

## **Project Title:**

# **ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY, WOMEN AND YOUTHS EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA.**

### **Sectorial Area of Intervention and Policy Objectives**

- Inclusive economic growth for food security and nutrition
- Create opportunities for decent jobs and secure livelihoods and poverty alleviation.
- Promote inclusive and sustainable business practices

The titled project *Enhancing Food Security, Women and Youths Empowerment for Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria* is aimed at promoting food security in Nigeria and Northern Nigeria in particular to develop solutions to food insecurity that bedevil the entire Northern Nigeria due to socio-political unrest, religious, banditry and kidnapping. This greatly affected the socio-economic lives of the entire population of northern with poverty rate of 71.40% in northwest zone, 60.70% in north-central zone and 60.10% in the northeast zone ([www.kingmakers.ng/2021](http://www.kingmakers.ng/2021)).

Food insecurity exists when people are undernourished as a result of the physical unavailability of food, their lack of social or economic access to adequate food. Food insecure people are those whose food intake falls below their minimum energy requirements as well as those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from an inadequate or unbalanced diet or from the body's inability to use food effectively because of infection or disease.

Famine and hunger are both rooted in food insecurity. Food insecurity can be categorized as either chronic or transitory, chronic food insecurity translates into high degree of vulnerability to famine and hunger, ensuring food security presupposes the elimination of that vulnerability. Chronic insecurity is similar to undernourishment and is related to poverty existing mainly in poor countries. No problems can be solved unless its causes are known: therefore, knowing the causes of food insecurity will help us to locate the solutions.

Gender inequality is a major cause of hunger and poverty. Food security can be a major concern for people who are incapable of or denied access to participation in labour - formal, informal or agricultural. In 2009, the UN estimated that 60 percent of the worlds chronically hungry people are women and girls, 98% of which live in developing nations, when women have income, substantial evidence indicates that the income is more likely to be spent on food and children's needs. Women are generally responsible for food selection and preparation and for the care and feeding of children (Otaha, 2013). Women play many roles in land use, production, distribution, processing, marketing accessing, trading and food availability. They often work as unpaid and self-employed workers on and off farm employees, entrepreneurs, traders, providers of services and caretakers of children and elderly, women farmers represent more than a quarter of the world population, comprising on average 43 percent of the agricultural workforces, ranging from 20 percent in Latin America to 50 percent in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The ethnic or religious conflicts have devastating effects on the economic activities especially food production in the areas that they take place. Conflicts here do not necessarily mean physical fighting of wars. It means a disarticulated country or society that is experiencing structural violence without official declaration of war such as pervasive poverty, oppression of the poor by the rich, police brutality, intimidation of ordinary people by those in power, oppression of women and children and monopolization of resources and power by some sections of the society. It will be wrong to say there is peace in such a country like Nigeria where Boko Haram and other sects are threatening the unity of the country. Consequently, it is quite possible not to have peace even when there is no war (Oke Ibeanu, 2009).

There is no gainsaying the fact that armed banditry has become one of the greatest threats confronting the peace and security of Nigeria. This is so because, it is usually accompanied with cattle rustling, kidnapping, rape, assassination and the wanton destruction of lives and property. Thus, this problem has been related to the negative impact of climate change, population explosion, high rate of poverty, youth's unemployment and underemployment, illiteracy, limited security presence, porosity of Nigeria's land borders and ungoverned spaces all of which are speedily leading to system failure. Rural banditry in Nigeria for instance, started as resource-conflict between two resource users which are the mobile pastoralists and sedentary farmers, over grazing land for livestock and land for agricultural production. No wonder, the International Crisis Group (2020), argued that, the security challenge in the North West has its root from long-running

competition over land and water resources between mostly Fulani herders and mainly Hausa farmers, both of whom have mobilized armed groups, “bandits” for Fulani pastoralist and “vigilante” for the Hausa farmers in the name of protection (ICG, 2019).

They argued further that these ethnic groups decry failure of the government to protect them and therefore insist on self-protection. These ethnic militias have the backing of ethnic and community, religious and traditional leaders, who justify their actions and shield them from facing the full wrath of the law (ICG, 2019). Their argument is in line with the position of (Abdullahi, 2019) who posited that rural banditry is a form of identity conflict, which affects social relations among different ethnic groups in West Africa. Regrettably, Nigeria is currently the epic center of banditry in West African Sub Region, with North West and North Central taking the center stage.

Consequently, Katsina and Zamfara states are the worst hit being the theatres of attacks in all these. The nefarious activities of armed bandits which began about a decade ago in the Northern region of Nigeria seem to have escalated and have taken a more dangerous dimension with the use of sophisticated weapons of warfare such as AK-47 riffles, Small Arms and Light Weapons among others. Armed banditry has thus become a recurrent feature in several communities in northern Nigeria, where residents can no longer sleep at night with their two eyes closed. These have resulted in loss of human lives, disability of some victims, displacement of people from their ancestral homes, looting of farm produce and rustling of cattle. Government’s efforts to curtail the menace of armed banditry through the use of military operations in extreme cases, and the adoption of negotiation strategy in some cases, have not really yielded the desired results as the situation seems to have gone out of control.

Presently, there is improvement in the general security situation in northern due to combing effort by federal, state and local government to stop insurgency, crime, drug abuse and banditry. Such that, the Nigerian army, police were equipped with defense mechanism to combat and stop all the insecurities that lead to food insecurity.

This mandated the engagement of this research to address food insecurity and nutritious growth in Nigeria. The target group are to be engaged in irrigation farming, tailoring, business centre entrepreneurship, make-up and hair saloon, cow fattening and milk packaging, poultry farming, fish farming, restaurants services and stock marketing investment.

The project will work with local actors to identify market-driven business models for food security development. It will contribute to the establishment of stock market investment to meet market requirements and buyers' standards, allowing farmers to improve their livelihoods through access to stock exchange investment that promote shareholding and sustainability of the project. These will facilitate responsive to wholesale and retail business entrepreneurship among members, will undertake conditioning and processing and also serve as a training facility and Centre of Excellence.

They will provide an avenue where we use the profit gained from our collective effort in our investment such as agro-allied activity, businesses, stock investment to empower the members for the subsequent farming period. This will go a long way in creating a shareholding investment where members will benefit from each according to the profit realized.

In addition, the project will create a database profiling farmers and employ GIS-based mobile telephony to connect farmers to extension workers, the facilities and other local markets. The driving force of the project will be the empowerment of capable young women and men from local communities in the seven (7) states of northwest geo-political zone (Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States). All project activities will thus be carried by a core team of 12 locally-selected young facilitators who will benefit from a one month vocational traineeship as extension workers, comprising training in technical skills, business management and a mentoring programme. They will in turn train at least 4,500 beneficiaries using the Farmer Field School Methodology throughout the duration of the project, under the supervision of the Project Management Team.

The project aims to further improve efficiencies in the value chain, establishing a storage facility such as warehouse and big stores for safe keep-up of farm produced. This will empower the project to manage the group by providing them with support materials such as improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticide and shareholding. The project will take an active approach to promoting entrepreneurship and new start-ups, by providing technical support to at least 1,000 local young women and men and nominal grants awarded on a competitive basis to those showing the most promise throughout the course of training activities.

Finally, at a higher level, the project will empower the group to be active in food production that will eradicate food insecurity such that there is sustainable attachment between the project management and local young women and youths for sustainable in food production.

### **Forward - Backward Integration Model**

Using a forward - backward integration model, the project will optimize agro-food value chains, improve efficiencies and engage and attract private investment in the agribusiness sector.

An illustration of the forward- backward integration strategy is shown below:

To quickly summarize, the primary objectives of the partnership are to:

- Promote employment, improve livelihoods, and empower young women and men – at least 2,500 people will benefit directly and up to 5,000,000 people in local communities in seven (7) states of northwest geo-political zone (Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States) area indirectly.
- Identify and assist farmers in overcoming bottlenecks to increase agro-production, achieve economies of scale and access markets.
- Put necessary infrastructure into place in a cost-effective manner – including currently non-existent aggregation, storage and distribution facilities, ensuring volume and quality through better post-harvest handling, food safety throughout the value chain and high quality products and packaging.
- Improve food security and nutrition – by increasing the quantity and quality of fruits and vegetables available in the market place, reducing post-harvest losses and recovering and comprehensively utilizing food waste, thereby contributing to improved food security and nutrition and allowing for further income generating opportunities
- Develop and disseminate a replicable model for improving and increasing production through targeted infrastructure investments to food security and nutrition in the seven (7) states of northwest geo-political zone (Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States).

## **Duration:**

Five (5) years development plan

## **Project Coordinator/Team Leader**

**Muazzam Musa Iro**

Phone No. +2347040803758

Email: [auwal1191@gmail.com](mailto:auwal1191@gmail.com)

## **Project Partners:**

**Okechukwu Oji**

Phone No. +2347033905291

Email: [okechukwuojio@gmail.com](mailto:okechukwuojio@gmail.com)

**Ann Obiageli Okereke**

Phone No. +2347033948770

Email: [gelyokereke@gmail.com](mailto:gelyokereke@gmail.com)

**Mamman Halliru Bakori**

Phone No. +2348081745577 and +2347033449546

Email: [hallirubakorim@gmail.com](mailto:hallirubakorim@gmail.com)

## **Local Partners:**

- AFCON
- Women and Youths Groups
- Local private companies if necessary

# Project budget:

Project Partners:

State Government

Local NGOs and Women's Groups

Local private companies as necessary

Project Budget Breakdown:

<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
6 Staff and other Personnel Costs	\$405,366.47
Supply of Agric-materials and Commodities	\$457,621.00
3 Tractors, 3 Utility Vehicles, 2Generators and Furniture for 2 Co-ordinating Centres	\$148,890.00
Contractual Services (Fuel, Bills, & 6 Drivers)	\$330,729.00
Travels & Local Running	\$300,913.00
Transfers and Grants Counterparts	\$554,869.00
General Operating and Other Direct Costs (Landed Property)	\$271,991.15
Indirect Support Costs (Labour, Storage & Transports)	\$98,131.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,568,510.62</b>

## ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY, WOMEN AND YOUTHS EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA

Aggregate amount requested and broken down by UNDG Harmonized Budget

Category: SDG-F Budget Sahara Group FAO ILO ITC

<b>Responsibility &amp; Partners</b>	<b>Project Co-ordinators</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Extension Workers</b>	<b>P.A. &amp; Statistician</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Staff and other personnel costs	\$245,379.47	\$100,000.00	\$39,987.00	\$20,000.00	<b>\$405,366.47</b>
Supply of Agro-Allied materials & Commodities	\$400,000.00	\$57,621.00			<b>\$457,621.00</b>
3 Tractors, 3 Utility Vehicles, 2 Generator set and Furniture @ 2 Co-ordinating Centres	\$63,274.20	\$83,942.07	\$1,673.73		<b>\$148,890.00</b>
Contractual Services (Fuel, Bills, Media Report, Internet & 6 Drivers)		\$225,473.00	105,256.00		<b>\$330,729.00</b>
Travel & Local Running	\$180,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$50,913.00		<b>\$300,913.00</b>
Transfers and Grants Counterparts	\$300,000.00	\$154,869.00	\$100,000.00		<b>\$554,869.00</b>
General Operating & Purchase of Landed Property (Where Necessary)	\$142,922.76	\$35,961.39	\$93,107.00		<b>\$271,991.15</b>
Indirect Support Services Costs		\$58,011.00	\$40,120.00		<b>\$98,131.00</b>

**Grand TOTAL = \$405,366.47 + \$457,621.00 + \$148,890.00 + \$330,729.00 + \$300,913.00 + \$554,869.00 + \$271,991.15 + \$98,131.00 =**

**TOTAL - \$2,568,510.62 [ Two Million, Five Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand, Five Hundred and Ten, Six-Two Dollar.**



# ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY, WOMEN AND YOUTHS EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA.

**RESEARCH SCHEDULED**

**08<sup>th</sup> APRIL – 26<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2026 (3 Year Duration)**

**EXPENSE RESEARCH GRANT**

**\$2,568,510:62**

S/N	ACTIVITY	DESTINATION	DATE	EXPENDITURE
1.	Project Management Team, Extension Services, Personal Assistant	Duty Allowance	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May, 2024	<b>\$405,366.47</b>
2.	Supply of Agro-Allied materials & Commodities (Improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides)	WACOT Ltd Katsina State	Thursday 13 – 24 May, 2024	<b>\$457,621.00</b>
3.	4 Tractors, 3 Utility Vehicles, 2 Generator set and Furniture @ 2 Co-ordinating Offices	Katsina and Kaduna	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May, 2024	<b>\$148,890.00</b>
4.	Contractual Services (Rental of Storage facilities, Fuel, Bills, Media Report, Internet & 6 Drivers	Katsina, Kaduna and Kano States	9 – 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 2024.	<b>\$330,729.00</b>
5.	Travel and Local Running	Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi and Gombe states	For three (3) years	<b>\$300,913.00</b>
6.	Training on Entrepreneurship Skills for Women and Youths and Grant Counterparts	Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi and Gombe states	Three Year Duration (Batch 1,2,&3)	<b>\$554,869.00</b>
7.	General Operating & Purchase/Hiring of Landed Property (Where Necessary)	Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi and Gombe states	Two Year Duration (8 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 & 16 <sup>th</sup> April, 2025	<b>N3,000:00</b>
8.	Indirect Support Services Costs (With Support Allowance)	Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Bauchi and Gombe states	Three Year Duration	<b>N100,000:00</b>
9.	Staff and other personnel costs	Co-ordinating Offices	10 <sup>TH</sup> – 18 <sup>TH</sup> OCT., 2022	<b>N200,000:00</b>
10.	Supply of Agro-Allied materials & Commodities	PREMIER SEEDS,& WACCOT	THURSDAY 15-12-2022	<b>N75,000:00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b><u>\$2,568,510:62</u></b>		

## **Project Description**

### **Background and rationale:**

The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria has achieved consistently high rates of economic growth of around 7% over the last decade yet, at the same time, approximately 61% (2023) of the population still lives in absolute poverty and the country ranks 153<sup>rd</sup> out of the 187 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) for 2023. Food security has become a challenge for many countries across Sub-Saharan Africa. From self-sufficiency in the 1960s, Nigeria became and has remained a net food importer since the 1980s. Notably, it is the largest net importer of wheat in Africa with an average of importation 456 to 500 millions metric tonnes to meet its consumption needs, against local production wheat figure of 670,000 metric tonnes in 2019. With exchange rate fluctuations and increasing fuel prices, it is thus also vulnerable to external shocks.

The Government of Nigeria has, for several years, pursued a policy of economic diversification away from the oil and gas sector, which remains the largest on the continent, and instead placing greater emphasis on agriculture (and allied industries) due to the widely-recognized multiplier effects the sector has on rural economic growth. In its Vision 2024, the government focuses on an agricultural transformation to achieve the multiple goals of food security, sustainable development and adaptation to climate change. The sector has great potential for growth and improved efficiencies. Nigeria has 84 million hectares of arable land but at present only 40% is cultivated. Agriculture accounts for an estimated 70% of national employment, but only 22% of GDP, thus indicating a significant potential for productivity gains. The obstacles to this however, are complex. Land ownership is fragmented, with tenure passed from generation to generation and agriculture is overwhelmingly rain-fed, with less than 15% of cultivated land benefiting from irrigation, resulting in low levels of productivity. The effects of climate change must be considered, including changing/erratic patterns of rainfall and higher temperatures – the World Bank estimates climate change could result in falls in output of up to 30%. Inadequate infrastructure, particularly poor rural roads and limited access to electricity, also poses obstacles to achieving scale. Small holders struggle due to a lack of good quality inputs, insufficient access to extension services and a lack of storage facilities and local agro-processing.

## **Youth Employment**

Nigeria has a high fertility rate- more than five children per woman- and a young population, with the median age being only 19 years of age. The country faces the challenge of maintaining of sufficient rates of growth to absorb all school leavers entering the market, an estimated eight million annually. At present, youth unemployment is high, with an estimated 50 million young people out of work.

Unemployment among those aged 18-34 years of age is higher in rural areas and this has been attributed to rapid population growth and inadequate infrastructure, poor teacher training and absenteeism in rural areas, often due to farm work. According to OCHA, approximately 20 million people have been displaced as a result of conflict in the North, with wide-ranging impacts on agriculture and economic activity. High unemployment has been linked to insurgency and economic growth and the creation of employment and income-generating activities are recognized as part of the long-term solution.

With regard to the occupational safety and health aspect, young workers involved in farm work are generally enthusiastic, however, like other new and inexperienced workers, these young workers are more likely to be injured on the job if they don't receive adequate safety training and supervision. Some injuries have a lifelong impact and some are even fatal. Furthermore, on-the-job injuries can present a significant risk/cost to a business when they can be effectively mitigated/prevented through appropriate training.

## **Women in Agriculture in Nigeria**

According to the World Bank (2014), 60% of male-headed households and 44% of women-led households are engaged in agriculture. While 90% of all households produce their own staple foods, there is a considerable difference in capacities and access to land and inputs.

## **Financial Inclusion – Access to Credit**

Low financial inclusion has far-reaching implications for the agricultural sector and for livelihoods. An estimated 34.9 million adults, or 39.7% of the adult population, in Nigeria were “unbanked” in 2012. Empirical evidence shows this is closely linked to income levels, financial institutions’ requirements in terms of documentation and literacy rates. Total adult literacy was

51% in 2012, although the literacy rate among youth is higher, at 75.6% for men aged 15-24 and 58% for women in the same age group. Many farmers are thus unable to access credit through formal channels; those unable to call on personal networks must resort to informal markets which are also in turn a limiting factor to achieving economies of scale. The importance of the private sector in this particular regard and to the long-term growth of the sector cannot be underestimated.

The project will review the availability of affordable financial advisory services for farmers and agri-food enterprises in the area related to financing of responses to new agri-food market opportunities. Selected farmers and enterprises may be assisted in preparing proposals for financing and in coordinating the necessary local technical assistance in food safety and compliant production advice. If necessary, the project may meet with Nigerian Finance institutions to raise awareness of the project and its beneficiaries with a view to interesting institutions in financing project beneficiaries' growth.

### **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Agriculture**

With the gaps in knowledge, market information and the reach of extension services, ICT carries great potential for the agricultural sector in Nigeria. Mobile applications linked to a farmer and agri-food enterprise database that shows the GIS coordinates of farms and fields allow farmers to access many types of value-added services. For example, these applications can be used for one-way, two-way mass text communications and can link to other databases. They can reduce travel, isolation and transactional costs for information acquisition, permit market-compliant traceability, efficient organization of agriculture extension services and collections.

At present, some 300 extension workers serve approximately 1.8 million farmers in northwestern Nigeria and mobile phone penetration appears to be high in the project's operating area, which also suggests a good potential for deployment. FAO is conducting a three year pilot, Agricultural Market Information System (2021-2023), in Kaduna State targeting 300 local farmers. There are also already many offerings in mobile app technology and pilot projects in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to draw upon. The project will endeavor to take stock and identify solutions appropriate for the targeted beneficiaries.

## **Mainstreaming of Gender and Women's Empowerment:**

Many young women, particularly in rural areas, are traditionally engaged in unpaid family/ domestic work, with little access to skills development opportunities or employment services outside the home.

The increase in unemployment and underemployment rates between 2020 and 2023 were more marked for women than men. For instance, in 2019, 2.9% of males were unemployed while 17% were underemployed whereas for females, 5.6% and 18.1% were unemployed and underemployed, respectively. By 2023, 24.5% males were either unemployed or underemployed whereas 34.3% of females were either unemployed or underemployed.

The project will strive to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, ensuring the equal participation of men and women, foster mentoring, incoming-generating activities, access to micro-finance and a small grants to empower the target group with funds to diversify their investment opportunities. Thus, the project will provide financial support to any beneficiary ready to engage into small scales business that will increase their income to self-employed.

The proposed Stock Investment Cooperatives (SIC), is a proposal to introduce microfinance programme in to the project with a view to buy goods from farmers for storage and retrieval. This will protect their farm produce from damage and necessary disposal, therefore it is an opportunity for the farmers to get food security and retrieve their food items when necessary from the storage provide.

This will allow women to diversify their sources of income, improve their business and financial management skills and identify and access credit support from the project Stock Investment Cooperatives.

The project will conduct a gender gap analysis to find out the challenges women's participation in the sector and how to effectively target women in identifying beneficiaries. Technical training will also incorporate training on gender and the importance of women's roles in the communities. All data on beneficiaries will be gender-disaggregated.

**Sustainability:****Climate change resilience and environmental sustainability**

The project will introduce farmers to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) to optimize their use of water, agricultural inputs and post-harvest handling, thereby improving their environmental sustainability and promoting climate change resilience. A reduction in post-harvest losses will mean savings for farmers in terms of in factor inputs, labour and increased sustainability.

Facilities will be located close to sites of production and, with the creation of Stock Investment Cooperatives (SIC) farmers will be able to sell their produce and strengthen local markets in the area. The food storage facilities will provide food security to any farmer willing to keep his produce in the store, and at the same time using the same produce to buy share in Stock Investment Cooperatives (SIC) in order to have income and to empower his local entrepreneurship business.

Women participants will have the opportunity to get financial support to establish small and medium scales business such as restaurants, poultry farming, beauty and hair dressing saloon, tailoring, cow fattening and milk packages, cosmetics and textile businesses. The women will be trained and guided for establishing the entrepreneurship business.

Storage areas will be hired ensuring appropriate control of ambient conditions to prevent losses due to dehydration and deterioration in quality.

Apart from storage, management and occupational safety and health, good recordkeeping, including of financial records, production, quality assurance and sales will be maintained so that the facilities are able to understand and improve on their performance.

**Targeted Groups:**

The project will directly benefit 2,500 people in the first year in Katsina State. In the second year, the project will be expanded to cover Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa States. This includes 4,500 local farmers, small agri-business owners, SMEs, etc. and their immediate families, in Katsina State as, through improved knowledge of sustainable agricultural practices, improved yields and reduced post-harvest losses.

In identifying participants for the traineeships, the project will prioritize capable young women and men, 18-35 years of age from local communities. Another 500 young women and men from low-income households will be assisted in identifying and creating business plans and developing the technical skills needed to implement them. Such beneficiaries may include farmers, tailors, cobblers, technicians (mechanics, electricians etc.), and other petty traders and vendors. Of this initial group, 100 will be selected on a competitive basis to receive a small nominal grant to implement their plans. Moreover, improved capacities of market places in the Katsina will help contribute to local economic development and improved livelihoods of local communities.

### **Regions of Intervention:**

The project will be first implemented in Katsina State, before the rest of the remaining six (6) states North-West Geo-Political Zone Nigeria, where government statistics indicate that poverty is the second-highest in the country, after North-East Nigeria. In this regard, the World Food Programme (2023) notes that the North-West and North-East regions have the highest incidence of vulnerability and food insecurity in Nigeria and are also most vulnerable to droughts.

Household sizes, with an average of 6-7 members, are larger than the national average of 5.77 and a higher number of dependents means is an exacerbating factor in food insecurity and poverty.

Located on the Zobe Dam in Katsina, Jibia Dam in Jibia, Mairuwa Dam in Funtua and Sokoto Rima River Basin Development, a tributary of the Niger River, Kaduna State, with its rail and road infrastructure, is a trade center and a major transportation hub for the surrounding agricultural areas. Katsina State has a population of over nine million people and its capital is one of the most important cities in Nigeria due to its place in the history of the political development of the country.

The Katsina State Government considers the development of the agricultural sector a high priority, has committed to empowering women and youth through agriculture and adopted a counterpart funding approach with the Bank of Agriculture to invest N1 billion (US\$ 5.02 million) through single digit interest (5%) loans. The state has successfully trained 7,650 youths and women under the SURE-P skills acquisition and empowerment program.

In recent years, the government has put in place infrastructure conducive to supporting agricultural development in Katsina State:

- Irrigation systems owned by the Federal Ministry of Water Resources.
- Access to water with the presence of a huge reservoir.
- Opportunities for farmers to lease portions of land from the Federal Ministry of Water Resources to grow various agricultural products.
- Access to electricity by local government authorities, which can easily be connected to the processing center.
- Good road networks which will facilitate smooth logistics for the farmers and ultimately for the distribution of processed goods to other locations for storage.

From interviews conducted by Sahara Group with farmers in September 2023, poor quality inputs (locally available pesticides were ineffective against pests), basic infrastructure, lack of storage facilities, lack of irrigation, off-takers to buy their crops and of credit/ loan facilities were all identified as the main challenges.

Moreover, through various scoping missions, Zobe Dam in Dutsin-ma, Katsina State was identified as the site for the project as it will benefit from the Zobe Dam irrigation project. The site is currently owned by the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and would be transferred into the ownership of the facilities once it is established. The site benefits from good access to water, including a large reservoir in close proximity. At present, farmers lease portions of land from their grandparents to grow various agricultural products and farmers also have access to irrigation services which ensure better agricultural yields.



## **Major Outcome of the Project**

The project aims to leverage innovative public-private partnerships for market-driven business models for agri-business development, establishing food storage facilities and retrieval which will employ a joint ownership model. It will contribute as follow:

1. **Improved Agricultural Productivity:** The project will play a pivotal role in bolstering agricultural productivity by introducing modern farming techniques, advanced irrigation systems, and high-quality seeds. This will lead to increase crop yields, enabling farmers to produce surplus food for both domestic consumption and export.
2. **Enhanced Food Distribution Channels:** A key outcome of this project is the improvement of food distribution channels. By establishing efficient storage facilities, facilitating transportation infrastructure, and implementing effective supply chain mechanisms, the project will ensure that food reaches the intended beneficiaries promptly and in adequate quantities.
3. **Promotion of Sustainable Farming Practices:** The project will encourage the adoption of sustainable farming practices, such as organic farming and agroecology. By minimizing the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, this initiative will prioritize the health of both consumers and the environment while safeguarding long-term food security.
4. **Empowered Local Farmers:** Through capacity-building programs and financial support, the project will empower women and youths, enabling them to engage medium and small scale businesses in the areas of poultry farming, tailoring, cow fattening and milk packages, cosmetics and textile material businesses, restaurants, woodwork and metal, digital transaction business, setting private primary schools for child care, chemist operation etc. This project will not only improved their livelihoods but also contribute to the overall resilience of the food system.
5. **Reduced Food Insecurity:** Perhaps the most crucial outcome of this project is the significant reduction in food insecurity across Nigeria. By empowering farmers to engage in a large scale farming, increase food availability, accessibility, and affordability and preserve and preserve and save about 50 millions Nigerians from over dependence on food related materials which amount to \$3,357,682,940 per annum.

6. Women empowerment on small scale business which meet market requirements and buyers' standards. With this development about 2,500 women and youths will benefit in the first year of trial to improve their livelihoods through access to new market strategy. Any profit generated from the project will be used to empower both women and youths to new entrepreneurship business that will give them self-employed.
7. In the second year of the project, about 50,000 beneficiaries will benefit through cooperative businesses with the first beneficiaries employing them for services and increase in their business ventures.
8. Stock Investment Cooperatives (SIC) will be introduced to all the registered beneficiaries who will seek financial support to improve their businesses.

## Annex

Below are the reference links showing challenges of Food Security and Possible Solutions in Nigeria;

1. Food Security: Nigerian Farmers Decry Lack Of Storage Facilities;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsLni7N3APM>
2. Threat to Food Security: Farmers, Traders in Northern Nigeria Lament Lack Of Storage Facilities; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS8JCvrWGNk>
3. FOOD INSECURITY: Farmer/herders clash and rising food insecurity across Northern Nigeria; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUvpRkCKPbk>
4. How can a food security crisis be avoided in northern Nigeria?:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kveWht8a4sc>
5. Nigeria seeks to increase grain production to address food security;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWtpZuSvT1g>
6. How Nigeria Can Achieve Food Security Amid Climate Change;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIsXC4TyZCQ>
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