



KWARA STATE EXPORT PROMOTION STRATEGY & GUIDELINES 2023-2028



28th December 2023



**KWARA STATE EXPORT PROMOTION
STRATEGY & GUIDELINES
2023-2028**



**KWARA STATE EXPORT PROMOTION
STRATEGY & GUIDELINES
2023-2028**



28th December 2023



Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Development Process	5
Responsibilities and Roles	7
Overview of Kwara State Economy	10
Objectives of the Export Strategy	11
Sectorial Analysis and Identification of Export Potentials	15
Rice Production, Key Issues, and Export Strategy	16
Cassava Production, Key Issues, and Export Strategy	20
Yam Production Key Issues and Export Strategy	23
Soybean Production Key Issues and Export Strategy	27
Financial Framework	30
Institutional Mechanism and Activities	32
Capacity Building and Sensitization	36
Trade Infrastructure and Logistics	38
Policy and Regulation Framework	42
Monitoring and Evaluation	44
Risk Management	
Conclusion	45
References	46





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We express our deepest gratitude to all individuals and organizations who, through their collective effort, have significantly contributed to the development of the Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines. Your invaluable contributions have made this strategy a comprehensive and robust plan for the future of Kwara State's exports.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Kwara State Government for their unwavering support and exceptional leadership throughout this project. The Kwara State Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Technology staff are given special recognition for their invaluable insights and coordination efforts. Your leadership has been the cornerstone of the success of this project.

We are grateful to the Nigeria Export Promotion Council (NEPC) and Reigns Management Consult for their technical support and provision of critical data. The contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank were instrumental in shaping the strategic framework.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the local farmers and private sector stakeholders. Your consultations and feedback were not just vital, but they were the very essence that tailored the strategy to the real needs and potential of Kwara State's agricultural sector. Your role in this process is truly commendable and we value your contribution immensely.

Finally, we acknowledge with great respect and admiration the diligent efforts of the research team from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and PwC Nigeria. Your expertise and dedication were not just pivotal, but they were the driving force behind the compilation of this comprehensive document.

Thank you for being so committed to fostering economic growth and sustainable development in Kwara State.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines is a comprehensive framework designed to enhance economic growth through increased international trade. This strategy has been meticulously developed through extensive consultations with the private sector, ensuring that it reflects the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders involved in export activities.

The primary objectives of this strategy are to boost economic growth, diversify markets, expand the range of exportable products, and build the capacity of local exporters. By fostering innovation and improving the quality of goods and services, Kwara State aims to become a competitive player in the global market.

Key components of the strategy include:

- **Responsibilities and Roles:** Clearly defined roles for government bodies, private sector participants, and support institutions to ensure coordinated efforts and accountability.
- **Financial Framework:** A detailed budget allocation and identifying funding sources to support export promotion activities, ensuring efficient resource management.
- **Strategic Approaches:** Focused on product development, market expansion, branding and promotion, and trade facilitation to create a robust export ecosystem.
- **Planned Activities:** Implement training programs, participate in international trade fairs, conduct market research, provide export incentives, and enhance infrastructure to support export activities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establishment of performance indicators and regular review processes to measure success and make necessary adjustments, along with mechanisms for continuous stakeholder feedback.
- **Risk Management:** Identifying potential risks, coupled with strategies for mitigation and contingency planning, to safeguard against unforeseen challenges.

This strategic document is a roadmap for leveraging Kwara State's unique strengths, fostering a conducive environment for exporters, and ultimately positioning the state as a leading exporter of high-quality goods and services. By adhering to these guidelines, Kwara State is poised to achieve substantial economic benefits and sustainable development through enhanced export performance.

MRS. DAMILOLOA YETUNDE YUSUF ADELODUN
Commissioner of Business, Innovation and Technology



INTRODUCTION

The Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines is a pivotal initiative to catalyze economic growth and development by enhancing international trade activities. This document serves as a strategic blueprint to guide the state's expansion of its export base, fostering economic diversification and resilience.

With its rich agricultural resources, burgeoning industrial sector, and strategic geographical location, Kwara State holds significant potential to become a prominent player in the global market. However, realizing this potential requires a well-structured approach that addresses the complexities of international trade and leverages the strengths of both the public and private sectors.

This strategy outlines clear objectives, responsibilities, and actionable steps to boost the state's export performance. It has been developed through an inclusive and consultative process, engaging key stakeholders from the private sector, including businesses, trade associations, and other relevant entities. Their insights and feedback have been instrumental in shaping a strategy that is not only ambitious but also practical and aligned with the needs of the local export community.

This document is organized into several key sections, each addressing critical aspects of export promotion. It delineates the roles of government bodies, private sector participants, and support institutions, ensuring a coordinated and collaborative effort. The financial framework highlights budget allocations and funding sources, while the strategic approaches focus on product development, market expansion, branding, and trade facilitation.

Furthermore, the strategy includes a comprehensive implementation plan detailing specific activities such as training programs, market research, trade missions, and infrastructure development. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are established to track progress and ensure accountability, focusing on continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement.

The Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines is a forward-thinking and dynamic plan designed to harness the state's export potential. It aims to create a robust and competitive export sector that contributes to sustainable economic growth and enhances the well-being of its

citizens. Through diligent implementation and ongoing collaboration, Kwara State is poised to achieve significant export capabilities and advancements in global trade presence.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Developing the Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines was a meticulous and inclusive process, ensuring the resulting strategy is comprehensive and aligned with all stakeholders' needs. This process involved several key steps:

1. **Stakeholder Consultations:** Extensive consultations were conducted with a diverse range of stakeholders, including businesses, trade associations, and other entities from the private sector. Their insights, experiences, and feedback were crucial in shaping the strategy, ensuring it addresses the real challenges and opportunities faced by exporters in Kwara State. The consultation started with a i) Kickoff meeting in Ilorin, ii) Stakeholders Workshop in Ilorin, iii) and Validation Workshops in Ilorin.
2. **Public-Private Partnership:** The strategy emphasizes a collaborative approach, leveraging the strengths and resources of both the public and private sectors. This partnership fosters a supportive environment for exporters, facilitating effective strategy implementation.
3. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Detailed market research and data analysis were conducted to identify key trends, potential markets, and Kwara State's competitive advantages. This informed the strategic approaches and objectives outlined in the document.
4. **Drafting and Review:** A draft strategy was prepared based on the consultations and research. A committee of experts and stakeholders reviewed this draft to ensure its relevance, feasibility, and alignment with the state's broader economic goals.
5. **Feedback Incorporation:** Feedback from the review process was incorporated to refine and improve the strategy. This iterative process ensured that the final document was robust and well-rounded.
6. **Finalization and Approval:** The finalized strategy was presented to relevant government bodies and stakeholders for approval, ensuring it has the necessary support and endorsement for effective implementation.

Through this comprehensive development process, the Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines have been crafted to provide a clear, actionable roadmap for enhancing the state's export performance, fostering economic growth, and ensuring sustainable development.

The Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines was prepared by the State Committee on Export Promotion (SCEP). The Committee comprises the underlisted Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and the private sector.

Table 1: Kwara State Committee on Export Strategy

SN	MDAS	Responsibilities
1	Kwara State Ministry of Business, Innovation and Technology	Anchor Ministry
2	Ministry of Agriculture	
3	Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development	
4	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	
5	Ministry of Solid Minerals	
6	Ministry of Communication	
7	Ministry of Women Affairs	
8	Ministry of Environment	
9	Kwara State Investment Promotion Agency	
10	First City Monument Bank (FCMB)	
11	Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) – Kwara State office	
12	National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) - Kwara State office	
13	Kwara State Garment Factory	
14	Sugar Films Factory.	
15	Reigns Management Consult	
16	Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industrialists (NASSI) – Kwara State Chapter	
17	Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) - Kwara State Office.	
18	Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME) – Kwara State Chapter	

The Committee also consulted with the following agency and private sector stakeholders.

1. Nigeria Police Force
2. Nigeria Customs Services (NCS)
3. Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC)
4. Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)
5. Association of Nigeria Exporters (ANE)

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

In implementing the Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines, clearly defined responsibilities and roles are crucial to ensure coordinated efforts and accountability. The following outlines the primary responsibilities and roles of key stakeholders:

Table 2: Responsibilities and Roles

SN	INSTITUTIONS	ROLES
1	Kwara State Government	✓ Provide overall leadership and strategic direction for the export strategy. ✓ Facilitate the creation of a conducive business environment for exporters through policy support and regulatory reforms. ✓ Allocate resources and funding to support export promotion activities. ✓ Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the export strategy.
2	Kwara State Ministry of Business, Innovation and Technology	✓ Develop and implement specific policies and programs to support exporters. ✓ Provide technical assistance and advisory services to businesses. ✓ Coordinate with other government departments and agencies to ensure a unified approach to export promotion. ✓ Organize trade missions, fairs, and international exhibitions to promote Kwara State products.

3	Kwara State Council on Export Promotion	✓ Implement sector-specific initiatives to boost exports. ✓ Provide market intelligence and research to help exporters identify new opportunities. ✓ Ensure compliance
4	Businesses and Exporters	✓ Identify and pursue export opportunities per the strategic goals outlined in the export strategy. ✓ Invest in product development and innovation to meet international market standards. ✓ Participate in training programs and capacity-building initiatives. ✓ Collaborate with government bodies and other stakeholders to enhance export performance.
5	Trade Associations	✓ Advocate for the interests of exporters and provide a collective voice in policy discussions. ✓ Facilitate networking and information sharing among members. ✓ Organize industry-specific training and development programs. ✓ Support members in accessing new markets and overcoming export challenges
6	Financial Institutions	✓ Provide financial products and services tailored to the needs of exporters, such as export financing and insurance. ✓ Offer advisory services on risk management and international trade finance.

		✓ Partner with government bodies to develop financial incentives and support schemes for exporters.
7	Educational Bodies	✓ Develop and offer training programs to build the capacity of current and potential exporters. ✓ Conduct research and provide insights on global market trends and best practices in export. ✓ Collaborate with industry and government to ensure relevant and up-to-date training programs.
8	International Trade Organizations	✓ Provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to local exporters. ✓ Facilitate access to international markets through trade agreements and partnerships. ✓ Offer platforms for Kwara State exporters to showcase their products globally

OVERVIEW OF KWARA STATE ECONOMY



Kwara State is one of 36 states of Nigeria, and its capital is Ilorin. The primary ethnic groups in Kwara State are Yoruba, Nupe, Bariba, and Fulani. The state was created on 27 May 1967 by the Federal Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon, who broke the then four regions of Nigeria into 12 states. At its creation, the state was made up of the former Ilorin and Kabba provinces of the old Northern Region with its first name as the West Central State, but this was later changed to “Kwara,” a local name for the River Niger. With a landmass of 35,705 square kilometers or 3.57 million hectares (about 4 percent of Nigeria’s landmass), over 70 % is arable. Agriculture is the economy's primary source, and the state's principal cash crops are cotton, cocoa, coffee, kolanut, tobacco, and palm produce. Mineral resources in the state are limestone, marble, feldspar, clay, kaolin, quartz, and granite rock. The population of Kwara

state is about 2.3 million (National Population Commission figure, 2006). The state's strategic location, rich natural resources, and vibrant workforce position it as a critical economic player within Nigeria and a potential hub for export activities.

Objectives of the Kwara State Export Strategy

The Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines are designed to drive substantial economic growth and development by enhancing the state's export capabilities. The strategy focuses on several key objectives: economic growth targets, market diversification goals, product range expansion, capacity building, and skill development. Each objective is essential for creating a robust and competitive export sector that can contribute significantly to the state's overall economic prosperity.

The table below presents Kwara State's export strategies' primary goals, objectives, and expected outcomes.

Table 3: Primary Goals, Objectives, and Expected Outcomes of Kwara State Export Strategies.

Goal 1.	Economic Growth	
Objectives	Strategies	Expected outcomes
1. To boost the economic growth of Kwara State by increasing export volumes and revenues.	i. Increase Export Volumes: Implement initiatives encouraging local businesses to engage in export activities. This includes providing financial incentives, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and offering support services to streamline the export process. ii. Enhance Export Revenues: Focus on high-value products and services that can generate significant revenue in international markets. This may involve identifying niche markets and high-demand products where Kwara State can have a competitive edge. iii. Economic Metrics: Set specific, measurable targets for export growth over the short, medium, and long term. Regularly monitor progress against these targets and adjust strategies to meet objectives.	I. Increased contribution of the export sector to the state's GDP. ii. Higher employment rates due to expanded business activities. iii. Enhanced foreign exchange earnings, leading to a more stable local economy.

	iv. Investment in Infrastructure: Develop and upgrade necessary infrastructure such as transportation networks, warehousing, and logistics facilities to support export activities efficiently.	
Goal 2	Market Diversification Goals	
Objectives	Strategies	Expected outcomes
To reduce dependency on a limited number of markets by expanding into new and diverse international markets	I. Market Research: Conduct comprehensive market research to identify new and emerging markets that offer potential for Kwara State's products and services. This includes understanding market demand, consumer preferences, and regulatory requirements. ii. Trade Missions and Expos: Organize and participate in international trade missions, expos, and fairs to promote Kwara State's products. These activities provide opportunities to establish business connections and explore new markets. iii. Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements: Leverage trade agreements and partnerships to gain better access to international markets. Work with national and international trade organizations to identify and exploit these opportunities. iv. Export Incentives: Incentivize businesses to explore and enter new markets. This can include financial support, tax reliefs, and subsidies for market entry activities.	I. Broader and more diverse export market base, reducing risks associated with market dependency. ii. Increased resilience of the local economy against global market fluctuations. iii. Expansion of trade relationships and international business networks.
Goal 3	Product Range Expansion	
Objective	Strategies	Expected Outcomes
To diversify the range of exportable products and services, enhancing Kwara State's competitive edge in the global market.	I. Innovation and R&D: Invest in research and development to innovate, improve the quality of existing products, and develop new products that meet international standards and consumer demands. ii. Sector Development: Identify and develop key sectors with high export potential, including agriculture, manufacturing, and technology. Provide sector-specific support and development programs to enhance their export readiness. iii. Quality Assurance: Implement stringent quality control measures to ensure	I. Wider variety of products and services available for export, reducing reliance on a narrow product base. ii. Enhanced competitiveness of Kwara State's products in the international market. iii. Increased innovation and technological advancement within the state

	products meet international standards. Provide training and resources to help businesses achieve and maintain these standards.	
	iv. Brand Development: Develop a strong brand identity for Kwara State's products. Promote this brand internationally to build recognition and demand.	
Goal 3	Capacity Building and Skill Development	
Objective	Strategies	Expected Outcomes
To enhance local businesses' and workers' skills and capacities to improve export performance and sustainability.	i. Training Programs: Develop and implement training programs focusing on export management, international trade regulations, market research, and quality standards. These programs should be tailored to the needs of different sectors. ii. Workshops and Seminars: Regularly organize workshops and seminars with experts from various fields to provide businesses with the latest knowledge and skills needed for successful exporting. iii. Mentorship and Support: Establish mentorship programs where experienced exporters can guide new entrants into the export market. Provide ongoing support and advisory services to businesses at different stages of their export journey. iv. Educational Collaborations: Partner with educational institutions to develop curricula and courses on international trade and export management. Encourage continuous learning and professional development in the export sector.	I. A skilled and knowledgeable workforce capable of driving export growth. ii. Increased number of businesses participating in international trade. iii. Improved export performance and competitiveness of local businesses.

SECTORIAL ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF EXPORT POTENTIALS

A detailed sectoral analysis of Kwara State's economy highlights the areas with significant export potential. By focusing on these sectors, Kwara State can leverage its strengths to enhance export performance and drive economic growth. The following analysis identifies key sectors, their status, challenges, and potential for export expansion:



Rice Production/Key Issues and Export Strategies



Rice production in Kwara State is a cornerstone of its agricultural sector, contributing significantly to its economy and food security. With approximately 150,000 hectares dedicated to rice cultivation, the state produces an estimated 500,000 metric tons annually, averaging 3.3 metric tons per hectare. Major rice-producing areas include Edu and Patigi Local Government Areas, benefiting from fertile land and irrigation facilities. Initiatives like the Anchor Borrowers' Programme by the Central Bank of Nigeria provide farmers access to credit, quality seeds, and technical assistance, bolstering production efforts. Additionally, investments in rice

mills and processing facilities, such as Shonga Farms and Bacita Rice Mill, enhance the value chain and ensure better quality rice. The key export markets are West African countries with high rice consumption, and international markets are in Asia and Europe, provided the rice meets quality standards.

Key Issues/Challenges

i. Limited Access to Quality Seeds: One of the primary challenges in rice production in Kwara State is the limited access to high-quality seeds. Many farmers rely on traditional seed varieties that are often low-yielding and susceptible to pests and diseases. This results in suboptimal harvests and reduces overall productivity.

ii. Inadequate Irrigation Infrastructure: Inadequate irrigation infrastructure poses a significant barrier to maximizing rice yields. Many rice farms in Kwara State depend on rain-fed agriculture, which makes production highly vulnerable to erratic weather patterns and droughts. The lack of sufficient irrigation facilities limits farmers' ability to practice multiple cropping cycles per year.

iii. Poor Soil Fertility Management: Soil fertility is another critical issue affecting rice production. Many rice paddies suffer from nutrient depletion due to continuous farming without adequate soil fertility management practices. Chemical fertilizers are often inconsistent and poorly managed, leading to poor soil health and reduced rice yields.

iv. Pest and Disease Infestations: Rice farmers in Kwara State frequently face challenges from pests and diseases such as rice blast, brown spot, and stem borers. These infestations can significantly reduce crop yields and quality. Limited access to effective and affordable pest control measures exacerbates this problem, leaving farmers vulnerable to substantial losses.

V. Post-Harvest Losses: Post-harvest losses are a major concern for rice producers in Kwara State. Poor handling, inadequate storage facilities, and inefficient processing methods contribute to significant losses after harvest. This not only reduces the quantity of marketable rice but also affects the quality, thereby impacting farmers' incomes.

vi. Limited Access to Credit and Financing: Many rice farmers struggle with limited credit and financing options. This financial constraint hinders their ability to invest in

essential inputs such as high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and modern farming equipment. Farmers cannot improve their production practices or expand their operations without sufficient capital.

vii. Market Access and Price Fluctuations: Access to reliable markets and stable prices is another significant challenge. Farmers often face difficulties in finding profitable markets for their produce due to poor transportation infrastructure and a lack of market information. Additionally, price fluctuations can make it challenging for farmers to predict their income and plan their investments effectively.

viii. Lack of Extension Services and Training: The availability of agricultural extension services and training programs is limited in Kwara State. Farmers often lack the knowledge and skills to implement advanced farming techniques and sustainable practices. This gap in education and support hinders the adoption of innovative methods that could enhance productivity and sustainability in rice farming.

xi. Abandonment by Farmers: Farmers, especially young people previously engaged in planting rice, have abandoned it for other businesses due to challenges in the Indigenous rice industry, particularly regarding equipment, market access, logistics, and other critical factors.

Export Strategies

- I. Enhancing Production Quality:** Improving the quality of rice production is critical for boosting exports from Kwara State. Implementing best agricultural practices, utilizing high-yield and disease-resistant rice varieties, and ensuring proper pest and disease management are essential. By adopting these methods, farmers can produce rice that meets international quality standards, making it more attractive to global markets.
- II. Developing Processing Capabilities:** Investing in rice processing infrastructure is crucial for adding value to raw rice and making it more competitive in international markets. Modern milling and processing facilities ensure that the rice meets international buyers' quality and packaging standards. Processed rice products, such as parboiled rice, rice flour, and rice bran oil, can fetch higher prices and open new market segments.

- III. Strengthening Market Access and Infrastructure:** Improving market access and infrastructure is vital for efficient rice exportation. Upgrading transportation networks, including roads and ports, will facilitate the movement of rice products from farms to international markets. Additionally, developing storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses ensures that rice remains in optimal condition for export.
- IV. Leveraging Trade Agreements and Partnerships:** Utilizing trade agreements and forging partnerships with international buyers can enhance rice export potential from Kwara State. Engaging with regional and international trade organizations and forming alliances with foreign companies can open new markets and provide better export opportunities. These partnerships can also offer technical assistance and market intelligence, helping local producers to meet international standards.
- V. Implementing Certification and Quality Control Measures:** Establishing certification and quality control measures is vital for ensuring that rice products from Kwara State are accepted in international markets. Introducing standards and certification processes, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), will help maintain consistent quality. These measures build trust with foreign buyers and enhance the reputation of Kwara State's rice products.
- VI. Accessing Export Financing and Support:** Access to export financing and support services can significantly boost rice exports. Financial institutions and government programs should offer rice exporters loans, grants, and insurance to mitigate risks and cover the costs associated with international trade. Additionally, export promotion agencies can provide guidance and resources to help local businesses navigate the complexities of the export market.
- VII. Promoting Rice Through International Marketing:** Promoting Kwara State's rice products through international marketing campaigns can raise awareness and demand. Participating in international trade fairs and exhibitions and leveraging digital marketing platforms can showcase the quality and variety of rice products available. Highlighting the unique attributes and benefits of Kwara State's rice will attract foreign buyers and create a strong brand presence in the global market.

Cassava Production Key Issues and Export Strategies



Cassava production in Kwara State is a vital component of the agricultural sector, playing a significant role in food security and economic development. The state dedicates approximately 120,000 hectares to cassava cultivation, yielding an impressive 1.2 million metric tons annually, with an average yield of 10 metric tons per hectare. Major cassava-producing areas include the Asa, Ilorin East, and Oyun Local Government Areas, which benefit from favorable climatic conditions and fertile soil. Government initiatives such as the Agricultural Transformation Agenda and the Anchor Borrowers' Programme have bolstered cassava production by providing farmers access to improved seedlings, fertilizers, and financial support. African countries where cassava is a staple in African countries and is in high demand in Europe and Asia for industrial uses such as starch and biofuels.

Key Issues/Challenges

1. ***Inadequate infrastructure:*** Poor Road networks and insufficient storage facilities lead to high post-harvest losses and reduced quality of cassava products. Smallholder farmers also face limited access to finance, making it challenging to purchase necessary inputs such as improved seedlings, fertilizers, and modern farming equipment. Pests and diseases, including the cassava mosaic virus and mealybug, exacerbate these challenges by significantly reducing yields.

2. ***Lack of modern farming techniques.*** Many farmers rely on traditional methods, which results in lower productivity and inefficient resource use. Additionally, the shortage of processing facilities limits the ability to convert raw cassava into higher-value products such as flour, starch, and ethanol, reducing **potential income from value addition**.
3. ***Limited access to reliable irrigation systems makes rice cultivation vulnerable to dry seasons, leading to inconsistent yields.*** Dependence on rain-fed agriculture further exacerbates this problem. Inadequate infrastructure, such as poor transportation networks and lack of storage facilities, results in significant post-harvest losses. Moreover, farmers often struggle to obtain high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides to achieve high yields.
4. ***Financial constraints.*** Many farmers lack access to credit and financial services, limiting their ability to invest in improved farming practices and technologies. Pests and diseases threaten rice yields, such as rice weevils and rice blasts. Inconsistent power supply disrupts processing activities, affecting the quality and quantity of rice produced, as reliable electricity is crucial for operating rice mills efficiently.
5. ***Climate change*** presents a pervasive challenge for cassava and rice production. Unpredictable weather patterns and extreme conditions, such as droughts and floods, adversely impact agricultural productivity. Moreover, better extension services are needed to educate farmers on modern farming techniques, pest management, and efficient use of inputs. Market access issues also plague farmers, who often lack access
6. ***No Structured Market:*** The absence of a structured market system impedes Kwara State's capacity to add value to Cassava products and limits the diversity of exports. Developing a structured market, establishing processing units, and fostering partnerships with chocolate industries are vital steps in creating value-added opportunities and increasing the state's income from Cassava and Rice exports profitable markets and face challenges in marketing their produce effectively.
7. ***Policy and regulatory challenges create an uncertain environment for farmers and investors.*** Inconsistent government policies and regulatory frameworks can hinder agricultural development. Addressing these challenges through strategic investments, policy reforms, and capacity-building initiatives is crucial. By doing so, Kwara State can significantly enhance the productivity and profitability of its

cassava and rice production sectors, thereby boosting the state's economy and ensuring food security.

8. ***Lack of Access to Improved Seedlings:*** Kwara State's Cassava export potential is hindered by the low yields from using outdated Cassava varieties with poor resistance to drought. To boost export capacity, concerted efforts are needed to provide farmers access to improved seedlings through collaborations with research institutions, extension services, and agricultural cooperatives.
9. **Post-Harvest Losses:** Significant losses occur due to inadequate storage facilities and techniques, leading to reduced income for farmers

Export Strategies

- a. **Enhancing Production Quality:** Enhancing the quality of cassava production is fundamental to boosting exports from Kwara State. Implementing best agricultural practices, utilizing high-yield and disease-resistant cassava varieties, and ensuring proper pest and disease management are crucial. By adopting these methods, farmers can produce cassava that meets international quality standards, making it more attractive to global markets.
- b. **Developing Processing Capabilities:** Investing in cassava processing infrastructure is essential for adding value to raw cassava and making it more competitive in international markets. Establishing processing plants for products like cassava flour, starch, and ethanol can significantly increase the export potential. These value-added products are in high demand globally and can fetch higher prices, providing better returns for farmers and processors in Kwara State.
- c. **Strengthening Market Access and Infrastructure:** Improving market access and infrastructure is crucial for efficient cassava exportation. Upgrading transportation networks, including roads and ports, will facilitate the movement of cassava products from farms to international markets. Additionally, developing storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses ensures that cassava products remain in optimal condition for export.
- d. **Leveraging Trade Agreements and Partnerships:** Utilizing trade agreements and forging partnerships with international buyers can enhance the export potential of cassava from Kwara State. Engaging with regional and international trade organizations

and forming alliances with foreign companies can open new markets and provide better export opportunities. These partnerships can also offer technical assistance and market intelligence, helping local producers to meet international standards.

- e. **Implementing Certification and Quality Control Measures:** Establishing certification and quality control measures is vital for ensuring that cassava products from Kwara State are accepted in international markets. Introducing standards and certification processes, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), will help maintain consistent quality. These measures build trust with foreign buyers and enhance the reputation of Kwara State's cassava products.
- f. **Accessing Export Financing and Support:** Access to export financing and support services can significantly boost cassava exports. Financial institutions and government programs should offer loans, grants, and insurance to cassava exporters to mitigate risks and cover the costs associated with international trade. Additionally, export promotion agencies can provide guidance and resources to help local businesses navigate the complexities of the export market.
- g. **Promoting Cassava Through International Marketing:** Promoting Kwara State's cassava products through international marketing campaigns can raise awareness and demand. Participating in international trade fairs and exhibitions and leveraging digital marketing platforms can showcase the quality and variety of cassava products available. Highlighting the unique attributes and benefits of Kwara State's cassava will attract foreign buyers and create a strong brand presence in the global market.

Yam Production/Key Issues and Export Strategies



Yam production in Kwara State, Nigeria, is a critical agricultural activity significantly contributing to local food security and the state's economy. In 2023, approximately 50,000 hectares were dedicated to yam cultivation, yielding an impressive 1.2 million metric tons of yams. This high yield, averaging 24 metric tons per hectare, surpasses the national average and underscores the region's favorable farming conditions and practices. Yam farming not only contributes about 15% to the agricultural GDP of Kwara State but also employs over 200,000 households, highlighting its importance in rural livelihoods. Despite these successes, the sector faces challenges such as pest infestations, post-harvest losses, and limited access to credit for farmers. To address these issues, the Kwara State government has implemented support programs, including subsidies, training, and infrastructure development, to enhance productivity and reduce losses. With continued investment and adequate policy support, yam production in Kwara State holds significant potential for further growth and economic contribution.

Key Issues/Challenges

- I. Limited Access to Quality Planting Material:** Farmers in Kwara State often struggle to access high-quality yam seeds. This limitation results in lower yields and increases susceptibility to pests and diseases. The use of traditional seed varieties further exacerbates this problem, as these are often less productive compared to improved varieties.
- II. Poor Soil Fertility Management:** Yam cultivation depends on fertile soils. However, continuous farming without adequate soil fertility management practices leads to soil degradation and reduced productivity. Many farmers lack the knowledge or resources to implement proper soil fertility management techniques, resulting in lower yields.
- III. Pest and Disease Infestations:** Yam crops are prone to various pests and diseases, such as yam beetles, nematodes, and anthracnose. These infestations can significantly reduce crop yields and quality. Farmers often have limited access to effective pest control measures, further aggravating this issue.
- IV. Inadequate Storage Facilities:** Post-harvest losses due to inadequate storage facilities are a significant challenge in yam production. Poor storage conditions can lead to spoilage, reducing the quantity and quality of yams available for sale.

and export. This not only affects farmers' incomes but also impacts the overall supply chain.

- V. Limited Access to Credit and Financing:** Farmers often face difficulties in accessing credit and financing options, essential for investing in better farming inputs and technologies. Farmers cannot improve their production practices or expand their operations without sufficient capital, limiting their ability to increase yields and profitability.
- VI. Market Access and Price Fluctuations:** Yam farmers in Kwara State face challenges with market access and price fluctuations. Poor transportation infrastructure and lack of market information make it difficult for farmers to find profitable markets for their produce. Additionally, unpredictable price changes can impact farmers' income stability and planning.
- VII. Lack of Extension Services and Training:** The availability of agricultural extension services and training programs is limited in Kwara State. Farmers often lack the knowledge and skills to implement advanced farming techniques and sustainable practices. This gap in education and support hinders the adoption of innovative methods that could enhance productivity and sustainability in yam farming.

Export Strategies

- i. Enhancing Production Quality:** Improving the quality of yam production is essential for boosting exports from Kwara State. Implementing best agricultural practices, utilizing high-yield and disease-resistant yam varieties, and ensuring proper pest and disease management are crucial. Farmers can produce yams that meet international quality standards by adopting these methods, making them more attractive to global markets.
- ii. Developing Processing Capabilities:** Investing in yam processing infrastructure is crucial for adding value to raw yams and making them more competitive in international markets. Establishing processing plants for products like yam flour, chips, and starch can significantly increase the export potential. These value-added products are in high demand globally and can fetch

higher prices, providing better returns for farmers and processors in Kwara State.

- iii. **Strengthening Market Access and Infrastructure:** Improving market access and infrastructure is vital for efficient yam exportation. Upgrading transportation networks, including roads and ports, will facilitate the movement of yam products from farms to international markets. Additionally, developing storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses ensures that yam products remain in optimal condition for export.
- iv. **Leveraging Trade Agreements and Partnerships:** Utilizing trade agreements and forging partnerships with international buyers can enhance the export potential of yams from Kwara State. Engaging with regional and international trade organizations and forming alliances with foreign companies can open up new markets and provide better export opportunities. These partnerships can also offer technical assistance and market intelligence, helping local producers meet international standards.
- v. **Implementing Certification and Quality Control Measures:** Establishing certification and quality control measures is vital for ensuring that yam products from Kwara State are accepted in international markets. Introducing standards and certification processes, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), will help maintain consistent quality. These measures build trust with foreign buyers and enhance the reputation of Kwara State's yam products.
- vi. **Accessing Export Financing and Support:** Access to export financing and support services can significantly boost Yam exports. Financial institutions and government programs should offer loans, grants, and insurance to yam exporters to mitigate risks and cover the costs associated with international trade. Additionally, export promotion agencies can provide guidance and resources to help local businesses navigate the complexities of the export market.
- vii. **Promoting Yam Through International Marketing:** Promoting Kwara State's yam products through international marketing campaigns can raise awareness and demand. Participating in international trade fairs and exhibitions and leveraging digital marketing platforms can showcase the quality and variety of yam products. Highlighting the unique attributes and benefits of Kwara

State's yams will attract foreign buyers and create a strong brand presence in the global market.

Soybean Production/Key Issues and Export Strategies



Soybean production in Kwara State, Nigeria, has become increasingly significant, contributing to both the local economy and agricultural sustainability. In 2023, soybeans were cultivated on approximately 30,000 hectares of land, reflecting the crop's growing importance in the region. The total production reached around 90,000 metric tons, with an average yield of 3 metric tons per hectare, slightly above the national average. Soybean farming supports many rural households, providing a crucial source of income and employment for over 100,000 people in the state. Despite the positive production figures, farmers face challenges such as limited access to high-quality seeds, inadequate storage facilities, and fluctuating market prices. To address these issues, the Kwara State government has introduced initiatives like seed distribution programs, training on best agricultural practices, and investment in rural infrastructure. With these measures, soybean production in Kwara State is poised for continued growth, enhancing food security and economic development.

Key Issues/Challenges

- i. **Poor Soil Fertility Management:** Soybean cultivation highly depends on fertile soils. However, continuous farming without adequate soil fertility management practices leads to soil degradation and reduced productivity. Many farmers lack the knowledge or resources to implement proper soil fertility management techniques, resulting in lower yields.
- ii. **Pest and Disease Infestations:** Soybean crops are prone to various pests and diseases, such as aphids, rust, and bacterial blight. These infestations can significantly reduce crop yields and quality. Farmers often have limited access to effective pest control measures, further aggravating this issue.
- iii. **Inadequate Storage Facilities:** Post-harvest losses due to inadequate storage facilities are a significant challenge in soybean production. Poor storage conditions can lead to spoilage, reducing the quantity and quality of soybeans available for sale and export. This not only affects farmers' incomes but also impacts the overall supply chain.
- iv. **Limited Access to Credit and Financing:** Farmers often face difficulties accessing credit and financing options, which are essential for investing in better farming inputs and technologies. Farmers cannot improve their production practices or expand their operations without sufficient capital, limiting their ability to increase yields and profitability.
- v. **Market Access and Price Fluctuations:** Soybean farmers in Kwara State face challenges with market access and price fluctuations. Poor transportation infrastructure and lack of market information make it difficult for farmers to find profitable markets for their produce. Additionally, unpredictable price changes can impact farmers' income stability and planning.
- vi. **Lack of Extension Services and Training:** The availability of agricultural extension services and training programs is limited in Kwara State. Farmers often lack the knowledge and skills to implement advanced farming techniques and sustainable practices. This gap in education and support hinders the adoption of innovative methods that could enhance productivity and sustainability in soybean farming.

Export Strategies

- i. Enhancing Production Quality:** Improving the quality of soybean production is essential for boosting exports from Kwara State. Implementing best agricultural practices, utilizing high-yield and disease-resistant soybean varieties, and ensuring proper pest and disease management are crucial. By adopting these methods, farmers can produce soybeans that meet international quality standards, making them more attractive to global markets.
- ii. Developing Processing Capabilities:** Investing in soybean processing infrastructure is crucial for adding value to raw soybeans and making them more competitive in international markets. Establishing processing plants for products like soybean oil, meal, and flour can significantly increase the export potential. These value-added products are in high demand globally and can fetch higher prices, providing better returns for farmers and processors in Kwara State.
- iii. Strengthening Market Access and Infrastructure:** Improving market access and infrastructure is vital for efficient soybean exportation. Upgrading transportation networks, including roads and ports, will facilitate the movement of soybean products from farms to international markets. Additionally, developing storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses ensures that soybean products remain in optimal condition for export.
- iv. Leveraging Trade Agreements and Partnerships:** Utilizing trade agreements and forging partnerships with international buyers can enhance the export potential of soybeans from Kwara State. Engaging with regional and international trade organizations and forming alliances with foreign companies can open up new markets and provide better export opportunities. These partnerships can also offer technical assistance and market intelligence, helping local producers to meet international standards.
- v. Implementing Certification and Quality Control Measures:** Establishing certification and quality control measures is vital for ensuring that soybean products from Kwara State are accepted in international markets. Introducing standards and certification processes, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), will help

maintain consistent quality. These measures build trust with foreign buyers and enhance the reputation of Kwara State's soybean products.

- vi. **Accessing Export Financing and Support:** Providing access to export financing and support services can significantly boost soybean exports. Financial institutions and government programs should offer loans, grants, and insurance to soybean exporters to mitigate risks and cover the costs associated with international trade. Additionally, export promotion agencies can provide guidance and resources to help local businesses navigate the complexities of the export market.
- vii. **Promoting Soybeans Through International Marketing:** Promoting Kwara State's soybean products through international marketing campaigns can raise awareness and demand. Participating in international trade fairs and exhibitions and leveraging digital marketing platforms can showcase the quality and variety of soybean products available. Highlighting the unique attributes and benefits of Kwara State's soybeans will attract foreign buyers and create a strong brand presence in the global market.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

The financial framework for the Kwara State Export Strategy and Guidelines outlines the budget allocation, funding sources, and resource management mechanisms necessary to support and sustain export promotion activities. This framework ensures that adequate financial resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to achieve the strategic objectives of boosting exports, expanding markets, and enhancing economic growth. The key components of the financial framework include:

Budget Allocation

The successful implementation of Kwara State Export Strategies is contingent upon the effective and expeditious mobilization of resources. The government must guarantee that the main implementing partners of Kwara State have access to adequate human and financial resources. The action plan designates institutions accountable for executing specific activities

according to their mandates. These institutions anticipate incorporating the Kwara State Export Strategies activities into annual work plans and budgets.

Development Partners and donor agencies will be critical in implementing the strategy, as the government cannot provide the necessary funding alone. They also play a crucial role in supporting Kwara's development agenda by providing technical, financial, and advisory assistance to help achieve the established national developmental objectives.

Development assistance has been the most essential development resource in most countries. Kwara State has been and continues to be a critical recipient of support from various agencies and collaborators. The implementing agencies require the assistance of Development Partners under the Aid for Trade program to implement critical programs concentrated on the strategy's priority areas and the action plan's components.

The total financial implications projected for implementing projects 2023-2026, excluding administrative costs, are USD\$2,000,000. This amount will be funded by the Government of Kwara State, revenue generated from fee-paying services, Development Partners, and Donor Agencies. The government of Kwara State will contribute 50% of the total budget, while financial institutions and development partners will contribute 50% and 10% from revenues, respectively. The implementing agencies will be responsible for composing robust concept notes to secure technical, financial, and advisory assistance from DPs and DAs.

The table below illustrates an approximate financial combination for implementation.

Table 4: Proposed budget contributions

Funding Sources	% Contribution
Kwara State Government	50
Revenues generated by implementing agencies	30
Development Partners & Donor Agencies	20

Table 5: Summary of Budget

<i>Allocation</i>	<i>Amount (USD)</i>
Strategic Goal 1	200,000
Strategic Goal 2	200,000
Strategic Goal 3	200,000
Strategic Goal 4	250,000
Miscellaneous	150,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,000,000</i>

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM AND ACTIVITIES

To realize Kwara State's vision of emerging as a prominent export player in Nigeria, the establishment and execution of a robust institutional framework are imperative. The State Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Technology will spearhead the implementation of the export strategy, ensuring the development of resilient frameworks, policies, and systems. These mechanisms will support and propel the state's export strategies forward, facilitating the efficient and effective promotion of Kwara State's products in national and international markets.

Trade Promotion Agencies: The Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Technology will establish the Kwara State Department of Trade and Export Facilitation (KWDTEF), headed by a Director in the Ministry.

Policy Development and Implementation: In Kwara State, under the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Technology, the government will fortify the Export Promotion and Trade Facilitation Committee to spearhead the formulation and execution of policies conducive to trade and export-oriented activities. A dedicated budget line to support the committee's endeavors will be incorporated into the 2024 State Budget. This committee will meticulously review and align the state's trade and export strategies with national objectives, culminating in creating the Kwara Export Readiness and Promotion Policy document. This document will encompass pivotal aspects such as fostering a business-friendly environment, streamlining regulations, and providing incentives to stimulate business engagement in export activities.

Notably, the Grievance Redress Mechanism, enacted through an executive order, will be a fundamental component, with the committee slated for inauguration in the first quarter of 2024.

Infrastructure Development: Recognizing the indispensable role of infrastructure in export success, Kwara State will expedite the activation of the Cargo Airport, establish Agro-processing hubs along product belts, and bolster Independent Power Projects, particularly in the proposed Industrial Park. Additionally, the facilitation of rural access roads through the Rural Access and Agricultural Market Project (RAAMP) will be prioritized to bolster farm-to-market schemes. The state will also invest in reliable energy and communication infrastructure to facilitate efficient business operations in the export sector.

Skills Development: Kwara State will implement training programs and educational initiatives to equip the workforce with the requisite knowledge and expertise for trade facilitation. To enhance strategic focus and operational efficiency, a week-long Workers Retreat for the Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment, and Cooperatives staff is scheduled for the second quarter of 2024. Furthermore, specialized training for staff, particularly in the Trade Desk Office, will encompass areas such as Market Research and Intelligence, Trade Information Management, Export Promotions, and international standard production, packaging, and labeling.

Quality Standards and Certification: Adherence to international standards is paramount for accessing global markets. Kwara State will establish robust mechanisms for quality control, certification, and compliance with international standards, coordinated through the Trade Desk Office within the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment.

Access to Finance: Facilitating and regulating cooperative societies to support product value chains and other initiatives. Facilitating exporters' access to finance is essential. Kwara State will collaborate with financial institutions to create favorable lending conditions and provide support mechanisms like export credit guarantees to mitigate risks. Notably, the state will mobilize resources from the informal sector finance, aggregating and strengthening.

Market Research and Information: Investing in market research will enable Kwara State to identify potential export markets and opportunities. Access to up-to-date market information is

crucial for businesses to make informed decisions and tailor products or services to meet international demand.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Recognizing the significance of collaboration between the public and private sectors, Kwara State will establish an effective PPP framework to leverage the strengths of both sectors in creating a supportive ecosystem for export-oriented businesses.

Technology Adoption: Embracing technology across the export process, from production to logistics and marketing, will enhance efficiency and competitiveness. Kwara State will explore digital platforms for trade facilitation and e-commerce to bolster its export endeavors.

Economic Planning and Policy Formulation: Establishing a dedicated economic planning commission or department responsible for formulating long-term economic development plans, policies, and strategies aligned with the state's overall vision and goals.

Kwara State Export Promotion Council: The 2024 budget provides operational expenses support for the Kwara State Export Promotion Council Setting, which facilitates the growth of export-oriented industries, provides export-related information and support services, and helps local businesses access international markets.

Monitoring and Evaluation Unit: Creating a monitoring and evaluation unit within the state government to track progress, evaluate the impact of economic development programs and projects, and ensure accountability and transparency in implementation.

Stakeholder Engagement Forums: Establish regular engagement forums involving government agencies, private sector representatives, civil society organizations, and community leaders to foster collaboration, gather feedback, and ensure inclusivity in decision-making processes.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND SENSITIZATION

Training Programs for Farmers and Agribusinesses: One of the cornerstone interventions is the implementation of comprehensive training programs for farmers and agribusinesses. These programs aim to enhance knowledge and skills in modern agricultural practices, post-

harvest handling, and value addition. By conducting workshops, seminars, and hands-on training sessions, farmers will learn best practices in pest and disease management and the use of improved seed varieties. Such initiatives will boost productivity and ensure that agricultural products meet the quality standards required for export markets.

Workforce Development: Developing a skilled workforce is critical for engaging in export-oriented activities. Vocational training and certification programs will equip individuals with expertise in agro-processing, quality control, packaging, and adherence to international marketing standards. This focus on workforce development ensures that Kwara State has a pool of qualified professionals capable of supporting the growth of export-driven businesses.

Export Readiness Training: Another crucial intervention is preparing businesses to enter international markets. Export readiness training sessions will cover essential topics such as export documentation, logistics, trade financing, and international trade regulations and standards compliance. These sessions will help businesses navigate the complexities of global trade, making them more competitive and successful in exporting their products.

Business Development Services: Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through business development services is vital for their growth and competitiveness. Mentorship programs, business planning support, and advisory services on market research, product development, and financial management will give SMEs the tools to scale up operations and enhance their market presence.

Technology Adoption Workshops: Promoting technology adoption in agriculture and business operations is essential for improving efficiency and productivity. Workshops on digital tools for farm management, e-commerce platforms for market access, and logistics and supply chain management technology will enable stakeholders to leverage modern technologies, thus enhancing their competitiveness in the global market.

Sensitization Initiatives

Public Awareness Campaigns: Increasing public awareness about the importance of exports and the opportunities available is crucial for fostering a culture of export-oriented growth. Media campaigns through radio, television, social media, and community outreach programs will educate stakeholders about the benefits and potentials of engaging in export activities. This

heightened awareness will encourage more businesses and individuals to participate in the export sector.

Stakeholder Engagement Forums: Regular stakeholder engagement forums will foster collaboration and communication among key players in the export value chain. By organizing forums, town hall meetings, and focus group discussions, the state can bring together farmers, businesses, financial institutions, and government agencies to discuss challenges, opportunities, and strategies for export promotion. Such interactions will build a cohesive and supportive ecosystem for export activities.

Information Dissemination: Access to timely and relevant information on export markets, standards, and regulations is vital for informed decision-making. Establishing information centers and online portals to update market trends, export requirements, and opportunities will ensure businesses have the necessary information to succeed in international markets. Distributing informational materials such as brochures, newsletters, and guides will further support this effort.

Grievance Redress Mechanism: Addressing concerns and challenges exporters face promptly and effectively is essential for maintaining confidence in the export sector. Setting up a dedicated helpline and online platform for reporting and resolving issues related to export activities will ensure stakeholders have a reliable avenue to seek assistance. Publicizing this mechanism widely will make it accessible to all involved parties.

Collaboration with Educational Institutions: Kwara State will partner with universities, colleges, and vocational institutions to develop courses and modules focused on international trade, export management, and global business practices, which will build a knowledge foundation supporting long-term export growth.

TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

To bolster its economic growth and establish itself as a key player in national and international markets, Kwara State will prioritize the development of robust trade infrastructure and logistics systems. Effective infrastructure and efficient logistics are critical components for facilitating trade, ensuring the smooth movement of goods, and enhancing the competitiveness of the

state's exports. By addressing these areas, Kwara State can create a more favorable environment for businesses and attract greater investment.

Road Infrastructure Improvement: Improving road infrastructure is fundamental to enhancing trade logistics. Many rural areas in Kwara State are agricultural hubs, producing significant quantities of goods for export. Upgrading and maintaining road networks will ensure that these goods can be transported efficiently from farms to processing centers and markets. The Rural Access and Agricultural Market Project (RAAMP) aims to construct and rehabilitate rural roads, thereby improving farm-to-market access and reducing transportation costs.

Activation of Kwara State Cargo Airport in Ilorin: The Cargo Airport in Ilorin will be activated to boost the state's export capabilities. The cargo airport will facilitate the rapid movement of perishable goods and high-value products to international markets. This infrastructure will reduce transit times and ensure that goods reach their destinations in optimal condition, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of Kwara State's exports.



Investment in Energy and Communication Infrastructure

Reliable Power Supply: Kwara State will invest in a reliable power supply which is crucial for efficiently functioning businesses engaged in export activities. Expanding Independent Power Projects (IPPs) to the proposed Industrial Park will ensure businesses have consistent electricity access. This will enable continuous production processes, reduce operational costs, and improve the overall competitiveness of Kwara State's industries.

Establishment of Agro-Processing Hubs: Kwara State will create agro-processing hubs along product belts to add value to raw agricultural products and reduce post-harvest losses. These hubs will provide facilities for processing, packaging, and storing agricultural goods, ensuring that they meet international quality standards. By integrating these hubs with transportation networks, Kwara State can streamline the supply chain and enhance the efficiency of its agricultural exports.



Customs Facilitation: Through the State Desk Office, the State will streamline customs procedures to reduce the time and costs associated with exports.

Warehousing and Logistics Centers: Developing modern warehousing and logistics centers will enhance storage capabilities and improve supply chain management. These centers can offer inventory management, order fulfillment, and distribution services, ensuring that goods are stored safely and dispatched efficiently. By investing in these facilities, Kwara State can support businesses in meeting the demands of international markets.

The Kwara State Geographic Information Services: The Kwara State Geographic Information Services Center will support the revolutionized trade logistics management. E-commerce platforms, online marketplaces, and digital supply chain management systems can enhance the visibility and traceability of goods. By adopting these technologies, Kwara State can improve the efficiency of trade operations and provide businesses with tools to compete in the global market.



Smart Logistics Solutions: Implementing smart logistics solutions such as GPS tracking, real-time inventory management, and automated warehousing can further enhance trade logistics efficiency. These technologies enable businesses to optimize their supply chains, reduce costs, and respond quickly to market demands. By investing in smart logistics, Kwara State can position itself as a leader in modern trade infrastructure.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Infrastructure Development: Collaboration between the public and private sectors is vital for successful trade infrastructure development. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) can leverage private sector expertise, resources, and efficiencies to implement large-scale infrastructure projects. By fostering strong PPPs, Kwara State can accelerate the development of critical infrastructure and ensure its sustainability.

POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Kwara State will design and implement a policy and regulatory framework that fosters a favorable business environment and promotes sustainable economic growth in Kwara State. By establishing clear, supportive, and transparent policies and regulations, the state can attract investment, enhance competitiveness, and ensure the efficient functioning of markets. The following components outline key elements of an ideal policy and regulatory framework designed to support economic development in Kwara State.

- 1. Export Promotion Policies:** Kwara State will develop comprehensive export promotion policies to stimulate export activities. These policies will provide incentives such as tax breaks, subsidies, and grants to businesses engaged in export activities. Additionally, establishing export processing zones (EPZs) with streamlined customs procedures and dedicated infrastructure will simplify the export process and reduce bureaucratic hurdles.
- 2. Investment Incentives:** Creating a favorable investment climate is essential for attracting domestic and foreign investors. The state will offer a range of incentives, including tax holidays, reduced import duties on capital goods, and access to finance at preferential rates. These incentives will target agriculture, manufacturing, and technology sectors to stimulate growth and diversification.
- 3. Support for Farmers:** Agricultural policies will focus on supporting farmers through access to affordable inputs, extension services, and training programs. The state can enhance agricultural productivity and quality by promoting modern farming techniques and improved seed varieties.
- 4. Agro-Processing and Value Addition:** Encouraging agro-processing and value addition is crucial for increasing the competitiveness of Kwara State's agricultural products. Policies will promote establishing agro-processing hubs and support businesses involved in processing, packaging, and marketing agricultural goods.
- 5. Public Infrastructure Investment:** Kwara State will prioritize investment in critical infrastructure such as roads, power, water supply, and communication networks. These

investments will improve the overall business environment and facilitate the efficient movement of goods and services.

6. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** The state will promote public-private partnerships for infrastructure development to leverage private sector expertise and resources. PPPs will be encouraged for industrial parks, logistics centers, and energy projects, ensuring that infrastructure development is sustainable and efficient.
7. **Ease of Doing Business:** Improving the ease of doing business is essential for attracting and retaining investment. Kwara State will streamline business registration processes, e-tax payment, haulage prices, easier and faster process of acquiring properties, resettlement action plan, reduce bureaucratic red tape, and enhance the efficiency of regulatory agencies.
8. **Regulatory Transparency:** Ensuring transparency in regulatory processes will build trust and confidence among investors and businesses. The state will establish clear, consistent, and predictable regulatory frameworks, providing businesses with the certainty to make long-term investments.
9. **International Standards:** Kwara State's products must comply with international quality standards to access global markets. The state will establish mechanisms for quality control, certification, and compliance with international standards. These mechanisms will be coordinated through specialized agencies and supported by business training programs.
10. **Consumer Protection:** Consumer protection is vital for maintaining market integrity and confidence. The state will implement and enforce regulations safeguarding consumer rights and promoting fair business practices.
11. **Financial Inclusion:** Promoting financial inclusion is crucial for supporting economic development. Policies will focus on expanding access to financial services for all population segments, including rural areas and small businesses.
12. **Support for SMEs:** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of Kwara State's economy. The state will provide targeted support for SMEs, including access to credit, financial literacy programs, and business development services. Special funds and credit guarantee schemes will be established to mitigate risks and encourage lending to SMEs.

- 13. Sustainable Development:** Ensuring sustainable development is key to long-term economic growth. Kwara State will implement environmental policies that promote the sustainable use of natural resources, reduce pollution, and protect biodiversity.
- 14. Social Inclusion:** Policies will also focus on promoting social inclusion and ensuring that economic development benefits all segments of society. Initiatives will include social protection programs, skills development, and efforts to reduce inequality.
- 15. Capacity Building for Government Agencies:** Strengthening the capacity of government agencies involved in economic development is essential. The state will invest in training and capacity-building programs for public officials to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- 16. Interagency Coordination:** Effective coordination between different government agencies is crucial for the successful implementation of policies. Kwara State will establish interagency collaboration and communication mechanisms to implement policies efficiently and effectively.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Activities	Description	Key Performance Indicators
Baseline Data Collection	Conduct comprehensive surveys and data collection to establish baseline metrics for all key sectors.	Number of baseline surveys conducted, data accuracy and completeness, percentage of key sectors covered.
Objective settings	Define export strategy objectives and goals	Annual Export volume growth rate
Stakeholder Feedback Mechanisms	Establish regular feedback channels with stakeholders, including businesses, farmers, and community members.	Number of stakeholder feedback sessions held, stakeholder satisfaction rate, and number of actionable insights gathered.
Policy Adjustments	Use M&E findings to inform and adjust policies and strategies to ensure continuous improvement and relevance.	Number of policy adjustments made, time taken to implement changes, stakeholder satisfaction with adjustments.
Infrastructure and Equipment Provision	Provide necessary infrastructure and equipment to support economic development activities, including transportation, communication, and processing facilities	Availability and condition of infrastructure and equipment. Rate of infrastructure utilization Stakeholder satisfaction with provided resources.

Risk Assessment and Identification	Conduct comprehensive risk assessments to identify potential risks and challenges impacting economic development initiatives.	Number of risk assessments conducted. Identification and categorization of risks. Stakeholder engagement in risk identification.
------------------------------------	---	--

Conclusion

Kwara State's export strategy aims to position the state as a significant player in national and international markets. By developing policies, enhancing infrastructure, and providing training, the state creates a conducive environment for export businesses. Establishing agro-processing hubs and trade facilitation centers adds value to local products and ensures competitiveness in global markets. Ensuring compliance with international quality standards and facilitating access to finance further boosts export potential. Market research identifies new opportunities, allowing businesses to meet global demand. Public-private partnerships drive infrastructure development and support export-oriented businesses. Embracing technology improves efficiency and opens new avenues for international trade.

MRS. DAMILOLA YETUNDE YUSUF ADELODUN
Honourable Commissioner of Business, Innovation and Technology

21st December 2023



References

1. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). (2021). *Anchor Borrowers' Programme Guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbn.gov.ng>
2. Kwara State Government. (2022). *Agricultural Development Policies and Programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.kwarastate.gov.ng>
3. Kwara State Government. (2023). *Kwara State Development Plan 2021-2025*. Retrieved from <https://www.kwarastate.gov.ng>
4. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2020). *Country Programming Framework for Nigeria (2018-2022)*. Retrieved from <https://www.fao.org>
5. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). (2022). *Annual Agricultural Survey Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng>
6. Nigeria Export Promotion Council (NEPC). (2021). *Nigeria's Export Strategy and Market Access Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.nepc.gov.ng>
7. World Bank. (2021). *Agriculture Sector Development Project in Nigeria: Enhancing Productivity and Export Potential*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org>
8. International Trade Centre (ITC). (2020). *Export Potential Map: Nigeria*. Retrieved from <https://www.intracen.org>
9. Adeoye, I. B., Adebayo, K., & Afolabi, M. O. (2019). Challenges of Agricultural Produce Export in Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Economics and Development*, 8(3), 45-57.
10. PwC Nigeria. (2020). *Transforming Nigeria's Agricultural Value Chain*. Retrieved from <https://www.pwc.com/ng>
11. International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). (2021). *Improving Cassava and Rice Production in Nigeria: Insights and Strategies*. Retrieved from <https://www.iita.org>
12. The Guardian Nigeria. (2022, August 15). Boosting Rice Production in Kwara State: Challenges and Opportunities. Retrieved from <https://www.guardian.ng>
13. FADAMA III Project. (2021). *Enhancing Agricultural Productivity in Kwara State*. Retrieved from <https://www.fadama.org.ng>

