## **Project: Empowering Women Farmers in Climate-Smart Agriculture (Niger State, Nigeria).**

1. **Project Idea & Goal (Map).**

This project targets 50 women farmers in Lado communities, located within the Agaie Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria. These communities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as erratic rainfall and droughts, which threaten their agricultural productivity and food security.

The project aims to empower these women farmers by training them in climate-smart agricultural practices (CSA). Climate-smart practices are techniques that help farmers adapt to changing weather patterns and improve their yields. By equipping women farmers with these skills, the project will enable them to ensure food security for their families and even generate additional income through increased harvests.

This focus on empowering women farmers is crucial because they often play a central role in the agricultural practices of these communities. By supporting this vulnerable group, the project contributes significantly to the overall well-being of Lado.

Below image shows a map of Nigeria highlighting Niger State. Agaie LGA is zoomed in, with Lado communities marked where the project is implemented.

A map of the country

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Fig.1.0: Nigeria map highlighting Agaie LGA, Niger State

A map with a blue pin on it

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Fig.2.0. Highlighting Agaie LGA in Niger State

**A map of a town

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Fig. 3.0. Highlighting Lado community in Agaie LGA, Niger State.

**2.0. Final Impact.**

The project aims to empower 50 women farmers in Lado communities, impacting an estimated 250 people including their families. To reach these participants, we'll establish a two-pronged approach:

* **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** We'll work with the Agaie Local Government Agricultural Development Authority (LGADA) to identify women farmers most in need of support and ensure the project aligns with local agricultural development goals.
* **Partnership with Women's Farmer Associations:** We'll partner with existing women's farmer associations in Lado. These associations will play a vital role in outreach and mobilization efforts, ensuring the project reaches the target participants and fosters a sense of community ownership.

Through this collaborative approach, the project will equip women farmers with the knowledge and resources to not only increase agricultural yields despite climate challenges but also enhance food security for their families and communities, and ultimately generate additional income through improved agricultural production.

**3.0. Project Activities.**

The project activities for Climate-Smart Agriculture for Food Security in Lado include:

**1. Needs Assessment**

To ensure the project directly addresses women’s needs, we'll begin with participatory workshops. These interactive sessions will allow us to understand their current agricultural practices, the challenges they face – like drought or limited resources – and their access to essential tools and knowledge. This vital information will guide the project's training modules, resource distribution, and overall approach, ensuring it effectively empowers the women farmers for long-term success.

**2. Climate-Smart Training**

The project will equip women farmers with the knowledge to combat climate challenges through a series of training modules. These modules will cover:

* **Drought-Resistant Crops:** Farmers will learn about selecting and cultivating crops best suited to withstand dry conditions, ensuring continued yields despite erratic rainfall.
* **Water Conservation Techniques:** Training will focus on water-saving irrigation methods and practices that maximize crop water use efficiency.
* **Soil Fertility Management:** Participants will gain valuable skills in maintaining and improving soil health, leading to increased productivity and reduced reliance on external fertilizers.
* **Basic Climate-Resilient Methodologies:** The training will introduce farmers to broader climate-resilient agricultural practices, empowering them to adapt their farming strategies to a changing climate.

**3. Seed & Resource Distribution**

To jumpstart the women farmers' adoption of climate-smart practices, the project will provide a critical resource package. This includes high-quality drought-resistant seeds specifically chosen for their suitability to the local climate. Additionally, fertilizer will be provided to enhance soil fertility and crop yields. Finally, small-scale irrigation tools will be distributed, empowering the women to manage water resources effectively and maximize crop growth even during dry periods. This comprehensive resource package will equip them for immediate success and encourage long-term application of climate-smart agricultural techniques.

**4. Demonstration Plots**

The project will establish demonstration plots within the communities, serving as a crucial learning ground for the women farmers. These plots will showcase climate-smart practices like planting drought-resistant crops and using water-saving irrigation techniques. By allowing participants to see these methods in action and compare them to traditional practices, the project fosters a deeper understanding of their effectiveness. This hands-on learning environment empowers the women to not only grasp the concepts but also witness the tangible benefits of climate-smart agriculture, motivating them to adopt these practices in their own fields.

**5. Mentorship Program**

To foster a supportive learning environment and ensure long-term knowledge retention, the project will establish a mentorship program. Experienced women farmers will be paired with project participants, creating a valuable knowledge-sharing network. These mentors can provide ongoing support, address individual challenges, and offer practical advice based on their experience. This peer-to-peer approach not only empowers participants but also fosters a sense of community and shared success, ensuring the women farmers have a reliable source of guidance beyond the project's formal training sessions.

**6. Farmer Learning Circles**

 By setting up regular meetings, a space for participants would be created to connect and share their experiences. This fosters a sense of community and allows them to learn from each other's successes and challenges. These meetings can be a platform for troubleshooting problems. As participants encounter difficulties, they can bring them to the group and benefit from the collective wisdom and support of others who may have faced similar issues. Over time, these regular interactions can solidify a strong support network, providing a valuable resource for participants as they navigate their shared journey.

**7. Monitoring & Evaluation**

* Monitoring progress: This involves keeping an eye on tasks, identifying roadblocks, and staying on schedule.
* Measuring success: This means regularly evaluating the project's outcomes to see if it's achieving the desired results.
* Incorporating feedback: Gathering feedback throughout the project lifecycle helps identify areas for improvement in future iterations.
* Fostering responsibility: Ensuring accountability by assigning clear ownership of tasks and setting deadlines fosters a sense of responsibility and keeps the project on track.

**4.0. Project Sustainability.**

* **Savings & Loan Group Formation:** By establishing a Savings & Loan Group (S&LG) within the women's farmer associations, the project creates a multi-pronged approach to financial empowerment. This group will provide financial literacy training, fostering responsible money management. Regular contributions will build a pool of funds for microloans, eliminating reliance on predatory lenders and allowing investment in seeds, fertilizer, or equipment. Consistent saving and loan repayments will also establish credit history, crucial for accessing future loans to grow their agricultural businesses. In essence, the S&LG equips the women with the knowledge and resources to become financially independent and invest in their farms' long-term success.
* **Cooperative Development:** To further empower the women farmers, the project will guide them in establishing a women-led agricultural cooperative. This cooperative will offer significant advantages: bulk purchasing of seeds and fertilizer at lower costs, collective marketing of their produce to secure better prices, and a stronger voice when negotiating with suppliers and buyers. This collaborative approach will not only improve their profitability but also strengthen their position within the agricultural market.
* **Knowledge Transfer:** Investing in the future, the project will train local agricultural extension workers in climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices. This ensures the women farmers have long-term support beyond the project's timeframe. These trained extension workers can then provide ongoing guidance, troubleshoot challenges, and introduce new CSA techniques, empowering the women to continue thriving with climate-resilient agricultural practices.
* **Advocacy:** To ensure long-term systemic change, the project will foster collaboration between the women's farmer associations and local NGOs. This partnership will create a powerful advocacy force. Together, they can lobby for government policies that specifically address the needs of women farmers in the region. These policies could focus on improved access to resources like land, credit, and training, while also promoting the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices. This collaborative advocacy effort can create a more supportive environment for women farmers to flourish and contribute to a more sustainable agricultural future.

**5.0. Budget Allocation (N16,159,625.57).**

* **Training & Workshops:** N4,000,000 (materials, facilitator fees, refreshments, transportation)
* **Seeds & Resources:** N4,500,000 (seeds, fertilizer, irrigation tools)
* **Demonstration Plots:** N2,000,000 (land rental, seeds, tools, maintenance)
* **Mentorship Program:** N1,500,000 (mentor stipends, transportation)
* **Farmer Learning Circles:** N1,000,000 (meeting space rentals, refreshments)
* **Monitoring & Evaluation:** N1,000,000 (data collection, surveys, reporting)
* **Administrative Costs:** N2,159,625.57 (office supplies, communication)

**Note:** The currency conversion (USD 10,000 to NGN 16,159,625.57) is based on an indicative exchange rate and may vary depending on the actual exchange rate at the time of project implementation.