CHAPTER ONE

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Rationale for the Niger State Gender Policy

The prioritization and planning for gender equality, women rights and empowerment has evolved gradually and has earned global attention considering the commitment of governments of all nations, international development organizations and other critical global actors to the promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of all persons regardless of their gender differences. Global concerns on gender equality have also heightened considering the high prevalence of discriminatory and harmful socio-cultural, economic and political practices which have relegated women and girls to extremely low levels of society despite constituting more than half the population in most national and subnational jurisdictions across the world.

As such, Gender equality and women's empowerment continue to be central themes in global treaties, covenants, and declarations because they are now acknowledged as catalysts to people-centred development strategies which focus on poverty reduction, improved standard of living, and good governments that give men and women equal voices in decision-making and policy implementation. Good governance, attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global/regional targets, (CEDAW, EFA, ICPD PoA, ILO, Environment, reduction of HIV/AIDS, etc.).

African governments have responded positively to the burden of under-development by instituting continent-specific development goals and strategies, while also recognizing the firm commitment to gender equality as the bait to development. These are expressed in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), adopted in 1981 and its Women's Rights Protocol of 2003; the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, 2001; and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) adopted in July, 2001. These initiatives are linked with other international agreements, and especially the (SDGs).

The Nigerian government has equally taken steps to establish legal and policy frameworks to promote gender equality by instituting the National Gender Policy (NGP) in 2007, and the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act of 2015. While these legal and policy frameworks aligns with all the international statutes highlighted above, they recognize and respond

to the internal peculiar gender concerns of the country especially with regards to the diverse gender-sensitive socio-cultural practices among the hundreds of ethnic groups in the country.

One of the implementation strategies of the NGP and the VAPP is the cascading of their content and implementation framework to the States and Local governments respectively. State governments in particular are expected to domesticate the NGP and put in place all necessary institutional framework for its implementation.

Accordingly, the Niger State government considers the making of this Gender Policy as a strategic action towards ensuring that the State aligns with both national and international best development standard and practice with regards to the promotion and protection of gender equality through the attainment of the objectives and targets of the NGP and the SDGs respectively.

The Niger State government, in making this Gender Policy, recognizes the prevailing crises of gender inequalities and widening gender gaps in the State worsened by the humanitarian situation occasioned by violent conflicts of banditry, kidnapping and insurgency activities in and around the State. The government of Niger State recognizes that attainment of the SDGs in the State will only be possible if the State is able to harness the vast human capacity potentials and opportunities domicile in its entire population including women and girl's resident in the State.

1.2   The Problem

Reports from the Nigerian Living Standards Survey (2019) indicate that about 40% of Nigerians currently live below poverty lines.[1] However, it is estimated that women, who make up slightly less than 50% of Nigeria's population, account for more than 70% of those in extreme poverty.[2] Indeed, more than a half of rural women live below the nationally defined poverty line, faced with challenges of high mortality rates, Poor access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), poor access to basic education, decent nutrition, adequate health and social services.[3]

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[1] World Bank (2020): https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/lsms/brief/nigeria-releases-new-report-on-poverty-and-inequality-in-country

[2] Obiukwu O. (2019). Gender Equality: Nigeria must mind the wide gap. The NEW AFRICAN, https://newafricanmagazine.com/19891/

[3] UNICEF: Situation of women and children in Nigeria https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/situation-women-and-children-nigeria

At the foundation of the rising levels of poverty and other social vulnerabilities among majority of women and girls in Nigeria is the prevalence of highly patriarchal society, where men dominate all spheres of women's lives. These forms of socio-cultural, economic and political dominance of women and girls are exacerbated by the prevailing trend of gender-based violence (GBV).

This Gender policy is therefore developed by the Niger State Government as a strategic intervention to respond to, and effectively address these and other similar problems contributing to—

a) Flagrant abuse of the fundamental rights of women and girls;
b) Increasing vulnerability, exclusion and disempowerment of women and girls;
c) Dwindling socio-economic opportunities for women and girls; and
d) Poor participation in leadership and decision-making processes.

1.3   Policy Context

Niger state is located in the North-Central region of Nigeria and inhabited by a little over 4 million people, with females (women and girls) constituting up to 49% of the total population. The State is ranked as the largest state in Nigeria by land mass.[4]

The economy of Niger state is largely based on agriculture. Approximately 90% of the population (with up to 80% of the women population) depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood. The State has about the largest and has the most fertile agricultural lands in the country. Approximately only 10 per cent of the state's arable land is being actively cultivated. The favourable climatic conditions provide unique opportunities in the State for the establishment of large-scale farming in crops such as maize, millet and yam. The fertile soil and hydrology of the State permits the cultivation of most of Nigeria's staple crops and still allows sufficient opportunities for grazing, fresh water fishing and forestry development. The incidence of bush clearing for agricultural purposes by burning large stretches of forest land has led to the disappearance of the rainforest which is prominent in the Niger trough and flood plain regions.[5]

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[4] http://tens-niger.com/about-tens/about-niger-state/
[5] http://tens-niger.com/about-tens/about-niger-state/

Some natural and mineral resources can also be found in Niger State. These include: Gold, Talc, Ball clays, Feldspars, Lead, Kaolin, Casserole, Silica, Sand, Marble, Copper, Iron, Columbite, Mica, Quartzite, and Limestone.[6]

Despite the vast socio-economic prospects of Niger State, based on the 2018 HDI report,[7] the State ranks among the 10 poorest States in Nigeria. UN (2015) global multidimensional poverty index reports that Niger State has a poverty rate of about 62% which is one of the highest both in the North Central and the entire northern regions respectively.[8]

Despite the nearly equal population of men and women and the vast socio-economic opportunities of Niger State, there are significant disparities between men and women in terms of access to, inclusion and participation in, and benefit from these vast opportunities. Several credible studies have shown that women and girls in Niger State, (as it is the case in most parts of northern and other parts of Nigeria) are largely excluded and marginalized from making contributions to, and gaining full benefits from the socio-economic opportunities in the State.

The table below presents a summary of some gender indices in Niger State—

Table 1: The Gender Related Index for Niger State[9]

	Life expectancy (year)		Adult literacy (%)		Primary and secondary education enrolment rate (%)		Income per person. (U.S. dollar)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
National Average	52	48	55.1	73.2	76.0	94.4	715	1,596
Niger	58	50	60.2	77.3	47.0	84.8	675	2,628

Notes: Primary and secondary enrolment rate are considered to be just added of both of the rate, so that the total number might be exceeding 100%.

Some of the key contributing factors to the prevalence of gender inequalities in Niger State could be highlighted as—

   a) Low women's literacy levels and significant gender gaps in female adult literacy.

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[6] www.mineralseeducationcoalition.org

[7] Global Data Lab: "Subnational HDI. https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/shdi/

[8] United Nation, (2015), The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index. http://www.dataforall.org/dashboard/ophi/index.php/

[9] UNDP (2009) Human Development Report Nigeria 2008-2009, Table 3.1, and p.152.

b) Rise in cases and incidences of gender-based violence (GBV) including forced and early girl-child marriage, female genital mutilation, rape, etc.

c) Low access to income and other economic opportunities.

d) Poor access to reproductive and other basic health services; leading to high infant and maternal mortality.

e) Unequal representation in leadership and decision-making processes in governmental and non-governmental institutions.

f) Prevalence of retrogressive ethno-religious practices which relegate women and girls and prevent them from participating in socio-economic activities.

The Governor Bello Muhammed-lead State government have since inception in 2015, recognized the significance in the vast population of women in the State and the important socio-economic roles that women can play in supporting the State to deliver on all targets of the SDGs. The government has therefore been taking strategic steps to address and reverse the trend of gender inequalities in Niger State by putting in place relevant legal, policy and institutional frameworks that will deliberately target women and other vulnerable populations in the state.

One key step already taken by the Governor Muhammed Bello Administration to reduce gender inequalities is directed towards ending the increasing prevalence of GBV in Niger state, the State Government inaugurated a twenty (20) member Committee on GBV Prevention and Response, headed by the Wife of the State Governor, Dr. Amina Abubakar Sani Bello. The Committee also has members from the State Ministries of Justice, Education, Health and Women Affairs, the Niger State Child's Right Agency, the Nigeria Police, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Imam Forum, Rayuwa Sexual Assault Referral Centre (RSARC) and the Women's Right Advancement Protection Agency (WRAPA).

The GBV Prevention and Response Committee has developed a document containing Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) to serve as framework for the delivery of GBV prevention and response services for survivors and for establishing mechanisms that will drastically reduce the prevalence of GBV while ensuring that perpetrators receive appropriate punishment.

1.4   The Gender Policy Governance Structure

This Gender Policy is to be managed by the Niger State Gender Equality and Rights Protection Council (NIGERPC) Chaired by the Wife of the Executive Governor, with membership drawn from the State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and other relevant MDAs, International Development Partners, women-led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), the organized Private Sector, Security Agencies, the Media, Traditional Leaders, traditional leaders, Local Government Areas, Technical Working Group, State Assembly and Local Government Legislative Council, Private Sector, Civil Service Commission of Niger State (CSCNS), Teachers Service Commission (TSC), Judicial Service Commission (JSC), local government Service Commission (LGSC) Development Areas, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Niger State Bureau of Statistics (Department), Civil Society Organizations and Faith Based Organizations, Political Parties, and Research and Academic Institutions in Niger State, etc.

The Secretariat of the NIGERPC will be hosted in the Niger State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and administered by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry under the supervision of the Honourable Commissioner.

The Gender Policy will be implemented in line with directives of the NIGERPC through the existing institutional framework of the Niger State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.

The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development shall support all MDAs of the Niger State Government to designate an officer not below the rank of Deputy Director to serve as Gender Focal Officer (GFO) with the mandate to support full compliance of all activities of their MDAs with the provisions of the Gender Policy.

1.5   Scope of the Policy

This Gender Policy shall address gender equality issues set in Goal 5 and all other development goals of the SDGs, as well as other specific development strategies and objectives of the Niger State Government across all social, cultural, political, economic, scientific, technological and all other developmental sectors and spheres of life in Niger State.

Implementation of the Gender Policy is to cover programs and activities of all three (3) arms of the State government including the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary respectively.

Programs and activities of all MDAs at state and local government levels, as well as at the level of traditional and community leadership shall effectively mainstream the principles, objectives and strategies of this Gender Policy.

Implementation of the Policy shall take cognizance of activities of non-state actors including CSOs and FBOs, private sector business organizations, international development organizations, the media, security agencies, etc.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0   POLICY OBJECTIVES, OBJECTIVES, AND PRINCIPLES

2.1   Introduction

Policy frameworks to ensure gender equality and empower women in the social, economic, political and cultural spheres are regulated in the Constitution. The framework will seek to establish and strengthen affirmative action efforts to reduce gender inequalities and geographical disparities in the distribution of natural resources and access to productive resources such as land, labour, finance, information and technology. The development of this policy was influenced by Niger State and Niger State gears on Gender Equality and Women's Capability, which emphasize gender mainstreaming as an important strategy to achieve evolution. It is also informed by the constitutional allocation and transformation, socioeconomic environment and other directions of the State of Niger

2.2   Objectives of the Policy

The overall objective of this policy is to achieve gender equality by creating a just society where women, men, boys and girls have equal access to opportunities in the political, economic, cultural and social spheres of life.

2.3   Target

The objectives of the Policy are as follows:

a) Facilitate the implementation of the Constitution and fulfil the obligations and commitments of states and regions to promote gender equality and autonomy due to discrimination;

b) Provide a framework for mainstreaming and mainstreaming gender in Niger State and Local Government development planning and budgeting and related policies, programs and plans, including books, programs and plans of NGOs;

c) Promote and support a rights-based approach when addressing gender issues; and,

d) Define an institutional framework and performance indicators to effectively monitor, monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

2.4   Guiding Principles

This policy, which recognizes the differences, diversity and inequalities between women, men, boys and girls, is guided by the following principles, most of which derive from and recognize the supremacy of the Constitution:

a) Sharing and being able to divide;

b) Equality, equity and non-discrimination;

c) Recognition of the differences, diversity and inequalities between women and men;

d) Respect for the rule of law;

e) Inseparability of the spheres of public and private life;

f) Authoritarian and discriminatory;

g) Community participation, consultation and cooperation;

h) Transparency and accountability;

i) Sustainable development and inclusive growth; and

j) Protection, integration and integration of marginal and special interest groups.

2.5   Policy Approach

The following approaches will be used to achieve the objectives of this policy:

a) Mainstreaming and mainstreaming gender in all planned interventions;

b) Affirmative action to ensure that temporary special measures are used to address past gender inequalities and injustices;

c) Empower women, men, boys and girls to create equal, just and non-discriminatory conditions;

d) The participation of men in the resolution of gender issues;

e) Institutional and human capacity building;

f) Budgeting for gender sensitive development planning; and,

g) Generate data and indicators disaggregated by sex, age and disability.

2.6   Policy Outcomes

The expected results of this constitutionally enshrined policy include:

a) Equality and economic empowerment will be achieved;

b) The diversity of all Niger will be recognized and respected;

c) Men, women and men have equal rights and access to education, health care, housing, employment and other services and resources;

d) Women and men have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making and to contribute to the political, social, economic and cultural development agenda;

e) Promote equal rights at the time, during and after the dissolution of a marriage; and,

f) Sexual and gender-based violence will be reduced and men, women, boys and girls will live with dignity.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0   PRIORITY POLICY ACTIONS

3.1   Introduction

This chapter describes the priority policy areas that the Gender Affairs Department will monitor and implement through approved institutional arrangements discussed in the next chapter. The political commitments linked to the political objectives described in the previous chapter are developed on the basis of an analysis of the case, the political context and the achievements. Policy measures taken in each priority area should guide the Niger State's gender mainstreaming efforts and ultimately lead to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Niger's commitment to gender equality requires that the views, needs, interests and rights of women, girls, men and boys, and special interest groups, shape the development agenda to ensure that everyone participates and benefits equally in development.

To achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development, Niger must fight against disparities between women and men and between different social groups. For this to happen, it is necessary to mainstream gender in the key areas identified. This chapter therefore describes the specific priority policy areas and their respective policy actions and commitments. To achieve the policy objectives, an action plan will be developed specifically that describes the main result areas, the implementing institutions and the allocated budgets.

3.2   Legal framework Strengthen regulatory, legal, policy and administrative frameworks on gender equality and the empowerment of women at all levels.

Political Actions
   a) Develop and implement Niger State guidelines on gender mainstreaming and standards to measure respect for gender mainstreaming in all sectors and at all levels;
   b) Assist in the review and revision of relevant laws so that they comply with the constitution and with the directives and standards of the State of Niger in the area of gender;
   c) Enact and enforce laws to comply with the no more than two-thirds gender principle;

d) Build the capacities of organizations responsible for implementing and monitoring gender-related interventions; and,

e) Adopt legislation to increase the participation of women in economic, social and political spaces in the public and private sectors. Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG) 1 (end absolute poverty and halve poverty) or SDG 5 (gender equality and empowerment of women and girls) by 2030. Towards SDG 10 goal on reduction inequalities (within and between countries) and SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels),

3.3 Eradicate poverty Guarantee equal opportunities and reduce inequalities in outcomes, including by eliminating laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate laws, policies and actions. Empower women and men to access and control economic opportunities and resources.

Political Action

a) Improve and improve access to credit opportunities for women and all other special interest groups through affirmative action initiatives;

b) Exercise the representation and participation of women in the steering committees of the State of Niger and initiate development initiatives, projects and programs;

c) Promote the implementation of constitutional social and economic rights, protect the family;

d) Review and implement appropriate social protection systems and measures to ensure that all women and men, girls and boys, especially poor and vulnerable traders, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as " access to basic services, ownership and control of land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, new technologies and financial services appropriate to the public;

e) Ensure a substantial mobilization of resources from various sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide the State with adequate and predictable means to implement programs and policies aimed at eradicate hunger and reduce poverty in all its aspects; and,

f) Promote and strongly promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religious, economic or other status.

3.4 Labour and economy Eliminate discrimination in access to employment, promotion and training, including equal pay in order to improve income security for men and women.

Political Actions

a) Strengthen and revise the legal and administrative framework for labour management in order to include women in hitherto non-traditional occupations, such as construction, mining, infrastructure development and 'other sectors;

b) Promote respect for the "no more than two thirds" gender principle in the recruitment, appointment and promotion of women and men in all fields for greater inclusion and visibility;

c) Implement labour policies that support minimum wage guidelines, regulations on working hours, and protection of union and collective bargaining rights, especially for women, in order to earn narrowing gender gaps in access to economic opportunities, benefits and productivity gaps;

d) Recognition of unpaid care work (for children, the elderly, the sick and disabled) and domestic work to ensure shared family responsibilities and investment in social services, providing infrastructure and social protection policies to reduce the burden on women;

e) Establish a database of employment records of women and men in the formal and informal sectors to monitor, assess and improve employment conditions for all, in particular are women;

f) Examine programs and projects that develop skills and aim to increase decent work for all, especially women;

g) Strengthening women's entrepreneurship capacity related to start-up capital; and,

h) Regulations on ensuring employment for women and men on maternity/maternity leave and ensuring the safety and protection of women in the informal sector, including women with disabilities.

3.5 **Education Improve and maintain measures to eliminate gender disparities in access, retention, transition, implementation and quality of education for women, men, girls and boys.**

Political Actions

a) Ensure equal participation of women and qualified men in leadership and decision-making positions in the education sector at the State level and the districts of Niger;

b) Adopt and strengthen measures to increase access and retention of girls and boys in public education programs at all levels of education;

c) Strengthening civic education programs about FGM and other harmful cultural practices that hinder girls' access to education;

d) Promote school counselling and household induction programs to encourage girls to enter STEM-related careers;

e) Provide information on personal hygiene, menstruation, standard facilities, and budget arrangements to provide girls' tampons and clean toilets for girls and children younger brother in school;

f) Promote accountability in the use of scholarship funds for vulnerable girls and boys and institutionalize direct support for orphans and severely disabled school going children;

g) Improve school attendance by implementing measures to combat gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and ensure safety and protection in schools; and,

h) Review and implement reintegration policies for pregnant female students to help them complete their education.

3.6 **Cultural and behavioural change Promote new attitudes, values and behaviours and a culture of respect for women and men, boys and girls.**

Political Actions

a) Mainstream gender equality and social inclusion into all curricula at all levels of education;

b) Developing and implementing capacity building and capacity building programs on gender and social inclusion; and,

c) Establishing foundations for gender and social inclusion.

3.7 **Access to health care Facilitate quality, accessible, affordable and affordable health care services, including reproductive health care, services emergency services, family planning, HIV and AIDS services for women and men, girls and boys.**

Political Actions

a) Strengthen universal health insurance and improve coverage to provide comprehensive and integrated preventive, curative and rehabilitation health services to everybody;

b) More funding from Niger's state budget allocation for gender equality to improve the delivery of health care services;

c) Implement school health programs in all schools;

d) Targeted implementation of existing health and nutrition programs to the benefit of vulnerable women and girls;

e) Strengthening efforts to reduce maternal mortality and new HIV/AIDS infections among women and girls; and,

f) Regularly review programs for women and girls (water, sanitation and hygiene) and recommend measures for improvement.

3.8 **Land, housing and agriculture**

Take measures to overcome barriers to women's access and control over productive resources, e.g., land ownership, housing, housing and agriculture.

Political Actions

a) Implement existing constitutional reforms and related legal frameworks to ensure equitable access to land and other natural resources, particularly for women, for agricultural purposes; industrial, housing and other productivity projects;

b) Improve extension services and provide appropriate agricultural information and technology to particularly benefit vulnerable women in agricultural activities;

c) Facilitate and improve the adoption of gender-based climate processes, smart inputs and external markets, to ensure that agricultural practices and other livelihoods are resilient with climate change; and,

d) Improving women's participation in fishing and the green economy.

3.9 Environment and natural resources ensure a clean, safe and sustainable environment.

Political Actions

a) Develop and review laws, policies and programs for the management of the environment and other natural resources (including forests, water, mining, oil and gas, and energy) to ensure respect for gender and equity;

b) Ensuring the supply of reusable water for women taking into account the gender division of labour, identifying the production and living activities of women in the household;

c) Ensure that women participate and benefit equitably from investments in various natural resource development initiatives;

d) Strengthen the capacity of development agencies in the field of gender mainstreaming in environmental and climate change laws, policies and programs and ensure that women, men, girls and women and boys participate in, contribute to and benefit from climate change resilience programs and projects; and,

e) Support interventions aimed at the equal participation of women, men, girls and boys in the sustainable use of natural resources for economic benefit, including carbon trading opportunities.

3.10 Peace and Security Integrate and mainstream gender perspectives in peace and security processes to create a stable and safe environment for all.

Political Actions

a) Promote gender mainstreaming in the management of conflict situations, including prevention and mitigation measures;

b) Promote and initiate the design, capacity building, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of peace building initiatives;

c) Ensure equal representation of men and women in peace-building and conflict prevention programs; and,

d) Promote the implementation of the Niger State Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions.

3.11   Governance, power and decision-making Ensure equal and meaningful participation and representation of women and men in positions of governance, power and decision-making in public and private regions.

Policy Actions

a) Initiate a law to come into force in accordance with the constitutional principle that no more than two thirds of the appointed and elected members must be of the same sex;

b) Ensure that political parties support the participation of women in political processes and promote gender equality;

c) Support effective collaboration of public authorities and entities to strengthen the capacity of women to participate and participate in competition policy, leadership and governance; and,

d) Support and encourage the active and meaningful participation of women in political processes and decision-making at the local level.

3.12   Information, Communication and Technology (IT-IT) Harness ICT as a tool for broader strategies and programs to create empowerment opportunities for women and men.

Policy Actions

a) Collect and disseminate gender data on access and use of ICTs to inform policy and decision making;

b) Identify, promote and document good practices and lessons learned to bridge gender gaps in the use of ICTs;

c) Promote the inclusion of ICT and STEM education in upper secondary schools; and,

d) Promote the deployment of active ICT hubs / digital villages and in local government areas of Niger State to ensure equal access of men and women to ICT services.

3.13   Respecting the human rights of all Cultivators respect the civil, political, economic and social rights of all people.

Political Actions

a) Enforce constitutional and legislative provisions for the realization of the civil, political, economic and social rights of all Nigerians;

b) Ensure the implementation of all human rights treaties of the State of Niger that Nigeria has ratified, paying particular attention to treaties on gender equality; people and human rights,

c) Provide protection for human rights defenders.

3.14   Gender-based discrimination Put in place measures to ensure that gender is taken into account in the fight against other forms of inequality.

Political Actions

a) Support the production of factual data on the extent, influence and impact of various inequalities due to inter and multi-discrimination;

b) Ensure compliance with constitutional provisions and anti-discrimination laws; and,

c) Develop targeted measures to address intersecting and diversity-related inequalities.

3.15 Sexual and gender-based violence Elimination of sexual violence and gender-based discrimination (SGBV) against women and men, girls and boys in the public and private sectors.

Political Actions

a) Ensure the application of laws and policies relating to sexual and gender-based violence;

b) Promote and establish safe spaces and shelters for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in Niger State and at the Local Government level;

c) Promote advocacy and education programs aimed at changing attitudes and cultures that contribute to acceptance and tolerance of sexual and gender-based violence;

d) Develop and strengthen the capacity of relevant organizations to conduct timely and effective investigation and prosecution of violations of the law related to sexual and gender-based violence;

e) Conduct research to identify the underlying and systemic causes of sexual and gender-based violence and design appropriate responses to mitigate them; and,

f) Promote the participation of men in the management and response to sexual and gender-based violence.

3.16   Girls and boys Promote respect and promote the rights of the child of girls and boys.

Political Actions

a) Elimination of all forms of discrimination, negative attitudes and behaviours which harm girls and boys;

b) Removal of structural constraints that hinder the realization of the rights of boys and girls;

c) Support women and men working with children and young people to break persistent gender stereotypes, taking into account the rights of children and the responsibilities, rights and obligations of parents; and,

d) Support age-appropriate sexuality education for boys and girls with parental involvement and emphasis on their responsibilities towards their sexuality and fertility.

3.17   Communication Ensure increased participation and visibility of men and women in the media and communications sector.

Political Actions

a) Promote capacity building and training in gender leadership, management and reporting in the media and implement gender sensitive approaches in education programs related to;

b) Ensure increased access to media information through local media channels in order to eliminate prejudices;

c) Help communicators to formulate gender perspectives in the content of their programs and reports;

d) Collaborate with the media to express the views and perspectives of women on issues such as the economy, health, politics, security and terrorism;

e) Capacity building of women to work in technical aspects of media production;

f) Strengthen adult education programs to improve literacy in order to access various media content; and,

g) Publicize the guidelines and standards of the State of Niger on gender equality and the empowerment of women; and,

h) Establish a system of rewards and recognition for individuals and organizations that have achieved high standards of gender equality and best practices.

3.18   Access to Justice Guarantee equal access to justice for men and women.

Political Actions

a) Ensure that gender mainstreaming is included in the Niger Legal Aid Service;

b) Facilitate and develop simplified judicial procedures and processes to improve access to justice;

c) Strengthen coordination between actors in the justice sector to deliver justice quickly;

d) Ensure adequate detention facilities for sex offenders; and,

e) Develop and implement gender guidelines and policies for the justice sector.

3.19   Institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women reinforce the ministry to take responsibility for gender with a clear coordination role and deploy the necessary resources for implementation, in coordination with other parties' stakeholders. Promote gender equality in all sectors and at all levels of government in Niger State.

Political Actions

a) Support defining the functional duties and responsibilities of different actors to avoid duplication, which can lead to inter-institutional competition and gaps in interventions that impede the achievement of equality. Gender equality;

b) Allocate resources within the Niger State budget to effectively carry out the mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for gender issues.

c) Provide a mechanism within Government ministries, departments and sectors to cooperate and coordinate between the Department in charge of gender and local government agencies responsible for gender for a coordinated approach;

d) Empower the Ministry to oversee the implementation of gender equality regulations in government agencies and other relevant laws in the State of Niger;

e) Encourage collaboration with and among civil society groups advocating for gender equality to effectively address any gaps in gender equality program implementation; and,

f) Positioning the Department at the top of the decision-making process to help the Department influence government policy.

4.0 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the institutional and implementation framework for the implementation of the Gender and Development Policy of the State of Niger. The institutions identified will facilitate the mainstreaming and integration of gender issues within the framework of their policy implementation mandate. Therefore, policy implementation will adopt a multi-sectorial approach involving both state and non-state actors at all levels. The Niger State Gender Equality and Rights Protection Council (NIGERPC) Chaired by the Wife of the Executive Governor, will assume the role of coordinating all other State agencies to promote harmonization and avoid duplication. The Secretariat will be of the NIGERPC will be hosted in the Niger State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and administered by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry under the supervision of the Honourable Commissioner.

In conjunction with the Niger policy, an action plan for its implementation will be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders. The action plan will provide clear roles and responsibilities as well as goals and deadlines for each actor, among other key requirements. Need to institutionalize and strengthen gender units in all areas, include gender in performance contracts for all MCDAs, build capacity of all gender units and require all MDAs " tailor this gender policy to their respective fields. The policy recognizes the need for coordination and collaborative efforts to ensure effective policy implementation.

4.2 Implementation Framework

Different aspects of the policy will be implemented by different actors, including Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and local communities, CSO collaboration with the private sector, trusted organizations and other key stakeholders. Development partners will be involved at different levels to support the implementation of policies. The table below presents some of the key organizations identified in the different sectors and their specific roles;

Matrix of Actors and their Respective Roles

1. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Ministry of Women Affairs, and Social Development**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

❖ Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and the full participation of women, men, girls and boys in social, economic, cultural and political spheres at all levels in the public and private sectors;

❖ Take the lead in formulating, developing, implementing and reviewing policies, and ensuring that budgets, plans and programs are gender-appropriate;

❖ Coordinating reporting on the State of Niger and gender obligations, participating in relevant forums and implementing the results and recommendations;

❖ Facilitate coordination of gender mainstreaming efforts and network linkages for effective policy implementation at all levels in all sectors;

❖ Coordinate socio-economic empowerment of women, strengthen business skills and facilitate networking and linkage with the market;

❖ Monitor the elimination of sex and gender-based violence (SGBV) and coordinate the inclusion of women in peace and security efforts;

❖ Coordinating the implementation of sanitary napkin projects for girls in schools (primary and junior high schools); • Develop a Niger State action plan to implement the policy;

❖ Help local authorities prepare gender action plans and provide guidance on gender outcomes reporting mechanisms;

❖ Develop guidelines and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment to promote respect for the principles of equality and non-discrimination;

❖ Provide advice and technical assistance to other organizations and sectors to promote gender analysis and planning;

❖ Coordinating and co-chairing Gender Sector Working Groups and Gender Technical Working Groups to monitor and examine efforts made to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment;

❖ Establish a gender management system and collect, store, regularly update and disseminate gender data;

- ❖ Conduct research on various gender issues in cooperation with academia and other organizations;
- ❖ Facilitating and coordinating gender focal points in the MDAs;
- ❖ Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework on gender equality and women's employment and gender-specific indicators to facilitate accurate monitoring, reporting and reporting;
- ❖ Strengthen cooperation and linkage between state and non-state agencies and facilitate connection with development partners; and,
- ❖ Global coordination of policy implementers.

2. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Niger State Department of Budgets/Auditor General**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Ensure that gender issues are adopted throughout the budget cycle and are incorporated into all aspects of the State of Niger's finance, accounting and related processes;
- ❖ Implement Niger State directive on gender-sensitive budgeting;
- ❖ Ensure that women, men, girls and boys are equally targeted in economic planning and development;
- ❖ Provide adequate funding to the Gender Department and other MDAs to implement the actions described in the policy;
- ❖ Conduct gender audits of sector budgets and expenditures;
- ❖ Establish a gender reward program to reward the best performers; Mobilizing resources for Gender Equality and WOMEN activities; and,
- ❖ Issue of gender budget report

3. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Attorney General's Office of Niger State**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Assist and advise the MDA in drafting the necessary legislation to implement the policy and key constitutional provisions;

- ❖ Amend laws contrary to the constitutional provisions on equality and non-discrimination;
- ❖ Make recommendations on other legislative and legislative reforms to support the implementation of policies; and,
- ❖ Implementation and supervision of legal aid services Niger State.
- ❖ Assist and advise the MDA in drafting the necessary legislation to implement the policy and key constitutional provisions;
- ❖ Amend laws contrary to the constitutional provisions on equality and non-discrimination;
- ❖ Make recommendations on other legislative and legislative reforms to support the implementation of policies; and,
- ❖ Implementation and supervision of legal aid services Niger State.

4. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Other line Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs)**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Develop, review and implement sector policies to mainstream gender in their budget processes, plans and programs;
- ❖ Coordinate the implementation of political components in MDAs and their respective local communities;
- ❖ Enforce the directives and standards of the State of Niger in terms of gender equality;
- ❖ Gender leadership in training at all levels and development of specific capacity building programs for gender sectors;
- ❖ Implement measures to implement recruitment, promotion and training provisions respectful of gender equality in order to adhere to the principles of equality and non-discrimination;
- ❖ Facilitate the communication of efforts of gender activities and achievements of the sector; and,
- ❖ Collect industry-specific sex-disaggregated data.

5. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Local Government Areas**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Integrate the standards of the State of Niger and gender indicators in local communities in Integrated Development Plans (CIDP);
- ❖ Develop and ensure the implementation of specific national gender policies;
- ❖ Develop and implement gender action plans for local authorities;
- ❖ Ensure adequate allocation of resources to implement gender equality and women's empowerment programs;
- ❖ Ensure that gender budgets are adopted in the budget cycle;
- ❖ Identify and implement programs aimed at gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- ❖ Collect, collate and disseminate data on gender in counties; and,
- ❖ Report on the implementation and activities of the gender policy by the local government.

6. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Technical Working Group (TWG)**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination;
- ❖ Monitor all aspects related to equality and non-discrimination in ministries, local communities, departments and agencies, including the private sector;
- ❖ Conduct regular gender audits and act as the main government agency to ensure compliance with regulations;
- ❖ Ensure equality and non-discrimination for special interest groups, including minorities and disadvantaged people, women, people with disabilities and children; and,
- ❖ Investigate complaints about gender-appropriate measures.

7. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Civil Service Commission of Niger State (CSCNS), Teachers Service Commission (TSC), Judicial Service Commission (JSC), local government Service Commission (LGSC) Development Areas**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Integrating gender policy, the principles of equality and non-discrimination and developing frameworks for recruitment,
- ❖ Training and promotion consistent with this policy; Integrate the principle of "no more than two-thirds gender" in recruitment, training and promotion;
- ❖ Collect data on human resource capacity and report the results; and, facilitating the creation of gender focal points.

8. ESTABLISHMENTS: **State Assembly and Local Government Legislative Council**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Pass relevant laws to promote gender equality and principles of non-discrimination;
- ❖ Promoting respect for the "gender 2/3 principle" in all sectors and at all levels; (30 decisive actions)
- ❖ Ensure that the State of Niger's budget processes are gender-sensitive;
- ❖ Investigate and report failure to respect the principles of equality and non-discrimination; and,
- ❖ Ensure that the principles of equality and non-discrimination are respected when approving development projects.

9. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Judiciary**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Improve access to justice for women, men, girls and boys;
- ❖ Incorporate the principles of equality and non-discrimination in dispute resolution; and,
- ❖ Integrate gender principles by at most two-thirds in their fields; (30% sure action)

❖ Collaborate with key stakeholders, take advantage of legal aid services; and,

❖ Helping vulnerable groups' access justice.

10. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

❖ Ensure effective prosecution of cases relating to gender equality and discrimination;

❖ To prosecute criminal cases that violate the provisions of this policy;

❖ Develop a prosecution policy in accordance with this policy; and,

❖ Strengthening of the special unit and its structures to deal with and prosecute cases of sexual and gender-based violence

11. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Niger State Bureau of Statistics (Department)**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

❖ Collect sex-disaggregated data for the State of Niger and gender statistics on gender equality and WOMEN's RIGHTS for the planning and implementation of projects in all areas;

❖ Collaborate with the Ministry of Gender Affairs, build capacity on literacy statistics, establish a database for gender data and produce brochures on men and women and fact sheets on gender. Kind; and,

❖ Mainstreaming gender into all of its policies, plans and programs.

12. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Civil Society Organizations and Faith Based Organizations**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

❖ Continue to advocate for gender mainstreaming in all areas and at all levels; Advocating for budgetary provisions in the State of Niger at all levels of management and budgets to meet the needs of poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups in society, in particular women, women, girls and children;

- ❖ Work with the government to raise public awareness of this policy;
- ❖ Help the Ministry of Gender Equality to report on the implementation of policies, plans and programs;
- ❖ Coordinate with the Ministry in charge of gender issues, identify target areas for research;
- ❖ Carry out awareness-raising and civic education actions to disseminate this policy;
- ❖ Provide platforms for effective information dissemination and education;
- ❖ Participation in the Gender Working Group and in the Technical Working Groups and in the planning and budgeting processes of the State of Niger;
- ❖ Develop and implement programs that address the main areas of gender intervention;
- ❖ Translate this policy into the policies, programs and activities of the organization; and,
- ❖ Provide legal services to vulnerable groups.

13. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Private Sector**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Ensure the integration of gender in company policies;
- ❖ Mobilize and release resources to support programs aimed at creating and mainstreaming gender awareness;
- ❖ Offer incentives and support to women entrepreneurs;
- ❖ Institute and take positive action measures; and,
- ❖ Support corporate social responsibility programs.

14. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Political Parties**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Promote gender mainstreaming in all political parties, structures, activities and systems;
- ❖ Ensure affirmative action measures in party structures, processes and mechanisms to implement the "two-thirds maximum principle;
- ❖ Ensure that women participate effectively in the activities of political parties;
- ❖ Ensure adequate allocation of resources to political parties and women's unions; and,

- ❖ Ensure that all political parties adhere to affirmative constitutional principles
- ❖ Identify gender-based inequalities as a major inhibitor to equal political participation;
- ❖ Provide a clear and coherent direction and policy measures for promoting gender equality in politics;
- ❖ Integrate gender equality into their vision and their strategic missions and plans;
- ❖ Identify specific objectives in line with key areas of internal organization and operation;
- ❖ Establish measurable targets and implementation mechanisms; and
- ❖ Develop internal accountability mechanisms for compliance with these objectives.
- ❖ Setting up fundraising networks within the party to support female candidates' campaigns;
- ❖ Creating a special internal party fund for women's campaigns or providing subsidies to female candidates; and
- ❖ Ensuring that the party allocates a certain amount of funds from any public funding obtained by the party for enhancing gender equality and women's political empowerment;
- ❖ Identify gender-sensitive strategies to reach out to female potential aspirants, for instance setting up search committees that are guided by clear rules concerning what characteristics to look for (in order to avoid nepotism), instituting rules for gender balance in candidate selection committees and establishing high numerical quotas for final lists of candidates;
- ❖ Developing and conducting trainings for gender awareness raising for candidate nomination committees;
- ❖ Formalizing rules on how candidates are nominated; and
- ❖ Setting a target for gender parity or stipulating a high (40 per cent or higher) quantitative threshold as a minimum level of women's participation in various decision-making bodies within parties.

15. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Research and Academic Institutions in Niger State**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Identify sources of information and contributions to the Ministry in charge of gender issues in the gender research program;
- ❖ Initiate and evaluate research proposals on identified areas of interest;

- ❖ Collaborate with authorized agencies to collect sex disaggregated data to support planning and analysis;
- ❖ Design training and education programs on Gender Equality and Women's Employment;
- ❖ Generate evidence to inform policy and decision making;
- ❖ Conduct research on emerging gender issues to inform policy and planning; and,
- ❖ Mainstream gender in the curriculum.

16. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Media**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Coordinating with the Ministry of Gender Affairs on issues of Gender Equality and WOMEN'S PROBABILITY; • Publicizing, informing and educating the public about politics;
- ❖ Promote positive coverage of women in the media and eliminate gender stereotypes;
- ❖ Raising awareness on Gender Equality and WOMEN'S WORK;
- ❖ Capacity building for gender-sensitive research and reporting;
- ❖ Report cases of gender and sexual violence;
- ❖ Help journalists develop a gender perspective in the content of their programs and reports; and,
- ❖ Improve and promote the capacity of women in the media sector to work in the technical aspects of media production

17. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Development Partners**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Facilitate mobilization of resources to support policy implementation;
- ❖ Put in place appropriate institutions and donor coordination mechanisms to ensure that gender is included in development cooperation;
- ❖ Provide financial and technical resources for gender mainstreaming;
- ❖ Support the provision of measures to promote gender mainstreaming good practice in all sectors and at all levels; and,

- ❖ Provide financial support to gender equality programs to reduce gender gaps and disparities in development.

18. ESTABLISHMENTS: **Councils of Elders/ Traditional Groups.**

Role and Responsibilities for Implementation Policy only

- ❖ Raise awareness of practices, customs, traditions and cultures that undermine efforts for equal opportunities in society;
- ❖ Educate communities and other organizations on what is and is not culturally acceptable; and;
- ❖ Collaborate with MDA, CSO, FBO and the private sector to induce and advocate for social and attitude change towards gender equality and WOMEN'S WORK.

4.3   Resource Mobilization

The successful implementation of this policy will require sufficient financial, human and technical resources to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the desired policy outcomes. Funding will be sought from the Government of the State of Niger on the basis of annual budgetary terms. Additional support will be sought from development partners and non-state actors. The strategies include: a) Niger State government budget allocation; b) Partnership through bilateral agreements and support from donor agencies; c) Support from regional development partners such as the African Development Bank; d) Partnership with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the State of Niger; e) Partnerships with trust-based organizations, civil society organizations, private sector organizations and other funding agencies for specific projects; and, f) Fundraising activities.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies

Monitoring and evaluation is very crucial to the successful implementation of the Niger State Gender Policy. It shall be integral part of the Niger State Gender Policy Framework. Both monitoring and evaluation are internal and external assessment framework that will be carried out during the life of a policy and/or programme. There is a monitoring and evaluation frame with gender indicators that can be applied right from conception of this policy and other policies, programme or projects. The M&E framework then becomes *one part* of the M&E plan (refer to the M&E Framework), which describes how the whole M&E system for the policy and programmes works, including things like who is responsible for it, what forms and tools will be used, how the data will flow through the MDAs and organisations, and who will make decisions using the data. It could usually be at the start (using Baseline), monthly, a mid-term or post-programme and/or policy impact assessment. The Gender Policy has established targets and priority actions with timeline for accomplishment. The Niger State Gender Equality and Rights Protection Council (NIGERPC) Chaired by the Wife of the Executive Governor, will lead in the implementation of this policy targets through the efforts of the State Gender Technical Working Group (SGWG) and the various gender desk officers in the Line Ministries, Departments and Agencies, political parties, private sector and other institutions identified in the institutional framework and implementation section of the preceding chapter.

Hitherto, both aim at ensuring that programme and/or policy objectives are reached, while strategies could be altered where constraints are observed, especially constraints that could derail the original programme/ policy objectives and goals. The evaluation of this Policy as a development intervention should result in transformational change explicitly linked to the SDGs.

The monitoring and evaluation framework for the Niger State Gender Policy (NSGP) aim at achieving the following:

- Identification of gender indicators which could help track down the progress (or otherwise) of the Niger State Gender Policy;

- Assist stakeholders to operationalise the NS Gender Policy as this relates to specific sectors and/or organisations;

- Facilitating regular assessment of impact (negative or positive) of gender mainstreaming programmes and activities on policy targets

- Determining whether targets are met, and whether the envisaged behavioural changes have occurred;

- Monitoring the extent to which resources have been used efficiently or otherwise;

- Measuring the long-term impact of policy on women and men, and the extent to which policy has helped to close the gender-gap, and enhanced social justice.

The Niger State Ministry of Women Affairs, through this special committee/working group and MDAs gender-desk officers shall provide the monitoring guidelines for collecting data on monitoring indicators from government departments, the private sector and the civil society organisations.   The Ministry shall distribute the monitoring guidelines to all relevant organisations for both collection and dissemination of information on gender equality and social justice issues and concerns.   The Ministry shall hold quarterly or half yearly M&E meeting with Permanent Secretaries and Directors of MDAs to ascertain progresses made with gender-disaggregated data of policies and programmes of each of them.   The Ministry shall hold an annual monitoring and evaluation meeting with all stakeholders, while also using this process to undertake an annual review of monitoring and evaluating indicators. Gender-Sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation tools shall guide the M & E framework of the Niger State Gender Policy (see Annex ……).

Effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism within the state gender equality and social justice framework shall hinge on the following conditions –

- The level of financial and human resources allocated to the monitoring and evaluation process;

- Setting up of effective structures and mechanisms for inter and intra institutional linkages with the Ministry of Women Affairs

- Capacity building for staff who handle gender equality and social justice policies and programmes;

- Quality of data collection and utilisation

- Making data on gender equality and social justice readily available to stakeholders

5.2   Assessment of Gender Impacts

Impacts of the Gender Policy

Both short- and long- term impacts of the Niger State Gender Policy shall be measured looking first at the internal mechanisms created by government and organisations at mainstreaming gender concerns and issues (short term); and the extent to which the gender policy framework has benefited the total society, and/or altered structures that traditionally created social injustice and women dis-empowerment.

Impacts of Policies and Programmes

There is need, not only to pre-empt the likely differential impacts of government and other institutional policies through ex-ante policy analysis, but also to monitor the impacts of macro policies at the micro level, that is on the lives of women and men at the grassroots. This will require a set of baseline instruments and indicators that is adaptable to any sector or population group.

The above, call for the institutionalization of gender statistics as an instrument of policy at all levels of public and private institutions and the development of appropriate gender indicators. The Niger State Planning Commission through its Monitoring and Evaluation Department and the Planning, Research and Statistics Department of all line Ministries shall collaborate with the NSTWG to generate gender specific and sex-disaggregated statistics and other situation reporting within all their statutory data systems. It is noted that already, efforts should be made within the reform of the State Planning Commission to collate and publish all gender-related data into a single volume. Attempts should be constantly at augmenting by action plan reports from the contemporary macro-policy and sector policy reviews in the State.

5.2.1 Gender Indicators for Gender Impact Assessment

Effective monitoring and evaluation require a robust framework of indicators which will derive from the objectives of State and sector specific objectives. Bearing in view that the Niger State Planning Commission will collaborate with the Ministry of Women Affair and Social Development to engender the State data bases, it is expected that statistics so developed will be based on expected outcomes of state goals and priorities in all sectors. Two levels of indicators are therefore proposed here for gender assessment.

International indicators

a.   The United Nations developed specific indicators which could be used to assess the performance of nation state as regards the achievement of gender equality. For example, the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report (1995) established a Gender Development Index (GDI) and a Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). Nigeria is also committed to the implementation of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action with their respective priorities concerns. Some of the indicators from these documents are guiding the actions of national governments, including Nigeria, and against which the country's and Niger State's gender equality progress will be measured. These indicators cover all the priority areas specified in the BPA, and in particular the following –

- Women's participation in political and leadership decision-making;
- Women's access to professional opportunities;
- Women's earning power and participation in the economy etc.

b.   The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provided an international commitment to human development in general, and to gender equality in particular. If gender becomes a cross-cutting issue in attaining the MDGs, then countries must provide indicators that could help measure the attainment of the following with due recognition of women and men's needs and concerns – • Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger;

- Achieving universal primary education;
- Promoting gender equality and empowering women
- Reducing child mortality
- Improving maternal health;

- Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensuring environmental sustainability
- Developing a global partnership for development

c.   The World Economic Forum came up with the following critical areas in measuring the extent to which women have achieved equality with men – • Economic participation;

- Economic opportunity;
- Political empowerment;
- Educational attainment;
- Health and well-being

d.   The African Centre for Gender and Development has also come up with the African Gender Development Index (AGDI) which consists of:

i.   Gender Status Indicators (GSI) in three critical development blocks -

Social Power or 'Capabilities' consisting of two components:

- Education with five indicators;
- Health with six indicators

Economic Power with three components:

- Income;
- Time-use or employment;
- Access to resources

Political Power which takes into account the participation ratio in:

Public Sector:

- Participation of women and men in Executive
- Participation of women and men in Legislature
- Participation of women and men in the judiciary

Civil Society

- The number of women, as compared to men, who are heading or managing NGOs;

- The number of women leading community-based or grassroots associations or unions.

All indicators measure gender differentials only.

ii. The African Governance Progress Scoreboard (AGPS) consists of indicators to track the commitment to global and regional conventions from the aspects of signing, ratifying and domesticating the various protocols.

National Indicators

The national indicators for measuring gender equality and social justice within the country will be guided by the country Constitution, the Macro-policy (currently NEEDS), implementation of this National Gender Policy and other specific policy documents relevant to gender issues and concerns nationally. Importantly, the efforts of the country at domesticating the various international declarations, conventions, and treaties on gender equality and social justice will provide a benchmark for developing these national indicators. Niger State government needs to track the national policies and ensure most of them are domesticated in the State.

CWIQ Indicator

The newly adopted survey of Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire (CWIQ) is an appropriate instrument for assessing gender impacts of policies. This survey framework is currently very narrow and its focus on gender is limited to gender-based violence. The CWIQ framework should be engendered in all its area of coverage by making individuals rather than households the unit of assessment and administering the instrument on female and male economic agents within households and communities. All data analysis should be carried out with gender of respondents as a category of analysis. The indicators of MDG goals should be adapted for expanding the scope and relevance of CWIQ.

Nigerian Statistical fact Sheet

Reports sectorial development indicators. This currently has no gender concerns. Indicators of gender-based participation in sector activities and productivity differences should be incorporated in the profile.

Nigerian Human Development Report

This annual report presents most of the human development indicators of the HDR for Nigeria. The Gender Development Indicator (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) need to be domesticated - modified to reflect the gender indicators that are most relevant to Nigeria.

SDGs Indicators

In the current dispensation, the SDGs indicators around the seventeen (17) thematic areas should be strongly used with gender perspective to monitor and evaluate the progress of the Gender Policy in Niger State.

5.3   Gender Benchmarking

Gender indicators shall be incorporated into all instruments for policy benchmarking in the country. Currently, SEEDS benchmarking is being implemented. The Ministry of Women Affairs, in partnership with Development Partners shall ensure that gender indicators are developed and incorporated; while assessors are trained for gender benchmarking.   The funding of Gender Monitors and Observers shall be part of the government budget for the exercise. Development partners may facilitate these mandates through special funding and technical expertise.

Within this framework, gender responsive strategies shall be adopted for all macroeconomic policies, such as is currently done for SEEDS Benchmarking.

BOX 5.8:

GENDER INDICATOR PLAN FOR SEEDS BENCHMARKING

All indicators of programme impacts, programme participation and access to facilities shall be constructed in a sex-disaggregated manner. For instance, indicators for number of new schools or number of trained teachers will be applied in a gender sensitive manner. All state level empirical evidences shall be disaggregated by gender.

> Access to social and physical infrastructure shall be assessed for women and for men because of differences in wealth status of women and men, time-use of women and men and gender roles for welfare provisioning are defined for women and for men.
>
> Review of policies and budgeting shall include a review for gender-responsiveness Assessment of service delivery shall include delivery of services that promote equal opportunities for women and men.

5.3.1 Resource Allocation and Resource Mobilisation

A necessary condition for the success of the proposed State Gender Policy is the availability of resource (human and material) for its operationalisation. Human resource requirement shall include –

- Capacity building for operators of the policy at State, Local Government Areas, organisational, and local institutional levels, especially in the area of gender mainstreaming;

- A strong communication network amongst stakeholders to facilitate sharing of information and data banks;

- Effective data collection and data utilization within the gender equality and social justice networks

- Adequate staffing of gender equality and social justice institutions.

Adequate financial resources shall be the cornerstone for measuring the success of this policy. It is expected that both governmental (state, and local governments) and private sector organisations will mainstream gender budgeting into their respective annual budget items. It is proposed that a certain percentage of government's annual budget (to be determined by the State Executive Council) be put aside for the operation of the State Gender Policy.

Resource support is expected through partnership arrangements that could support gender mainstreaming efforts at institutional and organisational levels, and community advocacy and enlightenment programmes which shall enhance gender equality principles and thereby bringing about changes in traditional gender role relations. Target financial supports are expected from -

- Development Partners; • Public-Private financing; and

- Civil Society Organisations.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND FORWARD LOOKING STRATEGIES

6.1 Conclusions

The main thrust of the Niger State Gender Policy (NGP) is to promote gender-equality through gender-sensitive and gender responsive culture in policy planning and state development. A major tool for the required social transformation shall be the promotion of gender mainstreaming in all public and private policies and programming priorities and in all organisational and community cultures in Niger State. Gender equality principles shall therefore become a cultural norm, while women empowerment shall become a corporate responsibility.

Core strategies for achieving the objectives of the Niger State Gender Policy have been identified as follow-

- Policy reforms through mainstreaming of gender concerns at all levels;

- Gender education and capacity building, so as to ensure necessary technical expertise and positive gender culture;

- Legislative reforms which ensure gender justice and respect for human rights; and

- Economic reforms for enhanced productivity and sustainable development, especially that which addresses the needs of women and children, and other vulnerable groups.

A major challenge is how to move from the policy prescriptions projected in this policy document, to the actualisation of the policy frameworks. Although an elaborate operational framework has been proposed in the policy document, it is also important to note that many noughts need to be tied together because of the overarching institutional restructuring required in order to meet the demands of this policy document. To achieve the policy goals, the following elements must be considered and adhered to –

- Political Will
- Gender as a Core Value for Transforming the Niger State Society
- Confronting Patriarchy
- Coordination, Networking, and Monitoring

6.1.1   Political Will

Creating a gender responsive and equitable society requires support from the highest level of governance, in particular, the Governor. The Governor, the State Executive Council (SEC), the Legislative and the Judiciary must embrace gender equality principles and practice for any meaningful change to occur. At present, the State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and its organs have the mandate for women empowerment and the entrenching of gender equality principles both in policy and practice. A major challenge that may be facing the Ministry is the extent to which it could facilitate the necessary transformation required for a gender equitable system across sectorial interests (i.e. both within public and private institutions), and at the grassroots.   The success of the gender policy framework therefore depends on the extent to which it attracts high level support in government, and conceiving it within the realities of the government's macro-policy plans, including its resource allocation framework.

6.1.2   Gender as a Core Value for Transforming the Niger State Society

The State Gender Policy Framework is anchored on gender equality principles, and a process in which women's roles in reproduction and production are not only valued, but are seen as being at the core of the wealth of the nation, and on which national development is anchored. The recognition of women's role in development had earlier led to increasingly diversion of human and material resources at both international and national levels to all segments of the society, including the previously marginalised womenfolk. Despite this apparent preoccupation with women-focused welfare and development programmes and policies, the confines of culture and social traditions, legal, religious and economic structures continue to limit the roles of women and to hinder them from benefiting from the development process. The development reality today, is more emphatic on the truism – *'a nation that is not engendered is endangered'*, more importantly, as the 'gender variable' occupies a central stage of national development.

A major challenge for this Niger State Gender Policy Framework therefore, is confronting traditional structures that continue to impede women in the process of development, and which provide a breeding ground for gender inequalities in our society. Importantly, this policy must be able to clearly show how the 'gender variable' is intimately linked to our development path as a nation, and that to ignore the 'woman's question' in national or state development policies and

plans is an attempt to slow down the nation's and state's development. It is therefore important to embrace 'gender' as a core value for political, and socio-economic transformations.

6.1.3 Confronting Patriarchy

A major task in the implementation of the Niger State Gender Policy is how best to confront patriarchy, exacerbated in the culture of male supremacy. The patriarchal cultural norm remains hidden and protected within traditional institutional structures held in abeyance, and almost in sacredness.

To make a meaningful change in gender role relations, in the pursuit of gender equality culture and principles, men and women must share mutual respect, while there must be a reconstruction of gender power play. In this wise, gender role relations traditionally based on exercise of power over the other gender as a way of life, and as the norm must change for an option of mutuality. This in itself becomes an important tenet of democratic ideals.

The goal of the Niger State Policy Framework is to provide equal opportunities for both women and men, and to change the current gender imbalances which have been entrenched by the principles of patriarchy in history. Rather than emphasise the negative situations of women alone, the policy aims at improving the equality between women and men, while at the same time espousing men to the possible gains of reducing the gender gaps and ensuring gender equality in all facets of life. The society, and in particular men, have a lot to gain by supporting equality for women –

- Improved fatherhood and motherhood, as the state and the private sector share social responsibilities for these;
- A more enduring gender role relations as women and men balance their roles and responsibilities within the private and public spheres of life;
- Freedom of choice and balance of power in matters of sexuality and reproduction
- Exchange of social skills between men and women;
- Improved quality of life at the household level, with talents and potentials of boys and girls properly nurtured and tapped for development;

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- Improved leadership terrain through the full use of leadership skills and styles of men and women

- A more humane social terrain as the needs of men and women, old and young, boys and girls, rich and poor, people living with disability become the focus of policies and development plans; and

- A sustainable state development.

6.1.4 Coordination, Networking, and Monitoring

The mandate for gender equality and women empowerment cuts across sectors, and institutions. A major challenge from this, is how best to ensure that these role functions are effective, and accountable, not only within government, but also within the private sector and the civil society. It is also important that these sectorial and institutional interests share the same understanding of the gender equality and women empowerment vision and mission. This can only be achieved through a well-targeted coordination, networking and monitoring efforts. The following become mandatory to ensure effective coordination, networking and monitoring –

- Drawing up of a 5-Year State Gender Action Plan to be updated every five years, and adaptable into Sectorial Gender Action Plans for public and private institutions (see Annex …..);

- Ensuring a well-coordinated gender mainstreaming framework within and across public and private institutions;

- De-centralising gender mainstreaming responsibilities using short, medium, and long – term strategies

- Clearly allocate monitoring and evaluation responsibilities within institutions.

- Use participatory mechanisms throughout the Gender Management System

6.2 Forward Looking Strategies

The approval of the State Gender Policy is the first step in accomplishing this vision of change and social transformation. It is envisaged that the State Gender Policy shall be operated within the current structures of governance. However, to ensure that the proposed change is more enduring, and for long-term sustainability, it is important to reconsider the structure within which the State Gender Policy shall operate. A major challenge within the present arrangement is how to

coordinate the gender mainstreaming efforts through each MDA's monitoring and evaluation unit across sectors as well as the private sector without over-tasking the present structure. Again, it is also important to clearly separate mandates for 'women empowerment' and 'gender equality', being the two legs of the Niger State Gender Policy. Otherwise, the pursuit of one may over-shadow the other if this process of change is not well articulated.

A solution is proposed in creating supportive institutions and/or institutional reforms. It is therefore proposed for the future, the creation of a Department or Unit of Gender Equality which remains within the arms of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. In this case, a Gender Equality Department is advised than the Unit. This Department may be located within the Ministry and with close working with SGTWG. Where the latter option is The Gender Equality Department is to take on gender equality specific roles. Such roles shall be mainly supervisory (i.e. supervision of activities of 'Gender Critical Mass' (GCM) within the Line Ministries and within other government organs), coordination and monitoring of gender indicators within private sector institutions and agencies, documentation (gender statistics and state gender status, working closely with the State Planning Commission); monitoring of gender benchmarking, and mainstreaming of gender equality concerns in state planning (work closely on this with the State Planning Commission), and recommending rewards and sanctions for gender equality index in each sector.

The Gender Equality Department shall define broad operational policies, indicators for the effectiveness, and timeframes for implementation and monitor performance (see Box 6.1. for other specific functions of the Gender Equality Department). Regular reports from this Department will guide intervention activities and programmes to be carried out by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and the M&E units within the State Planning Commission, and other government and private sector institutions.

Although all the institutions (public, private, and community level institutions) are to be involved in collecting and collating gender disaggregated data to ensure proper monitoring and evaluation processes, the Gender Equality Department shall be responsible for the overall coordination of assessing the progress of the implementation of the State Gender Policy, and shall be responsible to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.

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