.
CHAPTER SIX
6.0. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND FINANCING
6.1. Leadership Structure and Institutions

The Niger Agricultural Policy requires effective institutional agreements to ensure result oriented programme and project implementation. To ensure effective agriculture governance, in line with best practices, the Government of Niger State has designated the State Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development; and Livestock and Fisheries as the Agriculture Policy custodians for the State.

The implementation of the Niger State policy on agriculture shall be carried out by the two levels of government (i.e. State and Local Government Areas) in collaboration with the Federal Government of Nigeria and other stakeholders, including the organized private sectors, development partners, professional bodies, civil society organizations, farmers based organizations, faith-based organizations and communities.

The administrative agreement between the State Council on Agriculture, the Agricultural Services Management Committee, the Local Government Committee on agriculture and the Ward Committee on agriculture will form the basis for planning and implementation of the Niger State policy on agriculture. In this regard, field offices of the MARD and MLF shall be focal point for the coordination of agricultural programmes at the local government and communities. The focal point at the State and Local Government levels shall have the responsibility of identifying and mobilizing resources for executing projects and activities in a coordinated manner, paying due emphasis to the need synergy and harmony within their geographic boundaries and authority.

The organogram is as shown in Figure 5.1.
6.2. **State Council on Agriculture (SCA)**

A State Council on Agriculture shall be approved by the State Executive Council. Membership shall include: Commissioners and Chief Executives of relevant MDAs, Local Government representatives, organized private sectors and agriculture-related agencies.

**Terms of Reference for the State Council on Agriculture**

The State Council of Agriculture shall be the highest policy making body on all matters concerning agriculture in the State. The Commissioners for Agriculture and Rural Development and Livestock and Fisheries shall respectively be Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Council.

---

**Diagram:**

- **State Council on Agriculture; Secretariat, MARD/MLF**
  - **Agricultural Services Management Committee; Secretariat, MARD/MLF**
    - **LG Committee on Agriculture; Secretariat: Office of the Counselor for Agriculture**
      - **State Field Offices**
Figure 5.1: Structure for Co-ordination of Policy Implementation

The ToR are:

a) Identify, analyse and ascertain the strategic issues in agricultural development in the State, ensuring that strategies and targets are in consonance with the Niger State Development Plan.

b) Identify efforts already in place for accelerating Agricultural Development in the State.


d) Access further activities, new trajectories to be followed in dealing with agricultural development based on regular review of M&E reports and periodic survey.

e) Coordinate and harmonize efforts, strategies and programmes of agriculture in the State and ensure that the vision, goal and objectives of the Niger State policy on agriculture are realized.

f) Ensure adequate resource mobilization and allocation to accelerate agricultural development.

g) Ensure that council meetings are held at least twice yearly.

Membership of the State Council on Agriculture

a) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

b) Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries

c) Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment

d) Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

e) Ministry of Finance

f) Ministry of Lands and Housing

g) Ministry of Water Resources and Dams Development

h) Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Chieftaincy Affairs

i) Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

j) Ministry of Youths Empowerment

k) Ministry of Justice and State Attorney-General

l) Niger Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority

m) State Planning Commission

n) Committee of LGA Chairmen

o) House Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

p) Provost College of Agriculture, Mokwa

q) Dean School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, Federal University of Technology, Minna

r) NCRI

s) NIFFR

t) Niger Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture

u) Supervisory Councilors/Directors of Agriculture in the LGAs of the State

v) Representative of Traditional Rulers

w) Representative of Farmer Based Organizations

x) Representative of Faith Based Organizations

y) Representative of Development Partners

z) Representative of Civil Society Organizations

aa) Representative of Non-Governmental Organizations
6.2. Agricultural Services Management Committee (ASMC)

Mandate
This is the technical committee and the mandate is as follows:

a) The MARD and MLF shall serve as the State focal point for Agricultural Policy Programme Planning and Coordination in the State. The MARD will also serve as the secretariat of the SCA and shall work closely with the Local Government Secretariat, having regular fora for interactions.

b) The MARD and MLF shall provide day-to-day support that will enhance the effectiveness of the SCA.

c) To serve as the focal point for the coordination and harmonization of all Agriculture related policies and programmes being implemented by various Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the State programme consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in this policy document.

d) To provide a forum for exchange of views and experiences among partners and all bodies implementing agricultural programmes in the State and to foster and strengthen their respective roles.

e) To coordinate the review, on a continuous basis of policies and programmes with regard to their potential impact on agriculture in the State.

f) To ensure effective implementation of the different policy thrusts and programmes by putting in place effective machinery for M&E.

g) To maintain on-going advocacy for issues of Agricultural Development.

h) To ensure adequate financial provisions and timely release of allocated funds in the State development plan and annual budget.

i) To liaise with local and international donor agencies, financial institutions, and the private sector, CBOs and NGOs in soliciting for funds to complement government resources and efforts, and to ensure that development partners pay closer attention to incorporate agricultural considerations in their development strategies across all sectors in particular: Education, Health, Industry, Water Resources, Youth and Gender Based Programmes.

j) To coordinate the analysis and dissemination of results of important studies in agriculture in the State.

Membership
There shall be an Agricultural Service Management Committee (ASMC) at the State level. Membership of the ASMC shall comprise of the Permanent Secretary – MANR and MLF, Directors of all Department at the MARD and MLF as well as Head of Parastatals supervise by the ministries.

6.3. Local Government Committee on Agriculture (LGCA)

Mandate

a) The Local Government Committee on Agriculture shall be responsible for implementing the policy at that level.

b) The committee shall collaborate with the State Committee on Agriculture and Ward Committee on Agriculture in the implementation of programmes and projects.

Membership
There shall be a Local Government Committee on Agriculture. The committee shall be chaired by the supervisor for agriculture of the local government. Membership of the
committee shall consist of: the Local Government Councilor for Agriculture, Director of Agriculture, LG Cooperative Officers, Gender Officer and Community Mobilization Officer; the private sector, FBOs, representatives of communities, representatives of agricultural professional bodies, and representatives of Women groups.

6.5 Accountability
Government and stakeholders shall ensure that these Council and Committees are fully accountable for the resources and programme activities, for which they have responsibility, to guarantee the confidence of all stakeholders and partners involved, as well as to ensure correct and timely programme implementation.

6.6 Roles of Organized Private Sector
a) Collaboration with government and other stakeholders in policy articulation and facilitation of agricultural production, processing and marketing using the various initiatives in the agricultural value chain.
b) Taking leadership by making investment drives to bring private capital into agricultural development and agribusiness sustainability.
c) To actively participate in agriculture governance, bringing in innovation and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

6.7 Roles of Professional Bodies
a) To support stakeholders with technical updates on Best Agricultural Practices
b) Collaborate in the capacity of farmers including co-operative groups.
c) To actively participate in M&E and to advice government on GAP.
d) To carry out policy advocacy to encourage policy implementation and consistency.

6.8 Roles of Development Partners
a) To support stakeholders with funding for planned programs and projects
b) Technical support and advisories to stakeholders
c) To support stakeholders in capacity building, innovation and agriculture infrastructure.
d) To participate in M&E and the development of data bases for effective planning.

6.9 Roles of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs)
a) To mobilize farmers and create awareness on opportunities in projects and programs.
b) To advise Government and serve as a link between farmers and other stakeholders.
c) To mobilize funds in support of farmers related activities
d) To collaborate in the capacity building of farmers
e) To collaborate with other stakeholders in M&E activities
f) To network with other organizations for the improvement of Agricultural Practices.

6.10 Roles of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
a) To support the capacity building of staff and farmers including behavior change communication.
b) To support Monitoring and Evaluation activities
c) To provide advisories to stakeholders
d) Creation of public awareness on agribusiness development.
e) To mount advocacy for Good Agriculture Governance (GAG), for increased
budgetary allocations, as well as on programme and project articulation.

6.11 Resource Mobilization
All stakeholders will be involved in mobilizing resources towards the implementation of this policy. Resources here refer to: financial; human; technical; material.

6.12. Legislation
In order to establish a sustainable framework in line with objectives of this policy, critical and mandatory provisions of the policy shall be legislated so as to ensure policy continuity and stability.
The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of Niger State Agriculture Policy performance consists of tracking human, physical, and financial resources and recording how they are converted into outputs (goods and services delivered through the policy implementation) and, in turn, into outcomes and impacts. Timely and regular reporting provides input for project planning and budgeting and may also contribute evidence and learning to improve the performance of the policy and subsequent periodic review.

The M&E plan for the policy serves two main purposes. First, it highlights the key features of the Results Framework, including tools, outputs, outcomes, indicators, impacts and information requirements; second, it explains how they are applied at various stages of the policy implementation by the supervising entities.

To better understand the scope of the challenges in agricultural development in Niger State and to measure progress in addressing them, parameters in crops, livestock and fisheries production, soil capability and suitability, as well as the scope of mechanization, food processing and preservation; and marketing must be measured on a regular basis. This requires the collection and collation of data on the objectives and targets in the policy and the priority areas of focus. This data must be analyzed and professionally managed. A robust results framework and M&E will be put in place for implementation and results reported in a timely and efficient manner. In addition, transparent feedback loops will be established with implementing units, stakeholders, and the public.

Monitoring and Evaluation will help extract information from past and on-going activities that can be used as basis for programmatic fine tuning re-orientation and planning. The overarching role of M&E in the policy and eventual strategies will be to provide a tactical
link with the objectives, thrusts and targets of the policy and to ensure that policy actions are dynamic in responding to the agricultural development needs of the State. The following will be generated:

a) Key performance indicators and targets
b) Coverage of all interventions and services to farmers and farmer groups
c) Coverage of all aspect of production, processing and marketing
d) Effects of agricultural policy instruments, strategies and inputs on production, processing and marketing outcomes which will inform the process of redesigning sector policy instruments and strategies.

7.2. Monitoring
Monitoring in this policy would be a continuous function using the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and stakeholders in on-going interventions with indications of the extent of progress, achievement of objectives and use of allocated funds. Monitoring of activities in policy implementation will be done through routine collection, collation, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data, using standardized tools. The frequency of monitoring will be as applicable.

7.3 Evaluation
This would be a selective exercise that should attempt to systematically and objectively assess progress towards the achievement of outcomes. Evaluation in policy implementation will be done at the formative stage, mid-term and end of policy life-cycle, and and surveys.

7.4 Results Framework
Result Framework for this policy is defined in terms of inputs, output targets, outcome targets and impacts through appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as in the State's MTSS for Agriculture. Targets are defined for both the outcomes and outputs which become the results to be achieved through the implementation of the policy.

As in the MTSS 2016-2018, the outcomes deliverables and their targets are presented in Annex 1, while the outputs deliverables and their targets are presented in Annex 2. These (adapted from 2016-2018 MTSS) are expected to be achieved from 2020-2024 and will be used for monitoring and performance evaluation in the course of implementing the Agriculture Policy for the State.

The main strategies include: intensification of irrigation practices; encouragement of the adoption of modern agricultural methods and technologies; and adoption of AI technique to boost livestock production. This section seeks to break the main strategies/strategic directions down to specific projects.

7.4.1 Inputs
Inputs are those resources that go into the policy implementation at the start-up phase or during the implementation, to help the intervention achieve objectives. The inputs (e.g. number and qualifications of personnel, the financial resources, the institutional set-up, timing etc.) must meet the objectives.
7.4.2. Outputs
These are all the goods and services that will be delivered to the target population in the policy. Policy implementation inputs have to be transformed into outputs. The quantity and quality of the outputs is very important. For example, if one program input is the training of Extension Agents (EAs), an output would be the number of EAs trained. The quality of the training should also be “adequate” otherwise just training them would not effectively meet the needs of farmers.

7.4.3 Outcomes
Outcomes are changes in behavior and practices as a result of policy programmes and activities. The outputs, if of the right quality and quantity should produce a desired outcome. The skills of the extension workers should change and if they have the right messages with motivation to farmers, the poor agronomic practices of the farmers should change in order to improve productivity and yield. The change in skills of the EAs or the change in practices of the farmers is the outcome of the program.

Information requirements for the key outcomes to be monitored will include:

i. Crop production including yield per hectare. Commodity yield per unit area, total production of State per commodity & hectare coverage per commodity.

ii. Service delivery including extension demonstration.
   ♦ Number & Type of technologies disseminated.
   ♦ Number of Farm visits carried out.
   ♦ Number & type of demonstrations
   ♦ Adoption rate.
   ♦ Number of farm facilities reached.

iii. Changes in practices and adoption level

iv. Mechanization coverage of the State
   ♦ Area of coverage of mechanization.
   ♦ Number of farmers reached by mechanization, segregated.

v. Number of farmers registered and categorized under value chain and gender.

vi. Number of registered farmers accessing inputs categorized into:
   ♦ Agrochemicals (e.g. fertilizers)
   ♦ Quality and quantity of seeds
   ♦ Accessibility to credits
   ♦ Accessibility to better markets

vii. Number of and size fish farms established

viii. Increase in the number of livestock categorized into types and species

ix. Prevalence and incidence of vaccine preventable diseases

x. Reactivation of irrigation projects by number and hectarages

xi. No. and sizes of private ranches established per agricultural zone

xii. No. of PPP programmes/Projects

xiii. Extent of soil mapping and coding of the State

xiv. Number of processing facilities established by agricultural commodity value chains

xv. Number of specialized produce markets established

xvi. Quality of export-bound produce
7.4.4 Impacts
In this policy, this represents the ultimate effects of the policy action on the beneficiaries – the change in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – or what difference it has made in the life of the personnel, the farmer or farmer groups. A set of KPIs have been identified and will form the basis for the Niger Agricultural Management Information System (N-AMIS) of the policy. Indicators will comprise of mix of input, output and outcomes. The selection of indicators to be tracked will be based on what is practical, result oriented and what will strengthen interventions.

7.5. Assumptions
These represent external factors, influences, situations or conditions which, though largely beyond the control of policy implementations, are necessary for policy implementation success. For example, in extension delivery, it is assumed that field workers who are trained will understand the training and be motivated to do what they have been trained to do. However, it is not certain that this will actually happen. Accordingly, it is necessary to make assumptions explicit and list them in the framework as elements to be monitored or evaluated. It is however pertinent that the poor agronomic practices of the farmers should change in order to improve productivity.

7.6. Programme Logical Framework
In implementing the policy and subsequent strategies, implementers will be encouraged to design programme logic models–Programme road maps highlighting:

- How intervention is expected to work
- The sequence of activities
- How desired outcomes are achieved
  Monitoring and Evaluation will be done at three levels:
- Field and farming-community level, monitoring (routine) to Improve service delivery.
- Institutional, programme and project based monitoring coverage, to strengthen agricultural systems.
- Real time Monitoring and Evaluation Impact.

7.7. Policy Periodic Review
An efficient and constant feedback loop is critical to ensuring that the policy is adhered to in order to make timely decisions on what is working, what is not, and what needs to change. A periodic review of policy implementation shall be undertaken to monitor and track progress towards meeting targets. A report shall be produced which will provide an update to all stakeholders as to the progress of implementation, disseminating lessons learned and opportunities for moving forward.
DOCUMENTS CONSULTED


Niger State Development Partners (2 014); Briefing Notes; 45p.

Niger State of Nigeria Agricultural Policy Notes (2016); 8p


**STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED**

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Directorate of Agricultural Services, Planning Research and Statistics)
2. Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
3. Niger State Agricultural and Mechanization Development Authority
4. Niger State One Stop Investment Centre
6. College of Agriculture Mokwa
7. IFAD Value Chain Development Programme, Niger State
8. All Farmers Association of Nigeria(AFAN)
9. Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria
10. Agricultural Graduate Association of Nigeria (AGAN)
11. Niger State Supply Company, Minna
### Annex 1

**Summary of Levels of State Goals, Sector Goals, Programme and Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Goal</th>
<th>Sector Goal</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Accelerated agricultural modernization for increased productivity in a diverse range of products in order to attain food security, self-sufficiency, employment and sustainable income generation in the State and the country at large (Source: MTDP Niger State 2015-2019)</td>
<td>1. Achieve food security and increase current production levels of all agricultural products.</td>
<td>1.1 Irrigation development</td>
<td>1.1 Increased Hectarages of land area cultivated under irrigation practices for all year round agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overarching goal of the Agricultural Sector as articulated in Vision 3:2020 is as follows:</td>
<td>1.2 Crop production</td>
<td>1.2 Increased yield and availability of food and cash crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To take advantage of the diverse agricultural resources of the State to develop an Agricultural Sector that guarantees food security, reduction of rural poverty, facilitate Agro-Industrial growth towards accelerated economic development of the State by the year 2020. The sector shall be private sector driven, however, with government creating an enabling environment through Public Private Partnership (PPP). (Niger State Vision 3:2020)</td>
<td>1.3 Livestock production</td>
<td>1.3 Increased livestock population of quality animals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Improve post-production management and promote value addition of high value crops through private sector participation in agro-processing activities so as to expand employment, minimize post-harvest losses, enhance farmers' incomes and stabilize prices of agricultural products.</td>
<td>1.4 Fisheries production</td>
<td>1.4 Increased fish production and availability to consumers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Agro-processing and marketing development</td>
<td>2.1 Minimization of post-harvest losses, enhancement of farmers' incomes, stabilization of prices of agricultural products and expansion of employment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Buffer Stock</td>
<td>3. Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Agricultural Extension service delivery system.</td>
<td>3.1 Agricultural technology generation and transfer</td>
<td>3.1 Increased number of farmers adopting improved Agricultural technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Agricultural manpower skill development</td>
<td>3.2 Increased agricultural manpower productivity, efficiency and effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 Agricultural inputs Distribution</td>
<td>3.3 Increased access to quality agricultural inputs by farmers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 Agricultural surveys</td>
<td>3.4 Availability of reliable and current/updated agricultural data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Facilitate rural development through the provision of appropriate infrastructures to enhance farmers' access to inputs and markets and stem rural-urban migration.</td>
<td>4.1 Rural feeder roads and river crossings construction and rehabilitation</td>
<td>4.1 Improved inter communities, inter-farms and inter-markets links</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 Farm machinery and construction equipment acquisition, refurbishment and</td>
<td>4.2 Increased availability of farm machinery, construction equipment and rehabilitated AEHCs to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Annex 2

**Outcome Deliverables, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Baseline and Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Deliverable</th>
<th>KPI of Outcome</th>
<th>Baseline (i.e. Value of Outcome in 2018)</th>
<th>Outcome Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Increased hectarages of land area cultivated under irrigation practices for all year round agricultural production</td>
<td>Hectares cultivated under irrigation practices</td>
<td>Two drip irrigation systems to be replicated in the two zones of the State, 340 tube wells, 2HR 3 lister pumps to be provided in selected Irrigation Schemes and 2700 ha of land to be irrigated through government support</td>
<td>Additional 300 tube wells, 2HR 3 lister pumps and 5000 ha of land to be irrigated through government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Increased yield and availability of food and cash crops</td>
<td>The yield per hectare of various crops e.g. maize, sorghum, rice, cassava, yam, cowpea, groundnut, etc.</td>
<td>The current yield per hectare in Metric Tonsure as follows:</td>
<td>Yield per hectare to increase as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassava, yam, cowpea, groundnut, etc.</td>
<td>Maize=1.275MT/ha, Sorghum=1.315MT/ha, Rice=3.123MT/ha</td>
<td>Additional 300 tube wells, 2HR 3 lister pumps and 5000 ha of land to be irrigated through government support</td>
<td>Additional 300 tube wells, 2HR 3 lister pumps and 5000 ha of land to be irrigated through government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Increased livestock population of quality animals</td>
<td>Livestock population figures of animals at 2019 as follows:</td>
<td>Produce the following population of livestock:</td>
<td>Produce the following population of livestock:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle, 2,289,634, Goats, 2,559,676, Sheep, 7,225,789 (DPRS)</td>
<td>Cattle, 2,821,646, goats, 2,576,289, sheep and 7,665,838 poultry to be available.</td>
<td>Cattle, 2,501,944, goats, 2,653,577 sheep and 7,895,813 poultry to be available.</td>
<td>Cattle, 2,577,002, goats, 2,733,184 sheep and 8,132,687 poultry to be available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rehabilitation of AEHCs</th>
<th>Reduced drudgery in agricultural practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Ensure effective and efficient management of the finances, administration, human resources and general affairs of Niger State’s Agricultural Sector for optimal attainment of its mandates.</td>
<td>5.1 Administration, Finance/Accounts, Human Resources &amp; Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Planning, Research &amp; Statistics (PRS)</td>
<td>5.1 Effective and efficient management of Agricultural Sector’s resources, (human, financial and material)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Quality policy planning, research and data management for decision making</td>
<td>5.2 Quality policy planning, research and data management for decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Increased fish production and availability to consumers</td>
<td>Quantity of fish produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Agricultural Financing</td>
<td>Number of farmers having access to agricultural financing under NSCACS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Minimization of post-harvest losses, enhancement of farmers' incomes, stabilization of prices of agricultural products and expansion of employment</td>
<td>Percentage reduction in post-harvest losses of major agricultural products including crops, livestock and fisheries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage change in farmers' income from agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 All year round grains availability and market price stability</td>
<td>Number of months that grains are sufficiently available in the market in a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Increased number of farmers adopting improved agricultural technologies</td>
<td>Number of farmers adopting improved technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Increased agricultural manpower productivity, efficiency and effectiveness</td>
<td>Level of agricultural manpower productivity, efficiency and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Increased access to quality agricultural inputs by farmers</td>
<td>Number/proportion of farmers having access to quality agricultural inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Availability of reliable and current/updated agricultural data</td>
<td>Regularity and quality of Village Listing Survey (VLS) report produced. Regularity and quality of Agricultural production survey (APS) report produced. Regularity and quality of Market Price Survey (MPS) report produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Improved inter-communities, inter-farms and inter-markets links</td>
<td>Kilometer of rural roads and number of river crossings rehabilitated/constructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Increased availability of farm machinery and construction equipment to reduced drudgery in agricultural practices</td>
<td>Number of functional farm machinery and construction equipment available for use by farmers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Effective and efficient management of Agricultural Sector’s resources, (human, financial and material)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level of effectiveness and efficiency of the management of the Agricultural Sector’s resources (human, financial and material).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Quality policy planning, research and data management for decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of policy planning, research and data management for decision making in the Agricultural Sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>