



OXFAM

SYNTHESIS REPORT ON

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN NIGERIA

*For Small-Scale Women farmers in the 2024
Budget of the Federal Government of Nigeria:
Issues for Stakeholder Engagement towards
Food Security and Poverty Eradication*

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Executive Summary

Amid increasing realities of poverty and its gender dimensions in Nigeria, greater commitment and efficient allocation of public resources in the country's food sector using gender-responsive perspectives have been associated to enabling countries close gender gaps and improve livelihoods. Across Africa, country-specific evidence shows that gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) helps to deliver access to services that would help enhance better outcomes for women, men, and excluded groups in agriculture and across the value chain.

This is particularly so as empirical evidence shows that GRB serves a veritable tool for ensuring that projects and programmes that addresses the need of small holder farmers are captured in government budgets, implemented and properly oversighted.

This policy brief reviews existing studies on GRB and analyzes the 2024 budget for the Ministry of Agriculture to identify entry points for GRB and poverty eradication by prioritizing projects and programmes that address the needs of small-scale holder farmers. The study adopts desk review in preparing its synthesis report. It reviews existing studies and reports on GRB for other countries and draw lessons for Nigeria. The study found that:

- Nigeria has one of the highest proportion of women participation in the agricultural sector in Africa yet, ranks poorly in the global gender gap index. In 2022, Nigeria ranked 123 out of 146 countries with a score of 0.639, and 130 out of 146 countries in 2023 with a score of 0.637. Although there have been efforts over the years to enhance access to public service and address the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, the results have not been as desired. Studies such as Parpart (2014) attribute this unimpressive result to a gap between policy and its

implementation, a lack of institutional commitment and leadership, and resistance to gender mainstreaming.

- Whereas most studies on gender budget analyses are based on expenditure-side, such analysis could be extended to revenue-side analysis as well. However, because sources of revenue are also not directly linked with expenditure lines, gender-responsive analysis of the budget often focus on the expenditure-side. Analytical Context for conducting gender-aware assessment identified in the literature includes:

(i) analysis of the situation of women, men, girls, and boys in a given sector;

(ii) assessment of the extent to which policies address the gendered situation;

(iii) assessment as to whether budget allocations are adequate to implement gender-responsive policies;

(iv) assessment of short-term outputs of expenditure in order to evaluate how resources are actually spent and policies and programs implemented; and

(v) assessment of the long-term outcomes or impact expenditures might have.





1. Good practices for enabling policies and institutional setups for GRB

- i. A review of country experiences in Africa with gender responsive budgeting shows that countries where tangible progress has been made have anchored their GRB on a legislative framework and have coordination with the Ministry responsible for finance and budget with key government ministries such as agriculture at the national and subnational level (including local governments).
- ii. Gender mainstreaming should be prioritized by all sectors nationally and across all departments, decision, and units of the agriculture sector.
- iii. Also, there should be clearly established processes for the inclusion of smallholder women farmers in the budgeting process. Also, there is need to align the Renewed Hope 8-Point Agenda with the NDP (2021-2025). Assessment of the budget process in Nigeria shows that there is no clearly established processes for the inclusion of smallholder women farmers in the budgeting process.

At the preparatory stage, the call circular, which is a requirement of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2007, stipulates that gender responsive measures should be given priorities by the MDAs in coming up with the budget estimates. The document also makes reference to the National Development Plan (NDP), 2021 – 2025, and the Renewed Hope '8-Point' Agenda of the present administration. While these documents provides that gender and youth responsive approaches to programmes and projects in the budget should be given priority, the responsibility is on the MDAs to ensure that projects and programmes in their MDAs address the specific needs that women face in their sector. For the Ministry of Agriculture and Poverty Eradication, therefore, coming up with a strategy on how to engage small holder women farmers in every stage of the budget process is therefore vital. While the Ministry has its sectoral strategy, these policy documents are not deliberate on engaging smallholder women farmers across every stage of the budget process.

2. Experiences, needs and priorities of women, girls and men in the agriculture sector

- i. Empirical studies examines the experiences, needs and priorities of women, girls and men in the agriculture sector. However, these studies have not effectively influenced the level of project capture in the budget of the agriculture Ministry. The 2021 Non-State Actors (NSAs) Value Addition Biennial Review Toolkit (VABKIT) Report for Nigeria for the 3rd and 4th Biennial Review (BR) conducted focused group discussions among smallholder women farmers in 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory to implement the

Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). According to the report, small-holder women farmers in Nigeria have poor access to financial services such as credit (43%), and insurance (10.54%). As a result, smallholder women farmers resort to self-help (using group savings) to raise funds, but sustainability remains a challenge in a country where the agricultural sector is exposed to various challenges including floods and pastoralist-farmers conflict.

- ii. The needs of smallholder women and girls in agriculture are identified as access to land, livestock, or other agricultural resources; (a) management of agricultural resources;



(b) use of financial services and other inputs for agriculture; (c) access to education, knowledge, and skills related to agriculture; and (d) participation in agricultural labor activities. Women tend to be disadvantaged regarding all these dimensions. Addressing the challenges that smallholder farmers, especially women face, in the agricultural sector is also vital for mainstreaming GRB in the agriculture budget. Review of the literature identified the following factors that constrain small holder productivity in the agricultural sector.

iii. Despite these challenges that small holder farmers face, the projects and programmes in the 2024 budget do not adequately reflect these needs. The 2024 budget of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) provides for a total expenditure of N28.77 trillion, compared to the N24.82 trillion provided for in the 2023 fiscal year: representing an increase of 16%. The 2024 approved expenditure is based on a projected federally retained revenue of N19.59 trillion, the 2024 federal government budget creates a fiscal deficit of N9.178 trillion and a deficit-to-GDP size of 3.88%.

3. GRB Analysis of the 2024 Agriculture Sector Budget

- i. Macroeconomic indicators in Nigeria also justifies prioritizing smallholder farmers in the budget planning process for 2024 and beyond. The inflation rate continues to rise and the real GDP growth rate remains weak. With the food component of inflation being the highest, channeling resources to address the challenges faced by smallholder farmers and other challenges in the rural sector would help boost food production, reduce the cost of living, and eradicate poverty.
- ii. Analysis of the 2024 budget for Ministry of Agriculture shows that there was a remarkable increase of 175% in the allocation to the ministry from a proposed amount of N362.94 billion in the 2024 Appropriation Bill to the approved amount of N996.9 billion in the 2024 Appropriation Act. Sadly, the allocation falls below the 10% share of the total budget as recommended by the Maputo Declaration Recommendation (%).
- iii. The 2024 budget for the Ministry of Agriculture prioritized capital projects compared to what proposed budget. The framework for the NADFund would need to be put in place through legislation. It would also

be vital to examine how the NADFund would address gender-gaps in the agricultural sector.

- iv. The allocation for capital budgets in the headquarter Ministry and the National Agricultural Development Fund (NADFund) account for 36.25% of the total budget for development projects in the Ministry of agriculture.
- v. GRB analysis of the distribution of projects and programmes in the Ministry of Agriculture (HQTRS) and the National Agriculture Development Fund (NADFund) showed that 91% of these projects are gender-neutral, 7% are gender-sensitive and 2% are gender-specific.





Nigeria has one of the highest proportions of women participation in the agricultural sector in Africa, yet it ranks poorly in the global gender gap index, highlighting a significant disconnect between policy commitments and the actual inclusion and empowerment of smallholder women farmers.



4. Institutional Arrangements for GRB in the Agriculture Sector

Projects and programmes for smallholder farmers in the 2024 are not domiciled in the Ministry of agriculture alone. There are other stakeholders. Commitment towards enhancing access to public service by smallholder farmers should therefore involve consultations with these MDAs and other stakeholders as well.

5. Enhancing Access to Gender-Disaggregated Data for GRB

Access to gender-disaggregated data is also vital for mainstreaming GRB in the agricultural sector. However, data availability remains a challenge. A review of studies identifies ways through which this challenge can be defeated. Mercy Corp (2021) identified the following methods of collecting these data. They include through focus group discussions, In-person surveys, and Mobile surveys records of activities of target stakeholders / beneficiaries or other key stakeholders over time to understand the changes in behaviour and impact and use sex disaggregated data collected by the organization during core business activities to understand the gender composition and orientation of internal organization and business activities. According to the OECD (2023), surveys, interviews, reviews, opinion polls and benchmarking are also effective methods for obtaining and analysing data on diversity policies, as well as desk review, household interviews, focus group discussion.



6. Recommendations that work for GRB in the Nigerian agricultural sector

Institutional policies in the MDAs	Public Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there is a GRB policy that is also mainstreamed in the Ministry and its Departments and Agencies; • Establish a GRB desk in the Ministry and its Departments and Agencies. • Put in place a budget engagement process that engages stakeholders within the Ministry and its departments and agencies to assess the needs of smallholder women farmers and, within March to May every year, to ascertain needs that can be used as inputs into the budget at the preparatory stage. • Prioritize allocation for projects and programmes in the agricultural ministry budget that will address constraints for small-holder women farmers across the country. • Initiate or sustain collaboration with agricultural sector-based NGOs and development partners to support counterpart funding projects that will address the needs of small-holder women farmers. • Ministry to develop and sustain a data base for maintaining sex disaggregated databases in agriculture and the rural sector with clear gender performance indicators in line with the National Gender Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the Renewed Hope “8-Point” Agenda with the National Development Plan (NDP), 2021-2025 and ensure that GRB approach to agriculture and food security that are targeted at addressing gender gaps are clear mentioned. • Provide a legislative framework for GRB beyond the use of budget call circular; • Ensure that all sectors have GRB policies that is integrated with their sectorial policies. • Ensure that all projects and programmes that are related to the agricultural sector are • Hold annual town hall meetings with the National Assembly Committees on agricultural with Ministry of Agricultural and other agencies with agricultural focus to assess budget implementation with regards to the needs farmers in the previous year to identify gaps and draw lessons. • Land ownership and control in Nigeria is still dominated by men. Government needs to establish programmes and partnerships that will specifically target women, in order to improve access to land so as to enable them to increase their productive capacities, promote involvement in cash crop production and improve livelihood status. • Revise the National Gender Policy to ensure that it specifies goals, targets and desired outcomes for specific sectors including the agricultural sector.



7. Recommendations for GRB and the agricultural sector in the context of climate policy/financing

Although climate change was identified as an aspect where the 2024 budget of the federal government of Nigeria has a number of projects in the agricultural sector, the projects and programmes are not necessarily targeted at addressing gender gaps. Furthermore, while the projects and programmes provided for in the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture that have a direct bearing on climate change were few, the projects were specific in addressing gender-specific needs. These projects account for 0.55% of the total budget for projects that are targeted at smallholder farmers in the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture.

In other MDAs, projects and programmes that are climate change-related account for 3.13% of the total budget that are related to farming, or farmers. The low proportion of budget allocated for climate and gender in the agricultural budget and the overall budget of the federal government of Nigeria in the 2024 budget follow the global situation in 2021. According to a report by USAID while climate finance flows amounted to more than \$600 billion in 2021, only 2% integrated a gender lens.

The deduction is that while the projects in the Ministry of Agriculture that are climate change-related are more specific in addressing gender gaps, the projects in the other MDAs are not gender-specific. Sadly, there are more projects in the other MDAs for addressing climate change and gender issues that are contained in the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. In this regard, it is recommended that:

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security can also seek ways to attract funds from Green Climate Fund (GCF), Climate Gender Equity Fund (CGEF) and other global climate funds that can be channeled to address the gender dimensions in climate change and agriculture.
- Everybody is doing something with engendering food security policy, and engaging with small holder women farmers, but a central coordinating and M&E framework is lacking. All of these efforts should be domiciled with the Ministry of Agriculture.
- At the national policy level, there is need to ensure that policy framework reinforce each other rather than conflict or contend with one another.





8. Issues for Advocacy

- i. Evidence from studies and reports reviewed showed that countries where gender responsive budgeting have helped to improve the outcomes for small holder women farmers and the agricultural sector in general anchored their gender responsive mainstreaming policies on a legal framework. The evidence for Nigeria suggest that GRB policies are often anchored on the budget call circular that is in turn anchored on the Fiscal Responsive Act, 2007. For the 2024 budget, the National Development Plan (2021-2025) and the 2024-2026 MTEF & FSP, also serves as an anchor for GRB that are in turn referenced in the 2024 budget call circular.
- ii. Stakeholder consultation is required to ensure that policies targeting small holder farmers and food security are coordinated through the Ministry of Agriculture.
- iii. Although Nigeria has agricultural policy, it is not deliberate in addressing gender-responsive constraints. Setting up a gender desk in the Ministry of agriculture to track gender responsive process is great, but capacity building for all departments, unites and staff is vital to understand how the work done by every unit/division/department feed into the overall gender responsive drive of the ministry.
- iv. To address access to land challenges, the FMARD (2022) NATIP Policy (2022-2027) recommends the promotion of land certification for farm size consolidation and competitiveness. This will involve: Promulgation of law and legislation at the state level to minimize farmland fragmentation, Sensitization campaigns on land consolidation targeting key stakeholders, and community integration/involvement in effective utilization of land for agribusiness domiciled in their locality.
- v. Recognizing the security challenges faced by the small holder farmers, the FMARD (2022) NATIP Policy (2022-2027) recommends the establishment of Partnership on Secure Agriculture Land and Investments (PSALI) structure at national and sub-national levels, Promotion of agro-rangers for securing agricultural land and investment, Set up organized hunters, forest rangers/marshals to support PSALI, and the creation of a special role for traditional Institution/community leaders under PSALI.
- vi. The NATIP Policy (2022 – 2027) also recommends mainstreaming Gender into Extension Services, Climate Change Adaptation and Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture; developing gender-sensitive financing in agribusiness.
- vii. The lessons learned from other countries also show that there must be a commitment to and political will for gender equality and GRB at all levels of government. While the political will of the present administration in Nigeria for GRB across all sectors can be adjudged impressive, steps need to be taken to integrate the Renewed Hope Agenda with the NDP (2021-2025) and to ensure that sector-specific plans are clear of GRB directives.
- viii. To increase the inclusion of smallholder farmers in the budget process, the IBP report recommends:
 - a. Training and capacity-building programme that is targeted at strengthening interaction between the ministry of agriculture and smallholder women farmers to enhance their participation in the budget process. This recommendation is anchored on the finding that the budget processes in Nigeria, as in most countries, are hidden, opaque, and dominated by men.



- b. Improving the budget and political advocacy skills of small-holder women farmers would also be vital, as it would enable the group to understand the budget process and how to strategically intervene in it. Although the IBP and technical partners assisted SWOFON in improving their budget and political advocacy skills, more effort is required in this regard to cover more states.
 - c. The Ministry of Agriculture should also ensure that programmes and projects that seek to enhance access to fertilizer, seed and equipment for small holder women farmers are included in the budget of the Ministry. Because projects in ministry also include constituency and zonal projects of members of the National Assembly, holding stakeholder engagement with members of parliaments would also be vital on how to engender constituency and zonal projects of members of parliament.
- i. An assessment of the budget process shows that the budget call circular remains the major legal framework for mainstreaming gender into the budget of the federal government. Ensuring that MDAs follow up with sector policies that are anchored on gender-responsive policies and also ensuring that projects that are provided for in the ministries are anchored on the needs assessment of women would also be important. To effectively integrate GRB into the budget process, there is also a need to develop an oversight template that would enable agencies with oversight responsibilities to conduct oversight of project implementations that affect smallholder farmers. This oversight manual should also apply to other ministries as projects that affect smallholder farmers not only those domiciled in the ministry of agriculture.





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